

Live in the sticks and commute to London: how to make flexi-living work



Save 10



More people are making the most of new ways of working by embracing flexi-living CREDIT: CHRISTOPHER

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Where you work and where you want to live are not always the same. While that has traditionally meant compromise – maybe swapping a garden for a shorter commute – now, with the change in how we work, flexi-living is on the rise.

According to recruitment agency Timewise, only 27 per cent of people work a traditional nine-to-five, full-time job. This means that, unshackled from commitments to a physical office, more people are changing how – and where – they live.

Just as co-working spaces have sprung up to meet flexi-working - demand, so property companies are muscling in to support flexi-living. The soon-to-open Mason & Fifth development in Bermondsey, south-east London, calls itself a “home on completely flexible terms”, for those who need a place to stay for a few nights a week while working in the capital.

It is aimed at a younger crowd who pay per month on a rolling basis, with furniture and bedding included, and home-cooked meals (including packed lunches), a laundry service, housekeeping and concierge available on top. Rents start from £1,650 per month.

Others living flexibly stay in hotels a few nights a week to allow for family time in the countryside, or own and rent homes in different counties to allow for greater flexibility. Here, we meet four people who make flexi-living work for them.

Digital nomad

Philippe Kjellgren, 52, has taken flexi-living to the extreme in the name of research. The author of seven travel books, he is the founder of PK’s List, a global travel adviser service; recently he launched a hotel app. Since February 2017, he has been travelling non-stop around the world with his wife, Vi. “We decided to visit all the hotels that I recommend,” he says. “Then our dog died at the age of 17 and, as we don’t have children, we had nothing holding us back.”

Their London apartment is being rented out while they’re away (they are due back this month) and they stay in hotels for two to three nights at a time while Kjellgren personally vets them, working along the way. “I have a global team, so as long as I have Wi-Fi and phone coverage it’s no different than working in London,” he says. “Deadlines are still there but, overall, it’s more relaxing as it’s your time, and you manage it the way you want. Plus, a beach view is better than a rainy, grey London.”

There are downsides, though they are few, he adds. “I suppose not being able to cook a meal or invite friends over for dinner,” he says. “Other than that, it’s simply amazing.”

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