



# AULD & NEW ALLIANCE

PARIS MEETS GLASGOW IN A CHIC AND STYLISH  
APARTMENT IN THE WEST END

Photography Susie Lowe Words Catherine Coyle

**I**nspiration can be found in the most unexpected places. This glamorous interior, in a townhouse in one of Glasgow's most sought-after streets, is proof of that: its design concept first sparked into life in an airport lounge. The owner, killing time between flights on a business trip, was leafing through an airline magazine when his eye fell on a feature about Parisian apartments.

"He kept those pages and brought them with him to our initial consultation," recalls Margot Paton, design director at Chelsea McLaine. "And, from the moment we stepped into the property and experienced its grand proportions, original features and beautiful windows first hand, we could see why those images had struck a chord with him – the flat really did have the feeling of a Parisian apartment. Even the little balcony outside the kitchen window, complete with wrought-iron balustrade, made it seem like we could almost be in the French capital."

The two-bedroom apartment in the west end was bought as a second home, a place where its owners, a sophisticated couple with elegant tastes, could come at weekends to socialise, entertain and spend time with their extended family, particularly their grandchildren. A decision was made early on that the drawing room should be a real showstopper. It would function as a combined living, dining and kitchen space, with a distinct focus on luxury. Chelsea McLaine designers Amber Wiseman and Tracy Sifaoui, who led the project, had to tweak the floorplan to suit the proposed concept, changing the layout to improve the balance of the room. "The property is B-listed and dates from around 1880," says Paton. "It was converted 40 years ago, and there was no need for any planning permission for our alterations."

In reorganising the layout, the designers took heed of the grand proportions in this classically Victorian drawing room. An off-the-shelf kitchen wouldn't have worked here, as the scale of ▶



**[Above]** The kitchen and dining area enjoy plenty of natural light. AEG appliances and a Blanco sink and tap keep things simple and streamlined. A banquette, upholstered in Métaphores' Massai Tempete fabric, has been built into the island, complementing the ILP Azzurro leather on the seat and the dining chairs. The Julian Chichester Dakota dining table base has a bespoke glass top.

**[Previous pages, clockwise from top left]** Subtle detailing and a pared-back palette is what sets this property apart. Accents include accessories from a range at Chelsea McLaine; a close-up of the metalwork on the Julian Chichester Abbado media cabinet; Zoffany's rich velvet is offset by a Greek key motif; the walls of the living area are covered with Arte's Signature vinyl



**DETAILS**

**What** A two-bedroom apartment  
**Where** West end of Glasgow  
**Interior designer** Amber Wiseman and Tracy Sifaoui at Chelsea McLaine



the room is just too overpowering. In any case, the owners were seeking something that would make an impact and offer longevity and style. “We used a British trade supplier and added bespoke elements,” says Paton. “It gave us something unique and interesting that really complements the room.”

With this being a second home, there was less need for storage, which meant there was space for statement elements such as a tailor-made wine rack. A hand-crafted, foxed-glass mirror sits where a run-of-the-mill splashback might traditionally go.

“During the reconfiguration work, we found that waste from the kitchen sink was being pumped up, rather than down, attempting to defy gravity,” recalls the designer. “We came up with a scheme where we could lead the services to the island

by concealing hot and cold supplies and drainage behind the original skirtings.”

Little touches that might go unnoticed by the untrained eye elevate this property to a genuinely luxurious pied-à-terre. The herringbone oak flooring, for instance, has been laid so that it runs the length of the hall and into the living area (each individual board installed by hand), giving an effortless feeling of continuity. The handmade Spanish rug, meanwhile, hasn’t simply been put down on top; it has been inset into the floor, effectively sunk into the boards to prevent tripping or movement underfoot. A specialist cabinetmaker was flown from Latvia to Scotland to do this job.

Such practical considerations were deployed throughout. “We were conscious of the heating in a property of such



epic proportions, especially since we knew the owners aren't always here," recalls Paton. "So we installed six radiators, from MHS, to balance the heat on both sides of this room. They're contemporary in style and have a great output."

Similarly, with the lighting, six different circuits have been installed in the open-plan space, to allow a range of different lighting options in the various zones. To cope with such high ceilings, pendants had to be dropped low or replaced with wall lights. There are Estiluz black and gold wall lights above the kitchen, as well as pendants above the island. "We also fitted these with integral LED lamps which never need to be changed and are cost effective to run and better for the planet."

The area around the bay window encapsulates the Parisian aesthetic that led the design scheme; the chairs ▶

**[Left]** A sofa by Edinburgh furniture firm Charlotte James is covered in Zoffany's neutral but hard-wearing Atticus textile. The cushion fabrics are by Zoffany, Osborne & Little and Dedar.

**[Middle]** Distinct zones were created in the open-plan space through the lighting design and the positioning of the furniture; here, the bay window acts almost as a separate seating area. The rug has been inlaid on the herringbone floor, to prevent 'squinting' and trips.

**[Right]** A handmade antiqued glass mirror serves as a splashback, giving the illusion of space and making the kitchen feel furnished rather than fitted

[Below] Small changes were made to customise the bathroom, such as changing the tile grouting from white to grey, painting the skirtings a shade of Victorian purple, and hanging a textured, palm-patterned Arte wallpaper on the opposing wall, so it can be reflected in the mirror. [Right] There is quality in the smallest details, like this piece of architectural ironmongery. [Opposite] The master bedroom has an oversized Heathfield ceiling pendant and Jane Churchill wallpaper in a muted tone. The headboard, in Coco Tweed by Nobilis, was made bespoke by the cabinetmakers at Charlotte James



here are upholstered in Jim Thompson’s Holden fabric, and the variegated nickel media unit (Julian Chichester’s Abbado design) gleams in the light from the floor-to-ceiling windows. The concentric circles on the metallic cabinet doors tie in with the Greek key pattern elsewhere in the apartment, part of a classical thread that runs through the property.

The master bedroom is as sumptuous as any five-star hotel suite. The colour palette is neutral but textures, such as the Nobilis tweed of the headboard, bring it to life. The contrast with the sumptuous bedspread and curtains (both Larsen fabrics) accentuates the beauty and richness of each.

The guest bedroom pulls off a difficult trick – it has been decorated to suit the owners’ grandchildren, but in a mature and versatile way so it isn’t simply a ‘kids’ room’. Zimmer + Rohde’s Onda wallpaper provides a sophisticated backdrop, with Camengo’s Memphis fabric for the curtains injecting a kick of colour. “The fitted wardrobes were already here,” says Paton, “but we added mirrored panelling to increase the amount of light and to give the illusion of space.”

The views from the bedrooms might be of a leafy back green rather than the rooftops of old Montmartre, but there’s no doubting this apartment has a certain *je ne sais quoi*. That’s all down to the quality, both of the design and ▶

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**[Left]** Colour highlights in the guest room include this tailormade headboard, covered in a teal Kate Spade fabric. **[Below]** A close-up of the Camengo Memphis curtains shows the pattern is similar to the Greek key found elsewhere in the apartment, giving understated unity to the overall design concept



the workmanship, from the tactile finishes to the bespoke elements that give this home an enviable air of charm and chic individuality.

A lot of this success is down to the clients' approach. "They were wonderful to work with because they put their trust in us," says Paton. "That allowed us to see our design concept through from beginning to end. And they were able to relax in the knowledge that since every single element would be done by us, all the boxes would be ticked and every detail ironed out.

"In fact, the only thing they bought themselves was the television. It has been really satisfying; they were very accepting of what we, as professionals, were offering. They trusted us to do the job we'd been brought in to do." ■