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AHEAD OF THE CURVE

THINKING AHEAD,
ONE DOWNSIZER OPTED
FOR SIMPLE LUXURY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUTH MARIA MURPHY

When it comes to downsizing, you need to change mindset,” says interior designer Róisín Lafferty of Kingston Lafferty Design (KLD). “The worst thing to do is try and recreate a smaller version of what you had, it’s best to liberate yourself and start all over.”

This is exactly the approach adopted by Lafferty’s client Louise Phelan, former vice-president of PayPal, when she acquired a new pad in the snazzy Lansdowne Place development in the heart of Dublin 4. “I was drawn to the idea of living in an apartment after I visited a friend in London who was living on one floor in a Georgian house. It struck me as relaxed, like hotel living.” At the time, Phelan was making decisions about



In the living space, **TOP**, a mid-century modern serpentine sectional sofa from 1st Dibs, coffee table from Meridiani and custom brass side-tables by Moore O’Gorman. Looking through to the sun room, the Tulip marble table is by Saarinen and velvet chairs from the Contract Chair Company. **ABOVE** Kitchen by O’Connors Kitchens; Ellisse pendant by Federico Palazzari from Lost Weekend and oak and leather stools from the Contract Chair Company.



In the study, a Charles pull-out bed from Lost Weekend, marble coffee table from Amode and rug from Bushell Interiors.





ABOVE A Maison 55 poplar, faux-shagreen and brass writing desk from Houseology with Mies Van Der Rohe chair for Knoll from Vinterior. The 1950s Italian ball and brass floor lamp is also from Vinterior. **LEFT** A pair of mirrors from the owner's former house hang either side of the bed dressed in Foxford linens and throws. Layered sheers and curtains in dusty pink are by Mix & Match. **BELOW LEFT** The bathroom has an all-marble finish with ribbon mirror. **BELOW RIGHT** In the hall, a pink and white Murano chandelier from 1st Dibs, marble and brass console from Moore O'Gorman, and mirror from Rowell Interiors.

her career. "I took five months off and visited every five-star hotel in the country. I wanted to make a complete lifestyle change."

Introduced to the Lansdowne Place scheme at an early stage in its development, Phelan was attracted to the benefits and perks for residents. "The idea of having a concierge and 24-hour security appealed." Phelan acquired the apartment off the plans but it was only when she visited the site that she fully committed to downsizing. "It was immensely freeing - I really believed I was starting a new chapter."

Once Phelan made the decision to move in, Lafferty set to work. A scheme for the interior emerged, based on the strengths of the space, its ceiling-height glazed walls and sunny orientation, and Phelan's desire for a simple, feminine sense of luxury. With a beautiful shell to work with, Lafferty decided to major on restraint: "While we wanted it to be really light in terms of the palette, it was important it didn't become lifeless, so we chose materials and shapes that punctuated, rather than blended in."

The tone is set in the elegant hallway. Lafferty added a marble-tiled matwell, a floating console and a charming vintage pink and white Murano chandelier. In the open-plan living space, full-height hotel-quality voiles on the windows provide a translucent backdrop for a curved vintage Italian sofa, dusky blue velvet Artemis chairs, a silk rug and gleaming brass side tables that double as storage and display. A marble-topped Meridiani coffee table, a solid antidote to all the lightness, grounds the space, while a silk rug from Heal's, Kelly Wearstler wall lights and table lamps from Hicken Lighting, are feminine and sophisticated.

The internal balcony or sun room off the living space is used for dining and the second bedroom is furnished as an additional sitting room with a sofa bed for guests. Throughout, panelling and mirrors are used to add depth and a touch of classicism to the contemporary space. Phelan is delighted that she left the furnishings and objects she had lived with for years behind. "I wanted everything new and different. I left my house with what I stood up in."

As well as the comfort of her own space, there's the luxury of a gym, spa and resident's private dining room complete with chef under the same roof. "I don't have to worry about post or deliveries. There is a boardroom I can book for meetings, a dining room and chef so I can entertain. I ask guests to drinks in my place and then host dinner downstairs without having to worry about cooking or clearing up after ... I've just had my eight sisters to dinner; next I have to invite my nine brothers!" ■

