

March 2020

# Livingetc

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**LIVING ROOM**

'I adore this room,' says Maura. 'It's a snug space where you can curl up, listen to music, read or watch TV.'

Halabala **armchairs**, Atelier Caruso at Artemest. Teagan **stool**, Made Goods. **Walls in Copenhagen Blue** CP1033, Fleetwood Prestige. Italian Sputnik **chandelier** is a vintage find. Billiards **wall light**, Cuckooland.com



# boldly go

Maura McLaughlin's once magnolia Dublin abode is now a daring riot of colour and pattern that is pure joy

\* PHOTOGRAPHY Barbara Corsico  
WORDS Claudia Baillie



## home profile

## THE OWNER

**Maura McLaughlin, a corporate lawyer specialising in mergers and acquisitions.**

## THE PROPERTY

**A three-bedroom, three-bathroom Victorian semi-detached house in south Dublin. On the ground floor is an entrance hall, a living room, dining room and an open-plan kitchen and seating area that leads out onto the garden. There is also a utility room. On the first floor is a study and on the second floor is the master bedroom with en suite plus a further guest bedroom and a family bathroom. On the third floor is another bedroom with en suite.**

**I**t didn't really need any work, which is why everyone thought I was crazy,' laughs Maura McLaughlin as she describes how she decided to bathe her new home in vivid colour. The Victorian semi had been rented out for about 10 years, then decorated to sell, so the walls were magnolia, the floors were cream and the kitchen was plain white. 'It was all fine,' says Maura, 'but after years of looking for the right property it wasn't quite what I was after in the way of a home from a decorative point of view. After such a long wait, I wanted to make sure I created a house I really loved.'

Maura could see plenty of exciting possibilities in the four-storey, red-brick property that ticked so many other boxes. Located in a quiet, tree-lined street close to local shops, restaurants and a park, the house is only a mile from Dublin city centre. 'And all the neighbours know each other, which is lovely.' When it came to introducing a bold colour palette, Maura, who is a lawyer, knew she would need help. Quite by coincidence, one of her clients suggested she look at Dublin-based studio Kingston Lafferty Design. 'I had spent a while searching for someone I felt would relish the brief,' says Maura. 'And Roisin Lafferty and her team did. It was also attractive to me as a woman in business to hire another woman in business, so the female-led studio was the perfect choice.'

A keen traveller, Maura's brief for Roisin was heavily influenced by some of her favourite countries, including Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt. Another stipulation was that her collection of treasures and artwork picked up from expeditions would be woven into the schemes. 'Pastels and muted colours aren't my thing; I like bold shades, pattern, tiles and geometric shapes,' says Maura. 'The studio was able to take all the things I love,

which is a lot, and use them in the project. It has made this place feel very personal.'

Step into the once plain hallway and the walls are painted a high-sheen shade of aubergine. Move into the living room and the punchy palette continues, thanks to a bold blue wall, plum curtains and a multicoloured, chandelier. Bespoke cornflower blue panelling is given a playful twist with an unusual curved design, while in the adjoining dining room, the same panelling is a high-gloss royal blue. 'The room feels really glamorous,' says Maura, 'plus it creates an interplay with the glossy fireplace in the living room.'

The no-holds-barred approach continues in the kitchen, where dark-purple cabinetry is teamed with brass trims and topped with polished concrete, and a curved teal sofa and yellow armchairs sit on a circular marble 'rug'. One of the things Maura was keen to exploit, having lived in an apartment for so long, was the way the kitchen connects with the outdoors. So the newly designed garden with a plethora of colourful tiles is a favourite place. 'I come home from a day indoors and go outside with a cup of tea or a glass of wine.'

Upstairs, layers of green evoke a soothing atmosphere in the generous master bedroom, while a change to the original layout means the small fourth bedroom has been turned into a large en suite. 'Many people would think I'm mad having a bright-green, polished plaster bathroom,' says Maura. 'But all the good feelings from my travels are tied up in that aesthetic. To have something so indulgent and beautiful "just because" is such a luxurious thing that gives me a lot of pleasure. It's one of my favourite places in the house and has made it a truly wonderful place to live.'

Check out the work of the designers at [kingstonlaffertydesign.com](http://kingstonlaffertydesign.com)

## HALLWAY

'The rich, glossy paint reflects light, making the space feel really bright,' says Maura.

**Walls and woodwork in Aged Wine SW6299, Fleetwood Prestige. Nagano Sputnik chandelier, Mullan Lighting. Pouffe, Ferm Living. Josef Albers rug (on wall), Heal's. Moroccan encaustic floor tiles, Best Tile**

**KITCHEN DETAILS**

'I'd seen an aubergine kitchen in a house I'd viewed,' says Maura. 'It was so distinctive and something I wanted to emulate. When you switch on the lights, there's a wonderful twinkling effect as light bounces off the tiles.' The circular marble 'rug' (far right) defines the kitchen's living space and echoes the shape of the teal sofa.

Bespoke joinery, Moore & O'Gorman; painted in Farrow & Ball's Brinjal. Tilde pull handles, Alice Tacheny. Wall tiles, Mosaic del Sur. Custom marble floor tiles (far right), Rocca Stone



**DINING ROOM/LIVING ROOM DETAILS**

'Initially, the idea of panelling filled me with horror, but when Roisin showed me the curved design I was all for it,' says Maura. 'You can't place it in a particular era, so I feel it won't date.'

The circular brass shelving was a vintage find. The Betty dining table is from Made and was sprayed pink in a custom finish

**DINING ROOM**

'When you turn the lights on in the cabinets, the light shines through the reeded glass and gently illuminates the bottles,' says Maura. 'It feels glam without shouting "here's the bar!"'

Bombazine 7 light is by Där Lighting. Wall and cabinets in Farrow & Ball's Drawing Room Blue



“Roisin and her team encouraged me to do things that I wouldn't have dared to otherwise”

**HALLWAY**

A rug based on a Josef Albers modernist painting is used as artwork and ties in perfectly with the blue in the living room.

**Rug**, Heal's. **Pouffe**, Ferm Living. Moroccan encaustic **floor tiles**, Best Tile. **Walls** in Aged Wine SW6299 and Copenhagen Blue CP1033, both Fleetwood Prestige

**KITCHEN**

'The brass cabinet at the end of the worktop was originally going to be a wall,' says Maura, 'but we changed it to make the most of the garden view.'

Bespoke **joinery**, Moore & O'Gorman. The curved **sofa** (just seen) was made to order by Orior Furniture. Lalegno chevron **flooring**, Floor Design. **Tables**, Zara Home



## home truths

## IF YOU COULD GO ANYWHERE TOMORROW, WHERE WOULD IT BE?

Marrakesh. I love the colours, the architecture, the sounds and smells that all transport me a million miles away.

## FAVOURITE MUSIC TO LISTEN TO AT HOME?

Classic Motown. The Supremes, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, The Temptations - it's like listening to sunshine.

## THEATRE OR GIG?

Gig. I love it when a crowd gets swept up in the music and the whole venue comes alive with the energy.

## IF YOU WERE A PIECE OF CLOTHING WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Such a difficult question to answer! Hopefully a Hermès scarf - colourful, classy and comfortable to have around.

## BEST PLACE IN DUBLIN FOR A FUN NIGHT OUT?

No Name Bar pre- and post-dinner is a great place.

## GO-TO DINNER PARTY MENU?

Curries and casseroles. Anything that goes in the oven and lets you focus on the guests and not the cooking!

## MASTER BEDROOM

'Kingston Lafferty designed the headboard to wrap around the bed,' says Maura, 'which makes it feel cosy.'

**Headboard** made by Moore & O'Gorman. **Bed** with similar detail, HK Living. **Penelope bedside table**, West Elm. **Green light**, Anthropologie

## BEDROOM

'I had no idea what to do in this attic space,' says Maura. 'It was very plain and I doubted we'd be able to fit a bed in, but it has turned out to be amazing. Builders discovered the brick wall and Kingston Lafferty suggested we make a feature of it and add the amazing wallpaper to the walls and ceiling.'

The **wallpaper** is Color Field by Gio Pagani for Wall&Decò. **Reema bed**, Made. **Hexagonal crystal hanging lamp**, Out There Interiors

## SHOWER ROOM

Maura's love of Moroccan style is evident in the rich tile colours here.

**Tiles**, Mosaic del Sur. **Fired Earth** has similar **shower fittings**



## MASTER EN SUITE

'The bathroom makes grey Mondays so much easier,' says Maura. 'You get up and think, "This is pretty cool!"'

Eske **chandelier**, Mullan Lighting. **Disc and Sphere wall light**, Atelier Areti. **Bath and taps**, Crosswater at Versatile Bathrooms + Tiles. **Floor tiles**, Romanesque range by Original Style at Richardsons Ceramics

## LANDING

A rich blue wall colour provides a strong statement background for art and objects. **Walls** in Copenhagen Blue CP1033, Fleetwood Prestige

## PLANS

