



Beautifully Bespoke

CREATIVE USE OF COLOUR, INJECTIONS OF CHARACTER, AND EFFECTIVE LIGHTING WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE BIG DIFFERENCES IN SMALL SPACES, ACCORDING TO INTERIOR DESIGNER RUTH NOBLE

WORDS BY **CAROLINE ALLEN**. PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MATTEO TUNIZ**.



Interior designer Ruth Noble used a variety of hues to transform this apartment in Dublin's Grand Canal area. "Often people select neutral colours which leads to the interiors looking quite bland and impersonal. With the introduction of colour and pattern, an apartment can become more comfortable, inviting and welcoming," says Ruth. Working with Little Greene paints, she used colour, from Bone China Blue in the hallway to Juniper Ash in the bathroom, to elevate this scheme out of the ordinary.

"When introducing colour and pattern in smaller areas, it's important to consider the light," Ruth says. "Bear in mind where natural light enters the spaces and then consider how artificial light can be introduced. Lower level lighting such as table and desk lamps as well as standing lamps and pendant lights work really well within apartments to create atmosphere, ambience and character," says the designer, who is based at Pembroke Road in Ballsbridge.





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“Mirrors, when well positioned, direct in more light. Colour and pattern can be brought in through an ottoman or headboard. When contemplating colours, think beyond the paint selection,” she advises. “Consider the use of brightly coloured art and warm coloured fabrics for Roman blinds. Even coloured accessories, ceramics and lamp bases do well to create an effective interior finish. These are also easily interchangeable over time.”

As a globetrotter, the owner of this apartment was inspired by interiors internationally. He was keen to bring five star style to this property, which is both a corporate let and a personal pied-à-terre. Ruth was tasked with transforming the property, built around 2006, which offers views out to the quays and the Grand Canal basin. “The owner was seeking a design that was distinctive, unusual, appealing as well as comfortable,” she recalls. “The brief offered us creative license to create schemes that were dramatic but also inviting. I wanted to introduce materials and finishes that would confound expectations of a property built at this time in the area. It was important that atmosphere and warmth were introduced. By specifying dark floors throughout as well as incorporating feature tiles and



paying attention to detail in the lighting plan, we achieved this."

Ruth project-managed the refurbishment, working with contractors and choosing furniture and accessories from her own interiors emporium. "The design specification incorporated texture such as velvet upholstery and multi-faceted fabrics in window dressings. We incorporated brass and glass as well as

reflective tiling to maximise space in the bathrooms. The use of dramatic colour and unusual tones sets this property apart within this development. Finishes such as dark stained woods, glossy finishes, brass, patina finishes, glass, stone, and layered fabrics led to the outcome we set out to achieve." The lighting plan was important. "We incorporated wall lights, pendant lights and LED strip lighting as well as table and desk lamps. To enhance the functionality we added

A NEW BESPOKE HAND-PAINTED KITCHEN WAS FITTED WITH A MATT QUARTZ COUNTERTOP, BOILING WATER TAP, STORAGE AND DISPLAY SHELVING.



dimmers and five amp sockets as well as feature light fittings in brass and glass finishes to complement the interior schemes," outlines Ruth.

The hallway sets the tone for the rest of this covetable pad with 10x10 square porcelain tiles in three contrasting colours that complement the paint colours on the panelling and wall in the hall area. This same tile was fitted in the utility/storage room. All internal doors were panelled and painted and new bespoke brass patina door handles were fitted. This completely changed the look and feel of the property. "There is one piece of furniture in the entrance area, which acts as a hall table for decorative objects. The client had some lovely pieces

of art which we placed in the hall and throughout the property. A wool runner was added to complement the paint colour scheme."

A wall originally divided the kitchen and living area. "We opened up the space so the kitchen flows into the living space, more suitable for apartment living and entertaining," says Ruth. A new bespoke hand-painted kitchen was fitted. "The wall tile ties in with the textured wallpaper. A new matt quartz countertop was specified and a boiling water tap fitted. The kitchen design incorporates storage and display shelving. LED strip lighting was fitted into the shelves and downlighters into the base of the upper cabinetry to reflect down onto the counter top." The kitchen





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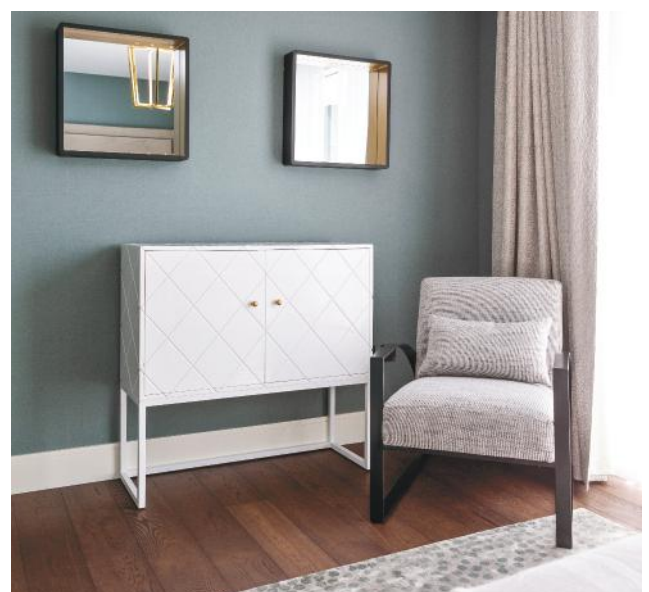


floor was fitted with a porcelain floor tile, giving a matt stone effect.

The floor-to-ceiling wall is fitted with textured wallpaper and a brass clock. Four gold-framed mirrors sit on the wall opposite the kitchen for effect and as a feature when entering from the hallway. Savvy utility storage includes hooks and tall storage. "In the dining area, wall lights and pendant lighting were added in a glass and brass finish. A new dining table and occasional furniture were incorporated. Blinds as well as lined curtains were added to all windows to control the light that streams in at different times of the day. With views out to the water in two directions, seating was really important. I wanted to create several seating areas within this sizeable living space," explains Ruth. "A large velvet sofa was introduced as well as a desk and two armchairs, which look out to the water in both directions. We designed painted shelving that utilises the height of the room and can be used for both display and storage."

The walls of the two double bedrooms were covered in textured wallpaper. New sheer curtains as well as interlining curtains were incorporated on a double track. "The sheer curtains allowed for the control of light as well as privacy while the interlined curtains eliminate the light at night and add character," says Ruth. "We incorporated ceiling pendant lights either side of the

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IN THE MAIN BATHROOM THE BATH WAS REPLACED WITH A SUPERSIZED WALK-IN SHOWER.





"WE INCORPORATED BRASS AND GLASS AS WELL AS REFLECTIVE TILING TO MAXIMISE SPACE IN THE BATHROOMS."



bed in the master bedroom and wall lights either side of the bed in the guest bedroom. The existing wardrobes were panelled and painted to align with the schemes. New bespoke brass patina and leather hardware added to the doors." Bespoke headboards inject a luxe effect. In the main bathroom the bath was replaced with a supersized walk-in shower. New large format tiling, sanitary ware, vanity units, brassware, lighting and accessories enhance the bathroom spaces.

"In the living room, I wanted to maximise the views as well as functionally control the light coming in throughout the day. Roller blinds were installed and interlined curtains on tracks with a wave heading, similar to the curtains in the bedrooms to complement the colour scheme," Ruth explains. The amount of light flooding in works well with the dark stained oak engineered floors. "These dramatic floors add a certain depth and set off the furniture, fabrics and rugs as well as the paint colours and textured wallpaper."

With effective lighting key to the success of this scheme, Ruth has plenty of tips on illuminating living spaces. "Incorporate functional lighting such as down lighters in bathrooms and kitchens as they disperse light evenly. In hallways and living spaces the introduction of wall lights as well as pendant lights can incorporate feature pieces. Decorative fittings add atmosphere and character. Table lamps, desk lamps and floor lamps allow for functional and decorative lighting at varied levels," she says.

Small space living requires a certain amount of discipline. "Don't hold onto pieces that don't suit or work within the space. Try to conceal clutter; only incorporate items there is a use for. Don't overfill the space; be realistic about the amount of seating and dining space required," advises Ruth. Adding personality is another consideration. "Incorporate different textures. Layering glass, reflective surfaces, wood finishes as well as stone and textured fabrics can create depth within a space. Apartments can sometimes feel impersonal. Through incorporating well-designed display shelving and hanging more wall art, a more personal feeling is created. This applies to both minimal and decorative designs."

*All furniture, fabrics, rugs, lighting and accessories were sourced from the Ruth Noble Interiors collection and shop:
33 Pembroke Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4
RuthNobleInteriors.com/the-collection*