

MOVE



When searching for a new home with her husband, Andrew Frazer, the interior designer Moya Farrell of Avenue Interior Design knew she wanted a project. When a 1930s terraced home in Blackrock, Dublin, went on the market, they knew it was the one.

"We were looking for six months. I didn't want to buy a new-build given the nature of what I do. My style would never suit that," Farrell says. "We viewed mostly doer-uppers – some needing lots of work. But this one had a massive advantage in that the previous owners had planning permission for the additional bedroom.

"I was pregnant with my daughter, my second child, at the time, so we knew we were going to need the fourth bedroom. I didn't initially think we'd do a full extension, but to get the bedroom we had to knock down and rebuild a structural wall, so if we were going to do it, we were going to do it right."

It took a year of work from getting the keys to moving in. There was a lot of pressure, with a young family and a growing business to take care of, but Farrell found the journey eye-opening.

"My daughter was born in the middle of when we were on site. It was so busy having two tiny kids. But that's what most of my clients are going through – having young children or running businesses or having demanding jobs. They're time-poor. That's real life.

"It was a good exercise for me as an interior design business owner to be the client and understand what it feels like to go through the process. I never doubted the value of design, but for me it reinforced how much detail and time you have to put into everything."

As tends to happen, surprises cropped up along the way, but overall the project went smoothly. "It's definitely harder doing your own house. I definitely felt some pressure. But it was so exciting to be doing it for ourselves, because I was going in armed with a little bit of knowledge and I had been doing it for other people for over ten years," Farrell says.

"I wanted something that was relaxed and refined, and to maintain the original charm as much as possible. I would describe myself as having a luxurious

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When an interior designer is on the

other side

After house-hunting for six months, Moya Farrell bought this 1930s terrace in Blackrock, which had planning permission for the fourth bedroom she needed

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OFFICE



After a decade of transforming other people's homes, Moya Farrell felt the pressure to get her own place right. She shares her style secrets with *Róisín Healy*

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interiors style, but that means different things to different people. For me it's a comfortable luxury; it's what hotels get so right."
After they got married Farrell and Frazer visited Gregans Castle Hotel in Co Clare for a mini-moon. Its homely feel inspired Farrell's vision for this house.
With two small children, storage was essential, so the space under the stairs was transformed into two cupboards with discreet push-to-open doors – one for laundry and the other for buggy storage, which Farrell plans to use as wine storage in future.
The colour palette for the home combines neutrals with soft shades inspired by nature, including earthy greens and dusky pinks. When studying interior design Farrell attended a workshop with the paint company Colourtrend and was impressed with the quality of paint, the range of colours and the customer service.
The rich, dark timber floor provides a

beautiful contrast, while soft furnishings in botanical motifs and linen are used throughout the home. The sofa in the front room was covered in linen fabric by Alhambra, paired with Clarke & Clarke embroidered linen for the curtains. She used Lewis & Wood fabric for the curtains in the principal bedroom and her daughter's room, and a striped Alhambra fabric for her son's room.
"I had a high benchmark for some elements of the project, and I definitely delayed things if we weren't able to do it to the quality I wanted. That's the hard part about working in the industry; you know what the shortcuts are and you know what's going to last," Farrell says.
"With curtains I tend to do an interlining and a fleece lining for added warmth and a sense of luxury. We had to furnish the whole house but we did re-cover an existing couch with fabric by Ian Mankin, and I was able to source a few antiques too."
Farrell picked up lamps and cushions from the Dublin store Hedgeroe Home.

Top: linen fabric and botanical prints contrast with the dark timber floor; the colour palette combines neutrals and nature-inspired shades. Above: the kitchen is by Mooneys Kitchens in Co Meath. Right: panelling in the guest bedroom



“It's all kind of ad hoc but I like that. It feels like it has come together”

Clockwise from left: the dining table Farrell inherited from her grandmother; the walk-in pantry; salvaged furniture and framed prints

She also recommends focusing on beautiful framing to enhance inexpensive pieces of art. Farrell was able to restore salvage pieces in Dublin, such as the cast-iron bath and the fireplace from E&A Reclamation in Ballymena.
"Auctions are my new addiction. I find Herman's really good. I've got a couple of occasion pieces like armchairs and side tables. You can just get them reupholstered. It's lovely that there's a story to it."
"I also inherited my granny's dining table. We weren't sure it was going to suit, and when we brought it to the house and put it with our wishbone chairs, it was the table that was amazing. So the chairs had to go. It's all kind of ad hoc but I like that. It feels like it has come together."
The kitchen is her favourite space as it's where the family spend most of their time. The French doors are by J&K Dungan Joinery and the kitchen is by Mooneys Kitchens in Co Meath, with Corston Architectural Detail handles. The marble, by Leinster Stone, is a standout feature.

"When you're buying stone it comes as a slab. I knew we'd have offcuts, so I was able to use those to create the windowsills in the kitchen and the two bathrooms, and create a countertop for the vanity we had made for the family bathroom," Farrell says.
"I always recommend to clients that they make use of the stone, and it's lovely to echo the detail throughout the house. It takes maintenance and you have to accept that there will be marks and scuffs, but the natural beauty makes up for it."
Work on their home and garden is complete. Farrell shared updates on the project with her followers on Instagram (@avenueinteriordesign.ie). This resulted in an influx of clients whose style tastes are aligned with Farrell's.
"We had the pleasure of working with the influencer Jodie Wood on her home, and as a small business it was an amazing backing. When someone like her puts her trust in you it's the ultimate compliment."
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