

flying high

A strong colour palette flows gently through this spacious five-level home

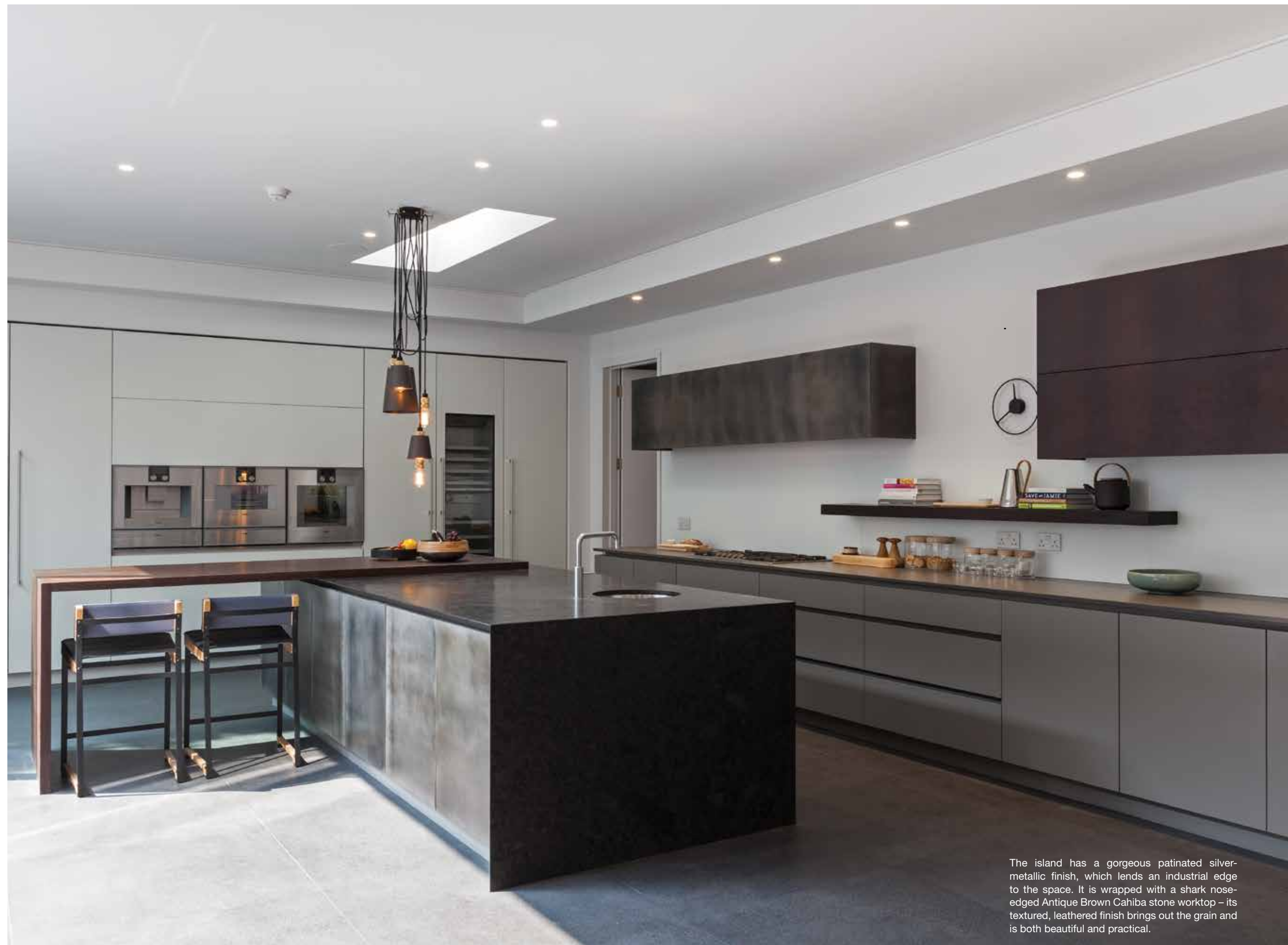
Words: **Jacky Parker** Photography: **Graham Gaunt**

W

ith a working relationship that spans 18 years, architect Mark Ruthven, of Studio Mark Ruthven, and interior designer Rosie Winston, of Clifton Interiors, were the ideal team to work on this stunning contemporary new-build in Hampstead. "We had worked on the former home of the clients – Mark and Katherine Wills – and also on projects for their friends, so they know our work well," says Mark. "On this occasion, they were building a home from scratch and wanted us to maximise the space available."

The couple, who have three children, aged 11, 14 and 17, had bought a two-bedroom 1950s house with the intention of knocking it down and building a large six-bedroom contemporary home in its place. Duly appointed and briefed, Studio Mark Ruthven created a spacious, open structure over five levels, with minimal internal walls, double-height windows and partially open mezzanine floors. "They wanted a light, free-flowing space that connected well with the garden," says Mark. "This design makes good use of the available footprint, lets in plenty of natural light and allows the house to flow vertically as well as horizontally."

The open nature of the structure was an important consideration for Rosie when designing the interior. "Mark and Katherine wanted the contemporary nature of the architecture to be reflected in the interior and we know from experience that they're not afraid of colour," she says. "With parts of the ground-floor décor being visible from the lower ground floor, the colour scheme and materials needed to be consistent. So we came up with a palette of warm neutrals, dark timber, metallics and stone, with splashes of saffron and blue that would flow throughout the house." ▶



The island has a gorgeous patinated silver-metallic finish, which lends an industrial edge to the space. It is wrapped with a shark nose-edged Antique Brown Cahiba stone worktop – its textured, leathered finish brings out the grain and is both beautiful and practical.



Above: The pendant is by Buster + Punch. Its industrial style works beautifully with the patinated metallic finishes on the island and wall units.



Right: Due to the ample proportions of the room, Rosie chose huge 900 x 900mm porcelain tiles for the flooring. An exterior version of the tiles has been used outside for continuity.

Situated on the lower-ground floor, the kitchen design was a collaboration between Rosie and Roundhouse. At one end, a bank of recessed white, floor-to-ceiling units discreetly houses the appliances: three ovens, a full-height fridge and freezer, and wine storage unit, plus a double-door pantry. Along the main wall, taupe base cabinets are topped with Silestone worktops and teamed with metallic-finished wall units and a matt-white glass splashback. A stunning Cahiba composite stone-clad island and perpendicular wenge breakfast bar take centre stage. “We didn’t want an all-white kitchen as it’s a big space and it would just disappear and look like nothing,” explains Rosie. “These punches of dark colour and rich texture bring it to life.”

When it came to lighting, Mark devised a mix that would balance function with aesthetics. In addition to a glass roof light above the far end of the island, which allows natural sunlight in during the day, he introduced directional recessed spotlights to illuminate the patinated cabinetry and to provide task lighting. An industrial-style pendant hangs over the breakfast bar to complement the look and offer a change

of atmosphere. “The kitchen is a very different place in the morning when you come down for a coffee compared to when you’re preparing dinner in the middle of winter or have a group of friends over in the evening,” says Mark. “It’s a mistake to have a standard grid system that just throws light onto the floor. We think about where things are and about how our clients will use the space at various times, so they can switch between decorative and task lighting.”

The dark timber and warm neutrals follow upstairs to the master bedroom and dressing room. Here, soft wool-velvet carpet covers the floor and upholstered furnishings are scattered with sumptuous cushions and throws, creating a calm and cosy yet plush feel. “This room is huge and has a lovely double aspect, so there is light all the way through,” says Rosie. “The Willses wanted it to feel like a luxury hotel suite and it was large enough for us to include a fireplace, sofa and TV, as well as bedroom furniture, so they have everything they need here.”

The adjacent dressing room connects to the ensuite and both rooms are separated from the bedroom with sturdy doors. “The couple both

travel for work,” Rosie explains. “As such, the rooms have been laid out so that if one person has to get up early for a flight, they can do so with minimal disturbance to the other.”

Dark timber features again in the bathroom, but here it’s mixed with limestone flooring and beautiful Statuario marble on the vanity unit and shower. “We wanted a play on dark and light,” says Rosie. “The scheme flows with the rest of the house but has that beautiful luxury hotel feel that the couple wanted.” A sculptural freestanding bath takes pride of place by the window, while the WC is tucked in discreetly next to the shower, out of view. Mirrored recessed cabinets above the double vanity provide generous storage, and wall-mounted taps keep the look un-cluttered.

“Most people have a lot of stuff, and when they move house part of the process is re-organising their lives,” says Rosie. “So everything here has been laid out for ease of use and accessibility. We’ve also chosen linear pieces for a clean, contemporary and luxurious look, which Mark and Katherine love.” [KBB](#)

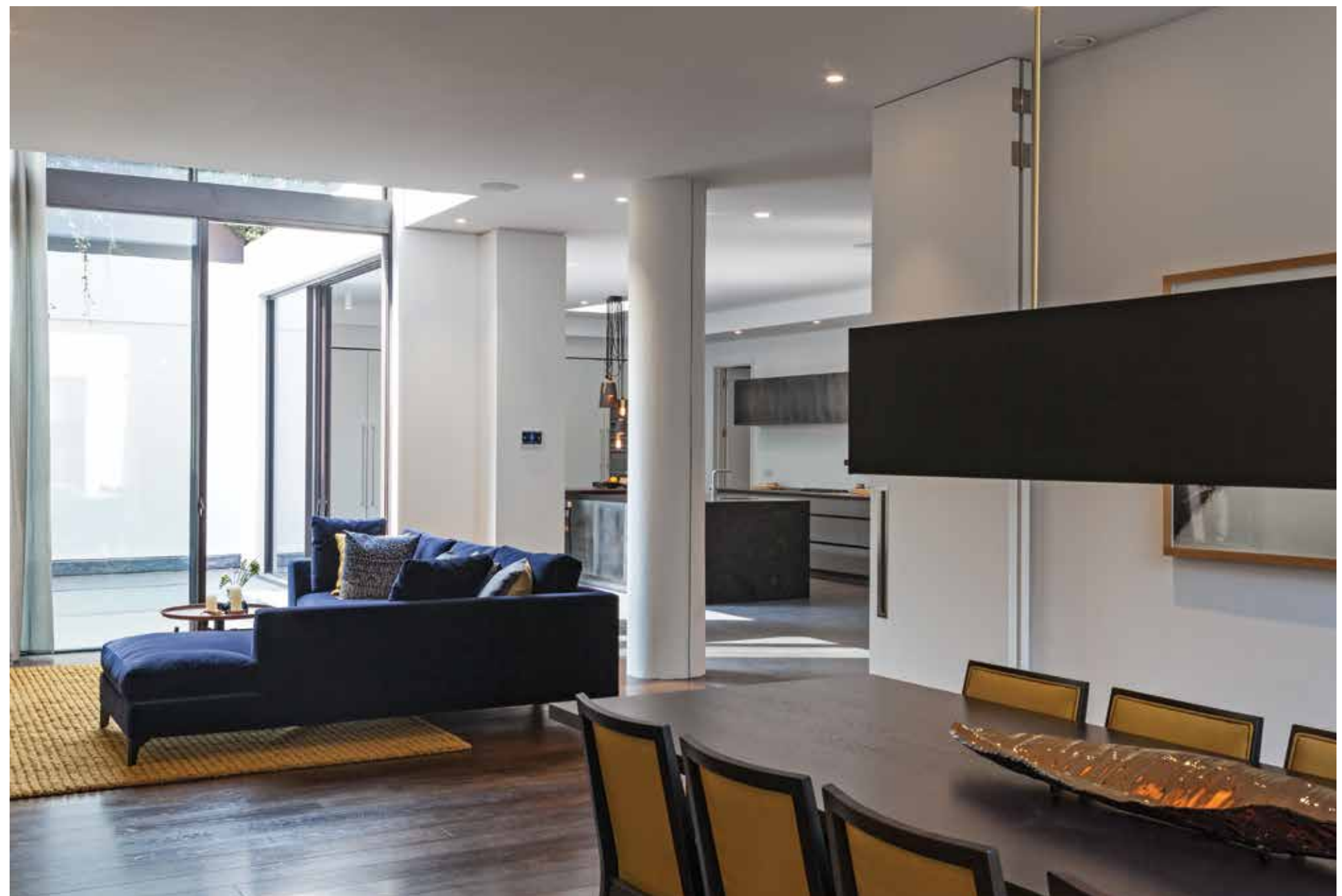
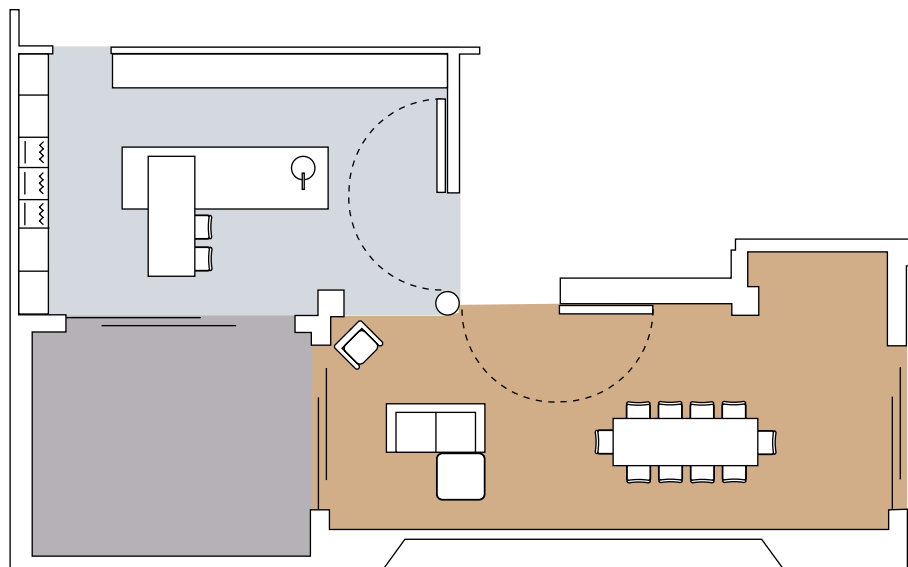
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Above: Although designed to be open-plan, the kitchen and dining areas are separated by two enormous floor-to-ceiling fire doors – a practical requirement. However, they can be closed to allow for privacy if the couple want to dine formally.

Top right: A large, luxurious Minotti sofa takes centre stage in the living area, its deep purple combining with bold yellow accessories and rug to add bursts of colour.

Right: This room is flooded with light on either side. Look up from the double-height windows and you can see into the room above. Double-height curtains run on recessed tracks on a Lutron-operated electric system.



Q&A



Designer Rosie Winston of Clifton Interiors says...

Which elements took up the majority of the budget?

It's easy to forget that appliances usually take up a third of the price of a kitchen. In the bathroom, meanwhile, it was the stone cladding and the bath, and in the master bedroom definitely the furniture.

Biggest challenge with the project?

Designing for large spaces is always challenging, as it's a balance between having enough furniture to fill the space but also keeping it simple.

What advice do you give clients on finding contractors?

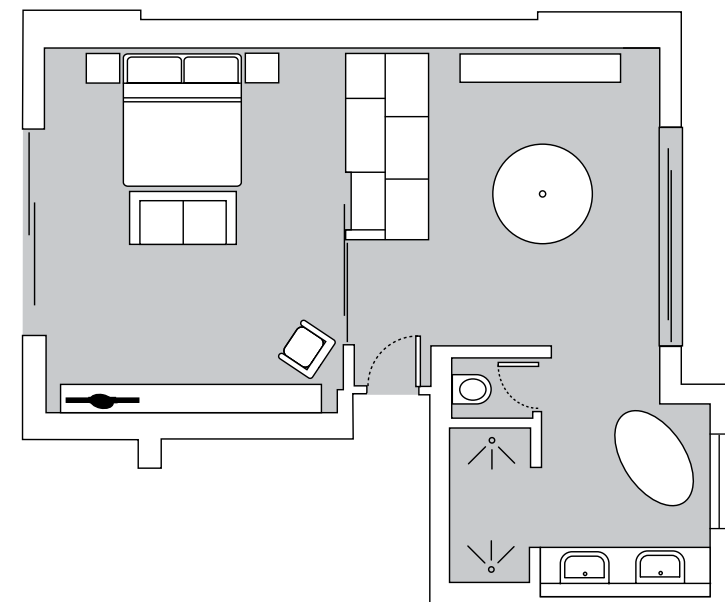
Always get competitive quotes and take references.

Any tips for people embarking on a similar project?

Complete the design in full and fully cost it before you start. And ensure that the design flows with the architecture of the space.



Above: Rosie introduced a specialist textured plaster finish, Polidori Barbera, on the wall behind the bed to add interest to the subtle palette. On the wall opposite she used Cornforth White and on the remaining walls she used Strong White, both by Farrow & Ball, to bring depth to the scheme.



Above: Designed so it's big enough for two, the dressing room features a huge artwork with a similar pattern and tone to the marble in the ensuite to subtly connect the two rooms.

Left: The bedroom has wonderful views over the garden. The contemporary fireplace is a luxurious touch and makes the bedroom feel extra-cosy in winter.

Opposite page, bottom: An alcove provides an unobtrusive dressing table area.



Left: There are showerheads at either end of the enclosure, each with independent thermostatic controls. **Above:** Slim drawers under the vanity unit offer discreet storage.

SourceBook

DESIGN

Architect Mark Ruthven of Studio Mark Ruthven (020 7485 0050 or www.studiomr.co.uk)

Interior designer Rosie Winston of Clifton Interiors (020 7586 5533 or www.cliftoninteriors.com)

Kitchen Roundhouse (020 7297 6220 or www.roundhousedesign.com)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry Urbo handleless bespoke cabinetry, Roundhouse, as before, with base units painted in Mole's Breath, Farrow & Ball (01202 850240 or www.farrow-ball.com) and tall units painted in RAL 9003 with alternate front finish in vertical wenge and patinated silver metallic

Worktops Silestone (01256 761229 or www.silestone.co.uk)

Appliances Combi-steam oven, pyrolytic oven, microwave, warming drawers, coffee machine, hob, extractor, wine storage unit, fridge and freezer, all Gaggenau (0344 892 8988 or www.gaggenau.com)

Taps Quooker (0345 833 3555 or www.quooker.co.uk)

Sinks (on island) RBX610 Rotondo stainless-steel bowl, Franke (0161 436 6280 or www.franke.com); (on side run) 3673-NA 8 Degree large single sink, Kohler (0844 571 0048 or www.kohler.co.uk)

Walls Painted in Wevet by Farrow & Ball, as before

Flooring Mosa Quartz (020 7490 0484 or www.mosa.com)

Pendant lights Buster + Punch (020 7407 0888 or www.busterandpunch.com)

Barstools Catenary by Token (www.tokennyc.com)

DINING/LIVING AREA

Dining table Van Rossum, Chaplins (020 8421 1779 or www.chaplins.co.uk)

Dining chairs and occasional table B&B Italia (020 7591 8111 or www.bebitalia.com)

Pendant light Longlight, CTO Lighting (020 7686 8700 or www.ctolighting.co.uk)

Sofa Minotti (020 7323 3233 or www.minotti.com)

Rug Cavalcanti (020 7635 1783 or www.cavalcanti.co.uk)

Walls Painted in Purbeck Stone, Farrow & Ball, as before

Curtains Deanswood (01634 814444 or www.deanswood.co.uk)

Curtain fabric Sienna by Sahco (020 7352 6168 or www.sahco.com)

Flooring For similar try oak floorboards from The Natural Wood Floor Co (020 8871 9771 or www.naturalwoodfloor.co.uk)

BEDROOM

Bed Savoir Beds (020 8838 4838 or www.savoirbeds.co.uk)

Sofa Minotti, as before

Cushions and bed linen For similar try Cox & Cox (0844 858 0744 or www.coxandcox.co.uk)

Bedside cabinets Dado, B&B Italia, as before

Carpet Jabo by Hill Flooring (020 7609 1234 or www.theflooringgroup.co.uk)

Dressing table stool Alcide 50 by Porada, Chaplins, as before

Pendant light For similar try Jim Lawrence (01473 826685 or www.jim-lawrence.co.uk)

DRESSING ROOM

Walls Painted in Cornforth White and Strong White, Farrow & Ball, as before

Artwork The Artful Project (www.theartfulproject.com)

Pouffe Alcide 90 by Porada, Chaplins, as before

ENSUITE

Bath Loop by Not Only White (www.notonlywhite.com)

Brassware MEM by Dornbracht (024 7671 7129 or www.dornbracht.com)

Vanity unit Custom design by Studio Mark Ruthven, as before

Mirror Custom design by Studio Mark Ruthven, as before

Floor and shower wall Antalya cream limestone, Mediterranean Stones (020 8807 1026 or www.med-stones.com)

Shower feature wall Statuario marble, Mediterranean Stones, as before

Sliding panel blinds Silent Gliss (01843 863571 or www.silentgliss.co.uk)

COST

A similar kitchen would cost from £80,000, a similar bedroom would cost from £40,000 and a similar bathroom would cost from £20,000

