

# All in the DETAIL

Bold colour, clever storage and an individual sense of style have created a sumptuous home in a small space

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**KITCHEN DINER**  
Oversized light fittings and bold artworks bring drama to the dining area. The walls are painted in Brooklyn Nights by Dulux and the table was a junk shop find that Geraldine painted white

**HOME PROFILE**  
**THE OWNER**  
Geraldine Apponyi, 29, who runs her own interior design company  
**THE PROPERTY**  
A one-bedroom flat in Ladbroke Grove, west London  
**PRICE** Approximately £500,000  
**MONEY SPENT** £40,000 to £50,000  
**WHAT IT'S WORTH NOW**  
Approximately £630,000

**ECLECTIC FURNITURE**  
A vintage telephone table, from Pimpernel and Partners, makes an ideal lamp table

**EXTERIOR**  
Original pillars either side of the door make for a grand entrance to the bijou apartment

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**HALLWAY**  
The bookcases, left by a previous owner, make fantastic use of the space. Geraldine painted the ladder, which came from a client who no longer wanted it, to match the shelves

After renting for almost three years, the time was right to buy my own home. I wanted to take on a challenge, experiment a bit and add my own style. I concentrated my search in the Ladbroke Grove area of London and looked at some lovely properties, but there was always a trade off. My budget was towards the lower end for the area, and I began to resign myself to the fact that it wasn't possible to get everything I wanted for a price I could afford. Then I found this flat, which needed a bit of work, but the basics were right for me. The area had a slightly run-down feel that I actually quite liked, and it also meant the flat might grow as an investment.

Most of the work was done before I moved in and I stayed with my mother while it was carried out. The door from the hallway to the living room was very close to the front door, so one of the first changes I made was to have it moved to the centre of the living room wall, raising its height to match the other internal doors and widening the opening to accommodate double doors. As a result, the hall, with its built-in bookcases, became much more a part of the living room. It helps to make the whole flat feel more spacious.

I'd worked with an excellent team of builders on past projects, so I hired them to work on the flat. And although I had a tight budget, I didn't skimp on carrying out structural changes, joinery, painting, decorating and electrical work. My mother, who was also my business partner for several years, always says that if the structure or the 'bones' of a space

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**STYLE TIP**  
Shutters are a good solution for a street-facing window in a Victorian home. They let light in, while offering privacy and are in keeping with the period of the property



**LIVING ROOM**  
(above) Geraldine replaced the old shutters with new ones from Shutter Logic. The purple sofa was an ex-display piece from the Artaba collection at MM Design London

**DINING DISPLAY**  
(far left) A fascinating mixture of accessories makes for a fun table centre. The milk churn belonged to Geraldine's grandmother and the purple tray was bought on a trip to Asia

**ROOM FOR GUESTS**  
(left) Lots of cosy cushions give this daybed a sumptuous feel to welcome overnight visitors. The whole bed lifts up to reveal concealed storage





**BEDROOM**  
(above) The bed base, like the one in the living room, opens up fully for additional storage. The paisley bedspread is a beautiful shawl, which Geraldine bought at a fair in Paris

aren't good it won't feel right. You can do a lot with decorating provided the structure is sound. Once the 'bones' of the flat were in good shape I set about changing almost everything else. The only thing that stayed was the bookcase – it was so wacky and wrong in both its design and construction, but at the same time worked so well. Lighting is another area that I didn't skimp on, as it's so important for atmosphere. I added recessed ceiling spot lights because of their strong architectural look – they really lift the scheme.

Despite the kitchen being the room that stood out for me when I first saw the flat, it wasn't in good shape and I had to replace the units. I thought that if I made the kitchen quite modern and painted the walls purple, the combination would really work. I chose an unusual purple shade because I wanted to

use the kitchen wall as a gallery for all the pictures and paintings I have from my artist friends and the colour works surprisingly well as a backdrop. I also wanted to set off my green and white Austrian china given to me by my grandmother.

This flat has been a fantastic way for me to experiment with ideas. What kept popping into my mind was that I wanted to create a home that felt like a little jewel box – elegant and warm, but at the same time a little quirky and unusual, and I love it. I just wish I could take it and expand it in size. My life has changed since I bought it and now includes a 6'4" boyfriend and a Rhodesian Ridgeback dog, who both need a little more space! But for now I'm holding onto my little jewel box and enjoying life here.

● **Contact Geraldine on 020 7751 0171 or email [info@mm-design.co.uk](mailto:info@mm-design.co.uk)**

*Create the look*  
*Team rich colours with classic designs for timeless glamour*



**LUXURIOUS LOOKS**  
Add colour with the Bluebell three-seater sofa in sloe pure cotton matt velvet, £1540, [sofa.com](http://sofa.com)

**INVESTMENT BUY**  
For a smart classic look, go for this Spring desk lamp in bronze finish brass, £142, Artisanti

**JEWEL SHADE**  
Add a bold finishing touch with this Absynthe velvet cushion, £30, Idyll Home



**CLOTHES STORAGE**  
Geraldine bought the Victorian steamer trunk from a junk shop in the United States. Its slim dimensions and built-in drawers make it ideal for the small room

**BATHROOM**  
(right) Transforming this space was a real challenge, as this tiny room was only big enough to fit in a shower, WC and basin. Geraldine chose inexpensive sanitaryware from Ikea, Bathstore and Victoria Plumb



FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE