

CSW

'MADE IN ITALY': ITALIA AND PARTNERS INTRODUCE TWO NEW ITALIAN DESIGN INSPIRED RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS IN LONDON



Two apartments in Victorian buildings, but each with their own characteristics. Two different projects with a common goal: to reinterpret and redefine existing spaces to make them usable and functional, as well as having a big visual impact.

One project involved the addition of a second bedroom and a kitchen that was separate from the living room. The other project redistributed the space and transformed a critical element – the staircase – into a striking focal point.

Both projects, in the heart of London, were the brainchild of [Italia and Partners](#), a Turin-based architectural firm operating in Italy and abroad.

The renovation and interior design project was at an apartment building in Wetherby Gardens, in the beautiful neighbourhood of South Kensington.

Measuring almost 65 square metres, the apartment had a large living area with a corner kitchen accessed through a small, dark, oppressive entrance hall that also led to the only bedroom, where the bathroom was located.

The main design challenges were to change the existing set-up, which was decidedly impractical, add a second bedroom and separate the kitchen. The result was exactly what the clients had been hoping for.



First of all the hall was removed to create a usable area in the entrance and let more light into the entire property. The kitchen was moved to the centre of the building and separated by full-height Rimadesio sliding doors that can close off the two rooms when necessary yet still create a more open space.

Other additions were a second bedroom/office, a corridor leading to the main bedroom, with a wide terrace overlooking the gardens that give the streets its name, and the bathroom (removing the need to access it via one of the bedrooms). A custom bookcase/cupboard, containing all of the property's technical equipment, and a storage closet were designed for the corridor to optimise the use of the space.

The bathroom is kitted out with Fantini Rubinetterie products and decorated with Carrara marble from design company Salvatori: on the walls with a matt finish, while inside the shower and behind the toilet with a chevron pattern to match the oak herringbone flooring throughout the entire apartment.

The bedrooms use Spin doors by Rimadesio while the living area uses Lualdi pocket doors and the Soho sliding door, also by Rimadesio.

Great importance has been placed on the lighting design, one of Italia and Partners' distinctive traits. The lights have been inserted into four-cm-wide grooves set into the ceiling which, in the living area, criss-cross to form a decorative element, while in the corridor and bathroom they form straight lines. The bathroom also features Juncos spotlights by Flos.

The cappuccino oak flooring sits alongside heat-treated oak furniture, which was custom made for Italia and Partners for the bathroom, second bedroom and corridor. The wardrobes have been lacquered to lighten the overall look, while the walls have been left neutral so that the furniture and paintings take centre stage.



As for the furniture, the table and dresser are by Rimadesio, the chairs by Bonaldo and the bright blue velvet sofa by Lema, while the kitchen is Modulnova.

Everything is therefore “made in Italy,” both in terms of the materials and the workforce who took part in the project, guaranteeing an excellent level of finish. The only item produced by a British company is the brass and glass table lamp.

“For me, elegance and plainness are the guiding thread and also the final result we wanted to accomplish within the various rooms, where classic materials such as wood and marble are juxtaposed with modern ones such as smoked glass and very technical lighting,” says architect Matteo Italia.

Many of the Italia and Partners’ distinctive traits can also be seen in the Collingham Place project in Earls Court, Chelsea.

The property originally measured 75 square metres and was spread out over three floors, but the owners needed another bathroom on the same floor as the living area and a different layout to sort out the height difference between the kitchen and the living room.

“We created two-sided recesses that are integrated into two shelves in the kitchen to resolve the problem of the different height levels,” explains Matteo Italia, *“and we added a bioethanol fireplace on the living room side.”*

The entrance hall is completely open so that the living area feels wider and the wonderful existing windows can be truly enjoyed.

The staircase, which was previously carpeted, is now covered with wood in the same flooring finish, taking an essential, functional part of the house and placing it centre stage for a great impact. To add style to the scheme, black lacquered handrails were designed to match the rectangles of the false ceiling, with strip LEDs inside.

On the top floor, the master bedroom has been enriched with a walk-in wardrobe while the bathroom was given its very own personality thanks to the black and white tiles from Mutina's Puzzle collection and the black fittings, such as the resin-topped Cielo basin stand.

For heating, the bathroom uses a Rift radiator by Tubes.

Some of the property's existing wooden doors were restored to create continuity with the original building, while in other places Lualdi flush doors were added.

This project too placed a heavy emphasis on the lighting design, which is quintessential of Italia and Partners. Laser Blade lights by iGuzzini were fitted inside the black rectangular false ceilings that run throughout the house, alternating asymmetrically to form a decorative element.

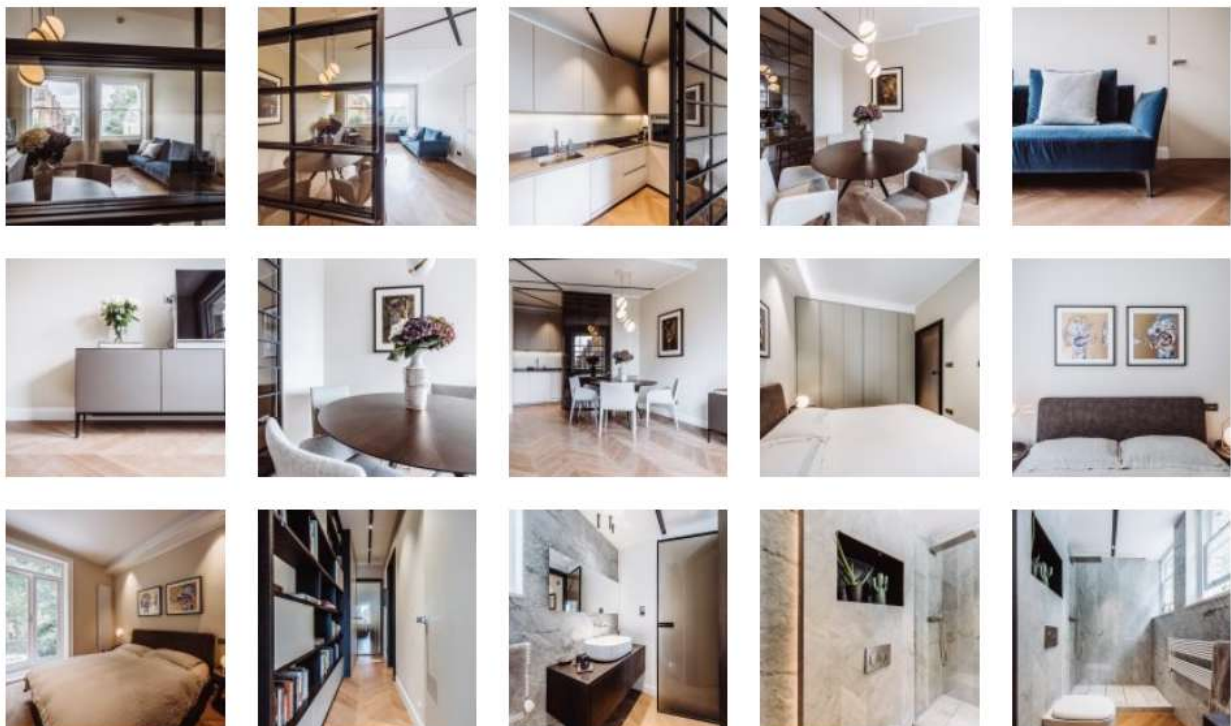
The flooring throughout the house is grey oak in a herringbone effect on the ground floor and a running bond pattern on the upper floor.

In the living space, alongside artworks by Roy Lichtenstein, Walter Valentini and the property owner himself, there are several design icons, from the Arco floor lamp by Castiglioni to the Eames Lounge Chair, the AX table by Bonaldo, the Lema chairs, the String Light by Flos, the Jardin d'Osier wallpaper by Hermès and the custom-made TV stand and sofa.

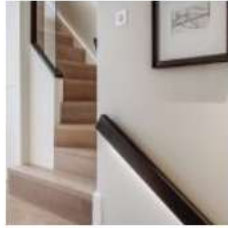
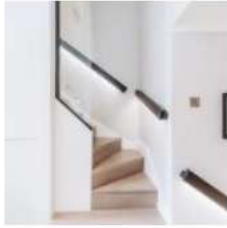
"Inside the home we used only Italian materials and furnishings", says Matteo Italia.

"Most of the furniture was designed by us and made by an artisan carpenter in order to achieve the very best quality."

South Kensington



Collingham Place



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