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INTERIOR DESIGN

European *flair*

The interior of a farmhouse has been remodelled to achieve the luxury of a five-star hotel, whilst retaining its cosy charm.

When Mila Podiablonska was commissioned to renovate a country farmhouse in Belgium for a successful young businessman, her brief was simple: to create the level of luxury found in top city hotels, whilst retaining the comfort, homely nature and character of the farmhouse. Mila opened up the series of dark pokey rooms to make space suitable for entertaining, using high quality natural materials and incorporating real fireplaces.

The exterior improvements also needed to be sympathetic to the surrounding buildings which in many cases were much older properties, with some dating from the 15th century.

The farmhouse was rooted in a conventional countryside context and had been untouched for many years. Mila embraced the idea of revisiting these elements to make them more relevant to modern living with a marriage between the old and new, retaining aspects of a classic interior combined with modern finishes and the choice of furniture balanced with the wooden beams.

The rear wall of the property was extended outwards to create more space for a larger kitchen, including a 14m-long floor-to-ceiling glass wall, running the entire width of the house. This improves the natural light in the living room, kitchen and diner and at the same time frames a spectacular view of the gardens.



Mila Podiablonska has rapidly built up her interior design business acquiring international clients with a taste for elegance and quality design.

After starting her business in Ukraine, she came to London to study interior design and gained her design diploma with Kelly Hoppen. This is where she learnt how to add symmetry and balance to a space and combine a neutral colour pallet and textural contrast to create elegant and timeless interiors.

Mila's primary objective is that her clients love the look and feel of their surroundings, believing that good design starts and ends by incorporating their needs into a functional, comfortable environment. She encourages the clients' participation throughout the whole design process. (absoluteinteriordesign.com)





The heating and electrical systems were upgraded and a Domotica home automation system was installed to control the heating, interior and exterior lighting, window blinds and sheers, which can all be operated and adjusted remotely from the screen of a smartphone or tablet.

Every square metre of the space has been considered with a carefully designed lighting plan to provide a number of circuits to satisfy





different requirements and purposes throughout the property. Mila says: "Low-level lighting is an important consideration for me in creating the right ambience, and in highlighting art, accessories, texture of the furniture and character of the walls. Each of the circuits can be individually dimmed or brightened and can offer many different effects and moods at any given time."

An element of glamour has been introduced with large black shaded chandeliers over the dining table, and black has been used elsewhere throughout the scheme.

An understanding of how people will move through the space was essential, and in this instance the natural flow of the zones works well for day-to-day living.

Each zone has sufficient space; from the raised living area, steps lead down a beautiful wide naturally lit corridor flanked by the glass wall and garden views, to the open-plan kitchen and lounge area, which creates a welcoming social hub, and is perfect for an evening relaxing by the fireplace.

SHOPPING LIST

Windows and doors Weru GmbH: weru.com

Marble floor tiles Impermo, Belgium: impermo.com

Silk rugs The Rug Company: therugcompany.com

Oak wooden floor Gerko Parket: gerkoparket.be

Sheers Sacho Hesslein: sacho.de

Lighting SLV Lighting Direct: slvlighting.com

Home automation Domotica: e-domotica.com