

IMAGE INTERIORS & LIVING

Festive traditions
of innovative Irish chefs and creatives

Dublin Coach House
Lakeside Cavan
Limerick Studio

material
matters

MARBLE, STONE & GLASS

HOMES

A converted Dublin coach house, rustic seaside living and a Victorian bungalow's colourful transformation.



LUXURIOUS LAYERS This KLD-designed master bed combines rustic tiles with soft, textured fabrics. More overleaf.



A NEW ANGLE

Full of contradictions, this Dublin coach house combines historical features with contemporary style to create a family nest that's full of surprises.

PHOTOGRAPHY AL HIGGINS WORDS MEGAN BURNS

It's hard to believe that just over a year ago, the immaculate house I'm walking through was more like a woodland than a home. Owners Aoife and Neil Collins discovered the property when it was completely camouflaged by nature. "The walls were smothered in ivy, and there were trees growing within the natural stone wall boundaries," Aoife tells me. What was apparent, however, was the building's potential, with its beautiful archways and stone walls intact.

They enlisted Kingston Lafferty Design to bring the building to life. "We wanted the design to be brave, with bold colour and texture: we chose KLD because of the unique way they look at spaces," Aoife says. The couple had planning permission to add an extension, so Roisin Lafferty explains that her aim, from the beginning, was to create connection between the old and new spaces of the house. "I wanted to make the most of the magnificent arches, but there's also the new, clean extension with a lot of glazing that contrasts with the beautiful old structure." Through her choice of materials and furniture, Roisin played with this juxtaposition, making it a characteristic feature of the house.

The three arches contain the kitchen, dining area and a cosy nook to the

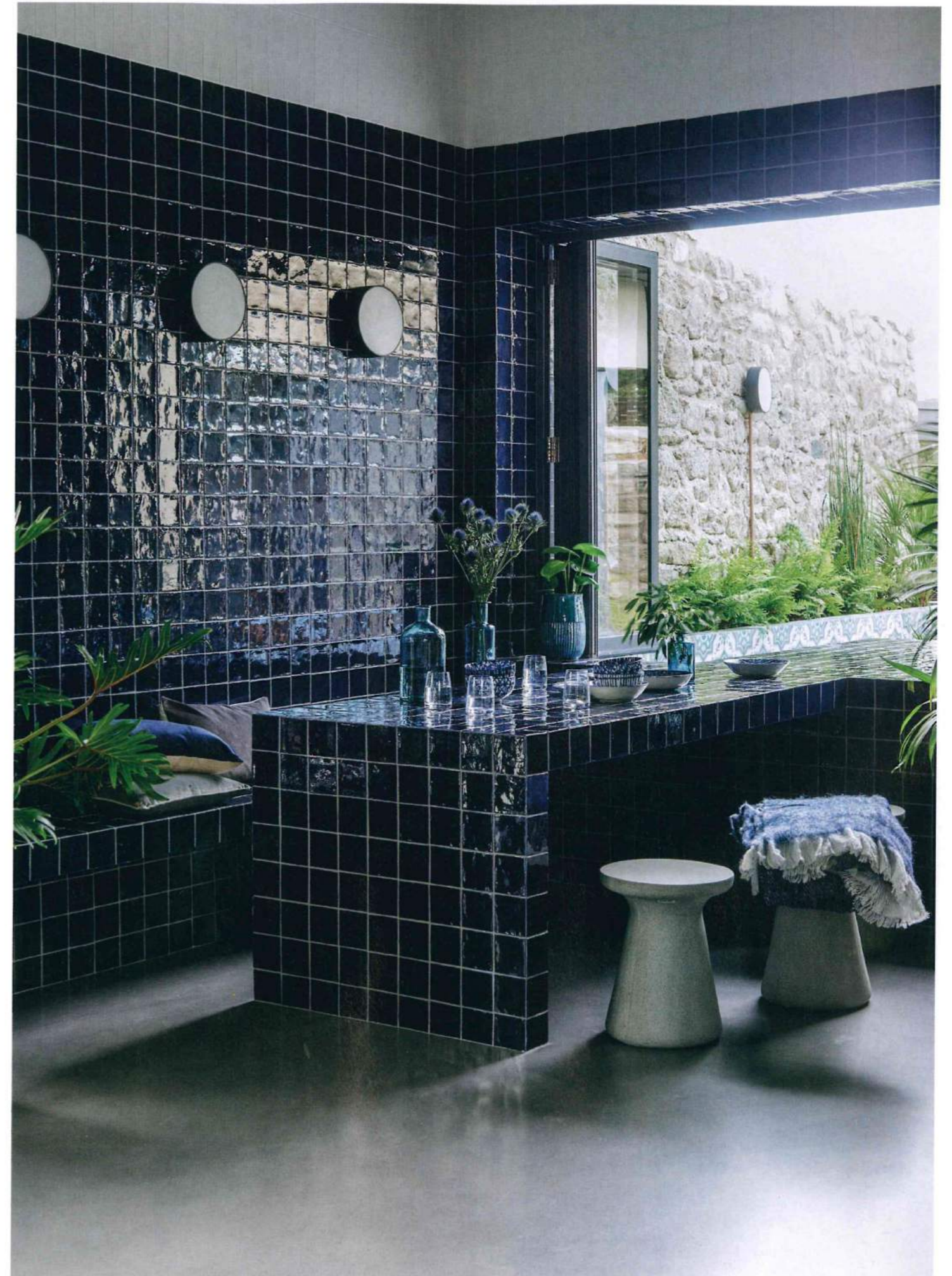


side, and the latter two are full of soft curves reminiscent of the vaulted ceiling above. This leads to the extension, with minimal black kitchen units and a clean-edged marble island, while next to it is a hidden bathroom, designed as an inset cube. A walnut wall hides a concealed door, and a mirrored one creates the illusion of another arch, giving a new perspective of the space.

A blue tiled dining area in the extension continues through to the terrace outside, and fold-away windows mean the two sides of the table can become one, blending inside and out. Its rich blue provides a jolt of colour against this palette of greys that comes from a mix of stone, plaster and concrete. "I wanted it to kind of catch you off guard," Roisin explains. "It's this glistening, jewel-toned space, and it looks like the table and bench are almost growing out of the wall on either side. The brackets of the bench are hidden, so it looks like it's just floating."

Surprises like this are to be found everywhere in the house. Despite all the contrasting elements of old and new, rough and smooth, straight and round, the room feels cohesive. "We didn't want to detract from the building itself, because it's so beautiful," Roisin says. "The materials we did add are

Roisin relaxes in the indoor/outdoor dining area, tiled with Zellige tiles from Rocca Stone. "I love that they're all slightly different shades." **PREVIOUS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Neil and Aoife in their new kitchen. The sofa for the sunken snug was custom built as part of the space and is Aoife's favourite thing about the house. The marble for the island is Consentino from D Tops, and the bar stools are By Lassen. The "cube" bathroom has a mirrored side that reflects the arches. Roisin had metal and glass panels set into the arches: "I wanted to frame the view, and cocoon the dining space a little bit more." The lights above the dining table are from Edizioni Design.



The lounge in the extension leads off the kitchen; the lights are Herman Miller, the chair is Carl Hansen & Søn and the rug is a vintage piece from iRugs. **OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** The hallway has custom-designed handmade marble tiles and bespoke brass mirrors, as well as brass skirting boards. The lounge in the original building is intentionally moody to contrast the open-plan extension: "We added rough plaster to add a texture to the walls, and then went with a really high gloss finish so it was luxurious and opulent," Roisin explains. The secret door to the bathroom is concealed in the walnut wall.





deliberately contrasting, so they're all very strongly polished, or refined."

When it came to furnishings, Roisin carefully considered how each element would interact with this distinctive building. "We used a lot of mid-century pieces, because there's an elegance to them in contrast with the roughness of the structure," she explains. They designed the curved, velvet, citrus green sofa in the lounge off the kitchen to offset the acute angles in that room, and added further softness with rounded lights, tables and a curved chair. A floor-to-ceiling oak sliding door allows this space to be separated from the kitchen, and a limed parquet floor also creates a distinction between the two areas.

The delicate balancing act continues at every turn. The main bedroom is flanked by an exposed stone wall, so Roisin added delicacy as a contrast. Generously high ceilings gave room to play with height and proportion, which led to the idea of the bed with its soft-toned tiles. "We designed the bed almost like a monument. The stud wall behind was created with the tiles in mind so they fit perfectly. Thanks to an excellent tiler, who mitered every single joint, there's not a trim in sight." Femininity also comes from the array of textures on the bed, from rich velvets to delicate, lace-edged cotton, and the floor transitions from oak to carpet, adding another layer of softness. Flush-finished wardrobes sit behind the bed, and a spacious dressing room leads to the en-suite, also with a beautiful stone wall. "I put in quite a lot of mirrors to really accentuate that, and we kept the joinery and the tiling minimal too," Roisin explains.

The kids' room has a host of fun features, such as a ladder leading to

TOP LEFT The walk-in dressing room in the main bedroom made the most of an awkwardly-shaped space. **LEFT** The ensuite bathroom features simple tiling and mirrors to give the spotlight to the stone wall. **OPPOSITE PAGE** The tiles on the bed are from Best Tile, and the lights are from Out There Interiors.





a snug above the wardrobe. “I thought it would be a really cute idea,” Roisin says. “We had the wardrobe reinforced to take the weight of a person, and then made a simple ladder in oak and metal. I wanted to be quite playful with that space with the graphic monochrome tiles and colourful light fittings. It’s meant to be almost toy-like.”

In a house that marries old and new, textured and smooth, and sharp lines with soft curves, the result is a showcase of what can be achieved when a building’s history is respected, and it still serves contemporary living. Its contradictions complement rather than clash, creating a home full of the unexpected, which Aoife explains is exactly what the couple had envisaged: “Above all, we wanted it to be different, a fun home for the kids to explore, and undoubtedly, KLD delivered.”

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ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The geometric tiles in the kids’ bedroom add a touch of fun. The ladder leading to the cosy nook on top of the wardrobe. The tiles in the main bathroom are from Best Tile.