

ORTAL

BUYER'S GUIDE

Selecting a Luxury Fireplace for Your Next Project

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Introduction



The right luxury fireplace can set the tone and create the core vision for a space, while offering warmth and proving its worth in function, efficiency, safety, and durability.

A luxury fireplace has the power to transform a space into a conversation starter—and a showstopper. From form to function, the right fireplace can complement your high-end design not only to meet your client’s taste preferences but also to make a functional statement.

Having to meet the demands of both design and pragmatism, the right luxury fireplace can set the tone and create the core vision for a space, while offering warmth and proving its worth in function, efficiency, safety, and durability. With so many considerations at play, it’s important to go with a brand you trust—one that has longevity in the industry, as well as a proven track record for innovation, safety, reliable installation, customer service, and more. When you’re confident in your supplier, your clients will be confident in you and your recommendations.

In this guide, we’ll walk you through current trends in the industry and everything you should consider when selecting a luxury fireplace for your next commercial or residential project.



04 — Trends in
Luxury Fireplaces





There's a huge demographic shift happening in the United States right now, with the nation adding one person to the population every 18 seconds. As the population rapidly expands, more people are purchasing homes, which means more homes need to be built to keep up with the demand.

At the core of these homes? The fireplace.

Throughout history, as the home's central masonry core, fireplaces have provided both the comfort of heat and the functionality of a kitchen. During the colonial period and well into the Victorian era, fireplaces were a necessity, chosen for their functionality rather than their design.

Although we no longer need fireplaces to keep our homes warm or make dinner—thanks to modern HVAC technology—our emotional connection to the fireplace as a central element of the home continues to inform how houses are designed and built. After all, as Frank Lloyd Wright famously said,

"The fireplace is the heart of the home."





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According to *Architect Magazine*, the evolution of the fireplace has come so far that some modern fireplaces serve purely aesthetic purposes, providing no actual heat at all. The middle ground that your clients crave, of course, is a luxury fireplace that offers innovative design features along with functionality. Some of the most popular features trending with luxury fireplaces include:

- Clean, frameless, and modern appearances
- Contemporary, modern design
- Taller fire viewing areas
- A safety screen or glass barrier
- Cool wall technology
- Linear and corner viewing options
- Indoor/outdoor features
- Elimination of noncombustible clearance zones
- Smart home integrations

The trend to move away from (and even ban) wood-burning fireplaces continues to gain steam in North America. Wood-burning fireplaces were banned in New York City in 2014, and Montreal recently banned wood-burning fireplaces that don't meet the city's strict emissions standards. Additionally, your clients are likely part of the growing number of consumers who are focused on design features that will save energy and improve the air quality in the home.

What does this mean for you? It means more of your clients will be requesting energy-efficient, luxury gas fireplaces. Let's take a look at what you need to consider when selecting a fireplace for your next project.

07 — What to Consider
When Selecting
a Luxury Fireplace
for Your Next Project





Selecting a luxury fireplace is such an important decision, especially if it will be the home's centerpiece.

Every decision that goes into architecting a living space is made over an immense amount of time with an expert attention to detail, but the most visible design elements often matter the most to clients. This is why selecting a luxury fireplace is such an important decision, especially if it will be the home's centerpiece.

Look for Design Variety

As a design professional, you don't want to be forced to design around a fireplace that doesn't work with your client's vision. The spaces you design are unique, and the fireplaces that go in them should be, too. That said, your clients typically also want a say in the design.

To meet the needs and demands of everyone involved in the design process, look for a manufacturer that provides a variety of models with multiple standard designs. Make sure the partner you choose also offers plenty of customization options so your clients can choose from a variety of design features for the interior of the fireplace, including:

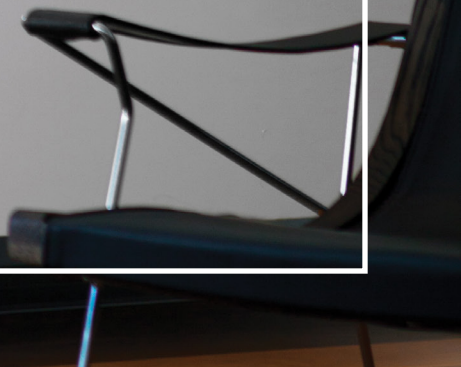
- Logs and branches
- Stones
- Lighting
- Flame
- Glass
- Bricks and panels
- Granite

Hidden Features Spotlight

The interior of a fireplace offers endless opportunity to bring your design to life. Whether you envision a more traditional look or a clean, modern vibe, Ortal allows you to design your own fire. Consider glowing embers for a classic fireplace experience or long white kindling for a sleek, contemporary approach.

If your clients desire a fireplace feature that reminds them of the classic brick fireplace they grew up with, Ortal offers that customization in red, tan, and more. To meet the needs of the clean, contemporary fixture, consider black, reflective paneling. Whatever you and your clients envision, Ortal has the design features to bring that vision to life.

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Find Design Flexibility

Don't let clearances, safety screens, required trims, mantels, and the other limitations of traditional fireplaces compromise your vision for a space. And you're not alone: Clients seeking a luxury experience also don't want to make sacrifices for the sake of design, so the fireplace you specify must allow them to use the space how they want.

Look for a luxury fireplace supplier that offers a modern approach to the fireplace through cool wall technology and power venting systems so you can design around the fireplace without limits.

With innovative, cool wall technology, you can mount a television, a piece of artwork, and more above the fireplace without sacrificing heat or worrying about what you've mounted. With a powerful power venting system, you can realize your vision of putting a fireplace practically anywhere—safely and easily. For example, if you're designing a luxury fireplace for a 10th-floor condo and want a standalone look, the venting can go below the fireplace with up to a six-foot vertical drop.



A modern, minimalist white fireplace is the central focus, with a fire burning brightly inside. The fireplace is built into a white wall and has a long, narrow opening. The room is brightly lit, with a ceiling light fixture visible. In the background, there are blue chairs and a desk with a computer monitor.

Patented Cool Wall Technology

Ortal's patented Cool Wall Technology enhances your design possibilities by ensuring that the walls surrounding the fireplace remain cool. Additionally, our passive heat removal system is among the industry's most sophisticated, operating more quietly and efficiently than most luxury fireplaces. With Cool Wall Technology, you can overcome any design obstacle and bring a space to life.

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For designers, time equals money, so the less time you have to spend detailing the fireplace construction documents, the better your bottom line for the project will be.

Don't Compromise on Design Efficiency

Not all fireplace manufacturers are created equally, and some are more designer-friendly than others. When vetting a luxury fireplace partner, ask whether they have specs and CAD drawings readily available for all of their models, including how to design a fireplace with a TV mounted above, shelf specs, vent pipe clearances, and so on.

For designers, time equals money, so the less time you have to spend detailing the fireplace construction documents, the better your bottom line for the project will be—and you won't have to compromise on details.

Get Confident on Pricing

When you opt for a luxury fireplace, you don't want the unit to get removed from the design because of client sticker shock or value engineering. You'll need to be prepared to handle any objections and challenge any expectations for what a fireplace should cost.

In fact, the long-term cost savings that come with investing in a modern, luxury fireplace can be a great place to start when discussing price point with sticker-shocked clients. Let's take a look at some of the pricing differences between traditional fireplaces and gas fireplaces.

13 — Traditional, Wood-Burning Fireplace





The average price for materials and installation of a traditional, wood-burning fireplace can cost upwards of \$22,000.

- **Labor and materials:** \$5,500 to \$11,000
- **Installation:** \$2,500 to \$10,000 (depending on whether there is a chimney)
- **Firebox:** \$500 to \$1,000

These figures *don't include* the additional ongoing costs, including:

- Regular chimney cleaning
- Cords of wood (which range from \$200 to \$600 each)
- Additional maintenance and masonry repairs
- Long-lasting and harmful environmental costs (see more on this below)



15 — Luxury Gas Fireplace





You need to be prepared to talk to your clients about the negative impacts of traditional fireplaces if they raise concerns about the pricing of a luxury gas unit.

The average price for materials and installation of a luxury gas fireplace is around \$15,000.

- **Fireplace unit:** average of \$11,000 (ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000)
- **Venting and installation:** \$500 to \$1,000
- **Fireplace installation:** \$2,000 to \$4,000
- **Gas line hookup:** \$150 to \$300

The only additional cost with a luxury gas fireplace is the cost of your gas bill and any smart home technology you want to implement along with it.

It's important to paint a picture of the whole cost of the fireplace wall project, not just the unit cost. Investing in a luxury fireplace is like investing in a functional piece of art that will last a lifetime, which is why it's so important to get it right the first time.

Focus on Environmental Factors

It goes without saying that traditional, wood-burning fireplaces are incredibly harmful to the environment—from sending dangerous particulate matter into the atmosphere to the dangers of deforestation. But you need to be prepared to talk to your clients about the negative impacts of traditional fireplaces if they raise concerns about the pricing of a luxury gas unit.

Next, ensure that the luxury fireplace you specify is



designed to operate efficiently and cleanly by looking for the following features

- **Direct-vent technology:** takes air in from the outside for combustion and expels the exhaust back outside
- **Interior air quality:** no emissions with particulates or carbon monoxide leakage
- **Exterior air quality:** coaxial flue that enables mixing with the air quicker for cleaner emissions
- **No standing pilot:** electronic ignition that turns on only when you need it (i.e., no energy waste while not in use)

When comparing fireplace manufacturers, look for green certifications, including LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), CALGreen, and others.





Environmental Design

Ortal's direct-vent fireplaces are LEED certified and feature advanced ventilation systems and glass paneling reinforced with nearly transparent mesh screens to provide an uninterrupted view into the fire. With direct-vent technology, combustion gases are expelled to the outside of the building, eliminating the problems of air quality and carbon monoxide that wood-burning and ventless gas fireplaces can cause. This differs from B-vent and ventless systems, which pull in combustion air from the room.

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Fireplaces are meant to be more than just beautiful—they also need to be functional.

Demand Efficient Performance

Fireplaces are meant to be more than just beautiful—they also need to be functional. Even the most high-end clients with luxury tastes don't want to be wasteful. When evaluating manufacturers, remember that not all cool wall and venting technologies are created equal, and be sure to ask the following questions:

- How much air is lost?
- How much heat is produced?
- How much energy is consumed?

Seek Expert Service and Support

When selecting a luxury fireplace for your next project, you shouldn't have to worry about troubleshooting problems or having to refine fireplace details. The more time you spend tackling issues, the more your profits could be negatively impacted.

Look for a supplier who offers end-to-end project support with the expertise to answer your questions and a commitment to being available when you need them. Also, ask potential suppliers about distributor locations:

- Can the supplier easily make a site visit if necessary?
- Is there a local showroom that you can visit with your clients?



Understand Installation Requirements

Although modern fireplaces are more complex than basic fireplaces because of the technology and innovation involved, that doesn't mean installation takes longer—it's just different. Installing modern gas fireplaces is more about additional detail than additional time, and it's important to convey this to your clients who may be concerned about the complexities and timelines of gas fireplace installation.

Work with a supplier that helps you customize the installation to the design by which the designer and manufacturer provide detailed drawings to the builder to streamline the process. Also, consider the following for streamlining the installation process:

- Use an experienced, authorized installer with National Fireplace Institute (NFI) gas specialist certification.
- Choose a manufacturer that provides clear framing instructions for builders.
- Compare lead times, because the longer the lead time, the more likely there will be project delays, frustrating builders and clients and increasing the budget.



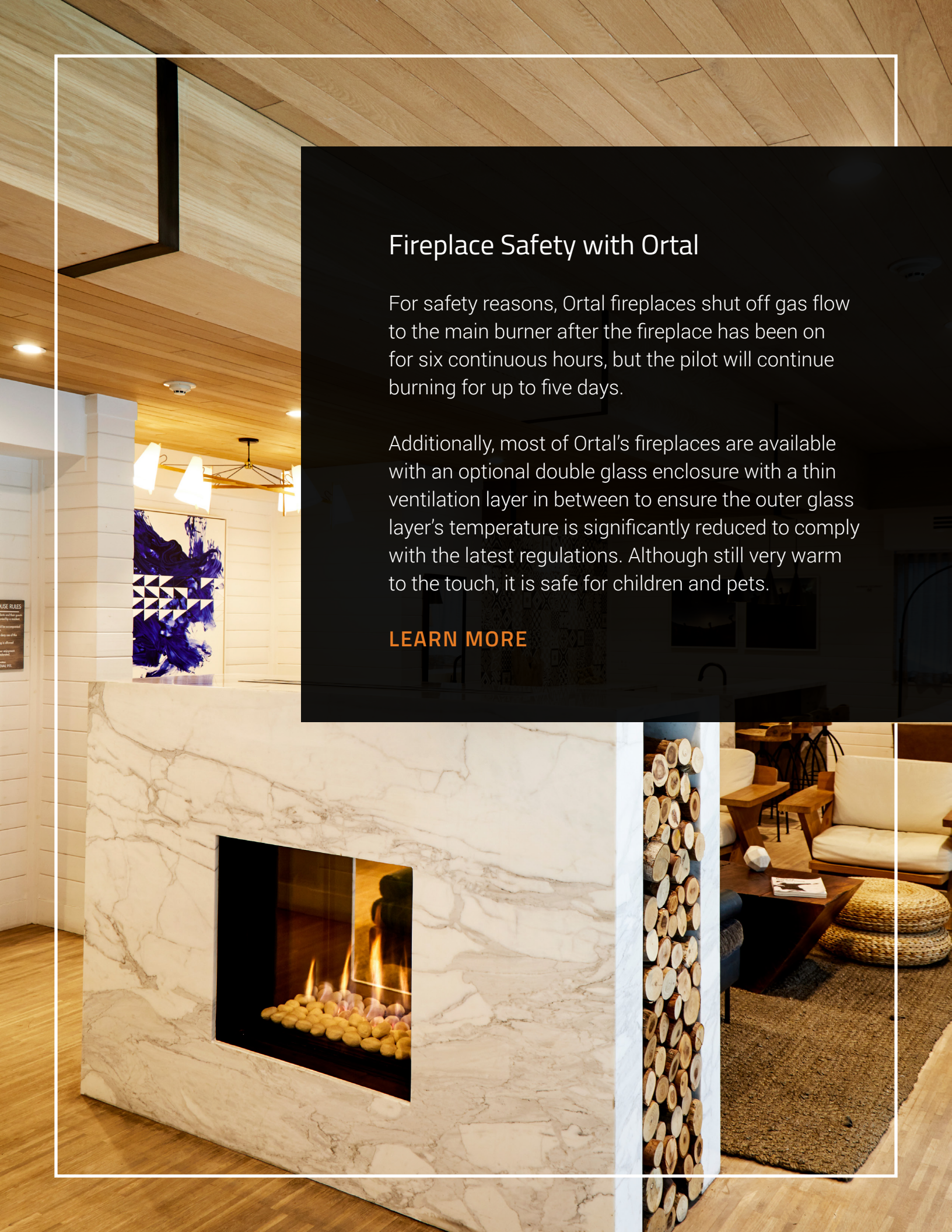


Assess the Safety Factor

All fireplaces must meet certain safety requirements—but you shouldn't have to sacrifice your clean, modern design for the sake of planning for safety barriers. As you begin the search for a luxury fireplace for your next project, look for a double glass heat barrier to ensure that the protective glass stays at a safe temperature, or consider a micromesh safety barrier that doesn't detract from the view of the fire.

Additionally, save time and reduce risk by working with a manufacturer who provides sizing guidelines and specs for clearances to vent pipes, sprinklers, inside corners and walls, venting diagrams, and so on.



The image is a composite of three photographs. The top-left photo shows a modern living room with a white marble fireplace, a stack of firewood, and contemporary furniture. The top-right photo is a dark, low-key image of a fireplace. The bottom photo is a close-up of the white marble fireplace with a fire burning inside. The text is overlaid on the top-right photo.

Fireplace Safety with Ortal

For safety reasons, Ortal fireplaces shut off gas flow to the main burner after the fireplace has been on for six continuous hours, but the pilot will continue burning for up to five days.

Additionally, most of Ortal's fireplaces are available with an optional double glass enclosure with a thin ventilation layer in between to ensure the outer glass layer's temperature is significantly reduced to comply with the latest regulations. Although still very warm to the touch, it is safe for children and pets.

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Market Longevity

Lastly, look for an experienced supplier who has a proven track record of excellence and trusted dealers throughout the country. But also look for a manufacturer who is an innovator and visionary on top of trends and technological innovations in the space. Your ideal partner should offer a unique product and approach that your clients would be proud to display in their home or business.

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Your Trusted Partner

Ortal has been redefining fire and setting industry trends for more than 30 years as the world's premier contemporary, frameless gas fireplace manufacturer. Ortal's engineers and designers work to exceed the expectations of the architectural design industry with patented features and ongoing updates focused on the latest technologies.

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Ortal: The Luxury Fireplace Made for Your Next Project

There are countless fireplace manufacturers out there, but not all of them deliver true luxury—the ultimate meeting of form and function. Ortal has been a pioneer and trendsetter of the luxury fireplace industry for more than 30 years. Offering more than 80 styles and more standard features than any of our competitors, we give you the flexibility to overcome any design obstacle.

Don't lose your design choices in value engineering—we offer the widest range of flexibility and possibilities, all with the shortest range in lead time. Ortal fireplaces are frameless, are wireless, and feature patented Cool Wall Technology and optional power venting. We meet stringent CALGreen and LEED standards with a unique burner design that ensures the cleanest possible use of gas to provide the ultimate marriage of warmth and efficient energy use.

With distributors and multiple warehouses maintaining large inventories across North America, you and your clients can easily visit a showroom to see Ortal fireplaces up close in person.

Your Life. Your Fire.
**Schedule a consultation to learn more
about Ortal fireplaces today.**

