

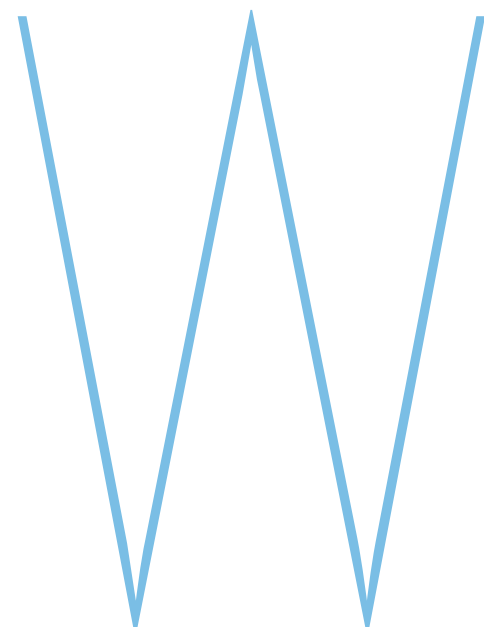
Restored, refreshed, revived

That goes for the pool as well as its lucky owners. Discover how a top-to-bottom refurb propelled this '60s villa out of the doldrums and into a much happier place

Photography ZAC and ZAC Words Malcolm Jack

DETAILS

What A 1960 four-bed villa
Where Glasgow suburbs
Interior design Chelsea McLaine



ondering how to better manage your wellness levels in the comfort of your own home? This revitalised contemporary villa just to the north of Glasgow has a whole department for that. On the ground floor to the rear, overlooking a garden that slopes down towards an enshrouding thicket of tall trees along the banks of a canal, is a sumptuous ten-metre-long indoor swimming pool. Imagine working off the stresses of the day with a few lengths, before melting into a healthy state of relaxation in the poolside sauna or jacuzzi – or just stretching out on a lounger, reading a book.

A “spa-like experience” had been requested by the owners, and Lorna Collins from Glasgow-based interior design studio Chelsea McLaine – mastermind of the whole-house makeover on behalf of her clients – gave it to them in full. “We used a lot of dark tiles, to make the pool area really moody and atmospheric, and to balance out the huge windows,” she explains. “The lighting is just gorgeous in the space. The owners love to go in there and just chill out for a bit. But it’s

also great for kids’ parties and for exercise. It fulfils a lot of different purposes.”

The pool was already there when Lorna’s clients bought the place in 2018, and not surprisingly it was a major selling point. Yet, like a lot of things about the property (a Cala build from the 1960s, extended two or three times since), it was in a tired state. As friends of Lorna’s, not to mention big admirers of her work, the new owners were keen to hire her for the full refurbishment project. But this was the designer’s first ever experience of doing up a swimming pool, and she admits she was thrown in at the deep end.

“We had to build a lot of new relationships and get to know all about pools and what they entail, particularly around working with moisture,” Lorna recalls. “For instance, for the wooden slats on the wall, we had to source specific timber that wouldn’t be affected by heat or dampness. The ceiling is made from stretched plastic, which is good for pool areas, but again was a new one for us. I’ve come to learn a lot about stretched ceilings!”

The pool area is reached from the main hallway, via changing rooms and shower facilities, just like a real spa. “As you enter the changing area, you feel you are in a completely different zone,” says the designer. When the weather’s fair, sliding doors open wide to connect the pool space to an elevated garden terrace that’s fully ▶

Previous pages The tiles on the walls, floor and jacuzzi are by Porcelanosa. The large-format tiles behind the jacuzzi had to be laser-cut into 10cm-wide strips to allow installation on the curved wall. The lanterns and lounge furniture are from Vincent Sheppard, and the cushion fabric is by Dedar and Pierre Frey. **Opposite** Accoya timber had to be specially sourced for the humid pool environment. It can be safely submerged in water and has a 50-year warranty. The wall lights and circular lights are by Flos



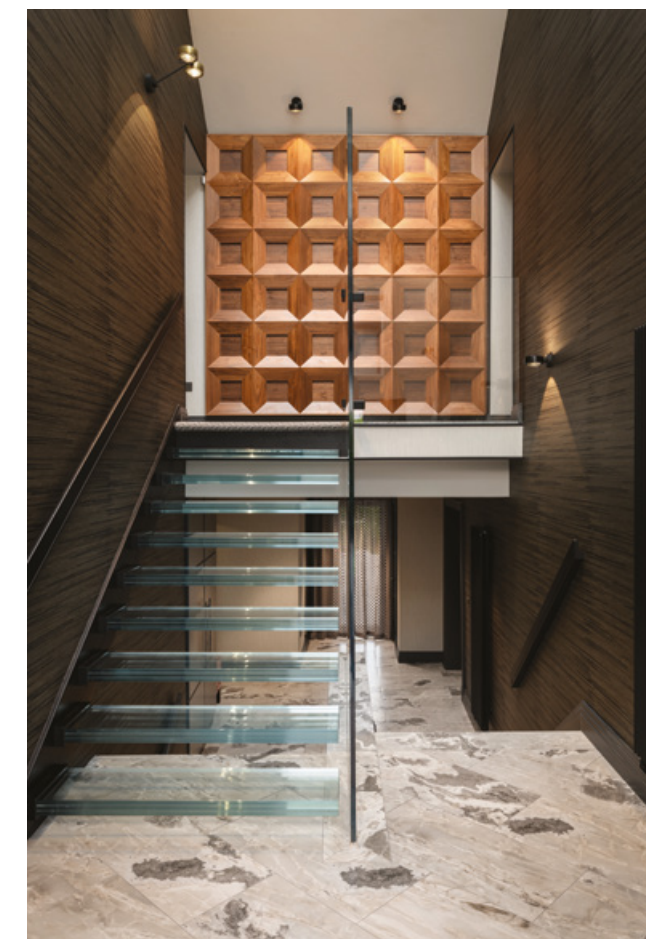
Below The huge lounge and cinema room has bespoke cabinetry by Atelier James, complete with Bang & Olufsen speakers. The massive rug was made bespoke by Ferreira De Sá. The wall lights are by Visual Comfort, the side tables on either side of the fireplace are by Eichholtz and the wallpaper is by Casamance. **Right** The glass staircase is the only thing that remained from the house under its previous owners. The walnut timber panel by Westend Cabinetmaker adds warmth, as does the bronze-toned wallpaper by Elitis. The lights are by Occhio



customised for big gatherings, with its covered outdoor kitchen and a seating area with a built-in fire-pit. “We were invited to a fireworks party here in November,” she smiles. “We sat out all evening with the canopy down, because the fire-pit gives enough heat. It’s amazing.”

A similar sense of sociability and low-key luxury pervades the rest of the house, which the clients more or less turned over to Lorna and her colleagues at Chelsea McInane for a year, moving out and leaving them to it. That level of trust is one of the reasons why Lorna believes the end product turned out so successfully. “They just let us go for it, which is a very difficult thing to do with your home,” she says. “But it meant we were able to be as creative as possible for them and look at every element and pull it all together cohesively.”

The brief she’d been given was a simple one: “They just knew they wanted it to have a real wow factor.” So how did she achieve it? Colours are largely muted and textures are mostly soft throughout, yet there is at least one feature in every room that pops out as a strong focal point. Take the kitchen, for instance: ▶





Above The first-floor living room was zoned to allow it to be used for different purposes. Deep tones of midnight-blue and bronze, with a touch of warm maroon and wine, were used to make it feel cosy and inviting despite its size. The frame of the Whitehead Designs sofa is covered in a GP&J Baker velvet, with Black Edition cut-velvet cushions. The rest of the cushions are a mixture of Casamance, Zimmer & Rohde and Osborne & Little. The stools are by Charlotte James



the countertops are veined granite, with deep, dreamy, almost aquatic patterns. “The clients took particular interest in getting this just right,” says Lorna. “We hunted high and low for the perfect stone, visiting lots of different suppliers around the country.”

The metal screen that separates the kitchen from the TV snug is another example of eye-catching detail. “It’s a bespoke piece, crafted by a company that makes metal furniture for us. I think it works really well, because it creates a visual divide between the

kitchen and living area without being a complete barrier. We’re really proud of it.”

On the first floor, above the dining-kitchen, is an extended living room and home cinema. The space is centred around two stand-out features: a big screen and a fireplace, both built into the same custom-made cabinet; and a brightly patterned rug so massive it had to be delivered via scaffolding through one of the Velux roof windows.

The cinematic experience is enhanced by the big screen. The cabinetry has been designed to frame the TV, which sits above the large gas fire and is flanked by a pair of sculptural speakers. Alongside is a generous open display area with incorporated lighting and an antiqued-mirror backing. The cabinetmaker skilfully inlaid brass strips to the timber face, arranging the wooden sections in different directions to show off the grain and add interest and depth. ▶

Left The bar, designed by Chelsea McLaine and manufactured by Atelier James, houses two wine fridges. The curtains have Lutron electronic controls.

Middle The table in the kitchen’s dining area is by Cattelan Italia. The Charlotte James chairs are upholstered in a Nobilis fabric with seats in a faux leather by Designers Guild. The painting is by Gordon Wilson. **Right** The middle doors of this unit open up fully and slide back into the cabinetry, housing a pantry area and coffee machine. It was manufactured by Peter Thompson of York to a design by Chelsea McLaine. The large feature handles are by Henry Blake

Below The fully bespoke kitchen is by Peter Thompson of York. A veined granite worktop was chosen because it has the “wow factor” of marble, but is more robust and less liable to stain. The sofa by Whitehead Designs is upholstered in faux leather from Designers Guild, a Larsen fabric for the seat cushions and a Nina Campbell fabric for the back cushions. The rug is by William Yeoward, the lamps are by Visual Comfort and the side tables are from Eichholtz. The sitting area’s cabinetry is by Atelier James



“The rug, with its hand-selected colours, was manufactured for us in Portugal to fit into a tiled surround. It’s ginormous, about eight metres by six metres – bigger than the footprint of some rooms alone. It’s extremely luxe.”

The master bedroom suite inhabits a space used by previous owners as a home gym. The Chelsea Mclaine team stripped it right back to the walls, opened up the ceiling and added skylights for more natural illumination, then reimagined the room as an enveloping sanctuary. There’s a dressing area with built-in wardrobes, a lavish en-suite bathroom, and a seating area at the

foot of the bed that looks out to the garden through tall glazed balconette doors.

This is the clients’ “tranquil spot” in the house, says Lorna. “When we started to design this space, we didn’t want to take away any of the room’s feeling of grandeur – it’s on a pretty big scale and has interesting high angled ceilings. We glazed the upper areas of the en-suite partition in bronze glass to allow the full height of the ceiling to be enjoyed from every area of the room.”

One half of the couple travels a lot for work, but has been making a concerted effort to do so less since the brand-new ▶



Above The divider screen (just visible above the sink) was made by Tom Faulkner to a bespoke design by Chelsea Mclaine. It separates the kitchen and living room, without creating a solid barrier. The stools are by Andrew Martin, recovered in Designers Guild’s faux leather. Gaggenau appliances, CTO wall lights and a ‘wine wall’ requested by the client complete the look. **Opposite, top row** This house is all about the incredible details. Handles by Turnstyle Designs; bespoke shelves in the pool changing area; Porta Romana wall lights in the master en-suite. **Middle row** Metal mosaic tiles by Porcelanosa on the breakfast bar; Flos lights in the pool; the bar’s worktop is Sensa by Cosentino. **Bottom row** A display drawer in the master bedroom’s dressing area; Dedar outdoor fabric on the bench and agate-effect tiles add luxury to the pool changing room; the dressing table was made bespoke by Peter Thompson of York



This page and opposite The master bedroom suite is big enough for a sitting area, a dressing area and an en-suite bathroom. It's a vast space, but it still feels warm and welcoming thanks to the tactile surfaces, layered fabrics and subdued lighting (the lights are a mixture of Heathfield, Occhio and Visual Comfort designs). The bed and headboard are from Robinsons Beds, the side tables are by Julian Chichester and the wardrobe area is by Peter Thompson of York. The wallpaper is from Nobilis and Casamance



“The owners moved out and just let us go for it, which is a very difficult thing to do with your home. But it meant we could be as creative as possible and look at every element and pull it all together cohesively”



Above The patio has a built-in fire-pit and seating area. An electric awning comes out over the seating area. The covered barbecue kitchen area is well equipped, with outdoor fridges and even a TV. **Right** The pivot front door was constructed from slate and has an illuminated handle. The window above it was added to allow more light into the hallway

deluxe bedroom was completed. “That’s often the case with our clients,” Lorna smiles. “Once you have your dream home, spending time there becomes your priority.”

Did the Chelsea McLaine team bring the wow? A message from the owners after their first walk around the house once work was finished suggests ‘wow’ might not even be strong enough a word. “The emotion is just overwhelming,” it read. “We are completely blown away.”

Were those ringing words of endorsement not reward enough for Lorna and the team, they have enjoyed seeing their clients make the most of everything their new home has to offer. This is a home to be lived in and enjoyed for many years to come. ■

