



Clockwise, from top left: Carefully chosen accessories in the drawing room; the entrance hall's impressive cantilevered marble staircase; earthy tones add warmth to one of the guest bedrooms





**BRIGITTA SPINNOCHIA TAKES THE CREDIT** for designing this penthouse apartment in Lowndes Square, just a stone's throw from the lure of Knightsbridge's top-end retail therapy offerings. Brigitta is part of Candy & Candy, the property team responsible for some of the most chic, and the most expensive, homes across the capital. 'I joined when the company first started six years ago, and have been lucky enough to help design and furnish a fabulous array of properties in Belgravia, Mayfair and Knightsbridge,' she says.

This double-height apartment is one of her favourites. Working with an architect, Brigitta has turned what were originally two single-storey flats with a warren of small, pokey rooms, into one exceptional living space. 'The biggest hurdle was a lack of natural daylight. We had to reconfigure the space to create larger, light-filled rooms that would work for family life as well as for entertaining large numbers of people,' she explains, leading us into the hall via a private lift.

This sensational entrance lobby is the nucleus of the apartment, with bedrooms and living rooms radiating from it. It's a remarkable space, with stone-effect Venetian plaster walls, a marble floor and a Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired stained-glass skylight. Not many lobbies have this much wow-factor, especially when they're in a flat.

A lover of all things Art Deco, Brigitta kept the period clearly in mind as she drafted her designs and has cleverly incorporated key pieces and influences from the 1920s and 1930s to great effect. The result is a successful blend of sumptuous entertaining and living rooms, complete with Art Deco-style moulded ceilings, elegant furnishings and beautiful accessories that reflect the sophistication of that age.

The drawing room carries off the look effortlessly. Previously three smaller rooms, it's now flooded with light from three floor-to-ceiling windows. The inlaid oak floor is covered with a bold geometric rug by legendary 1930s designer, Eileen Gray. A selection of tub chairs, cosy two-seater couches and a huge, low-slung Christian Liagre sofa fill the space. 'It was a nightmare getting the furniture up here,' admits Brigitta. 'The sofa's three and a half metres long and had to be craned through a window.'

The details are exquisite: raw plaster walls; finest silk cushions festooned in tiny beads; and glass vases and vessels >

**BRIGITTA SPINNOCHIA'S FAVOURITE PLACES TO SHOP:**

**Spina, 12 Kingsgate Place, NW6, tel: (020) 7328 5274, www.spinadesign.co.uk**

A superb collection of stunning contemporary accessories, including sumptuous curtain tie-backs, footstools and fringing. This place really does sell bespoke jewellery for the home.

**Valerie Wade, 108 Fulham Road, SW3, tel: (020) 7225 1414, www.valeriewade.com**

Valerie Wade specialises in both antique and modern furniture, and accessories, including art and glassware. Particularly delectable are her jewel boxes and scent bottles.

**Gallery 25, 26 Pimlico Road, SW1, tel: (020) 7730 7516**

An extensive range of decorative furnishings, arts and lighting from 1900-1950. The owner is incredibly knowledgeable and tells amazing stories about each piece and where he found it.

**LOUNGE (LONDON) LTD, 9 Mapesbury Road, NW2, tel: (020) 8931 6649, www.loungeonline.net**

Marian Cotterill is the talented interiors stylist behind Lounge London. In store are reproductions of Florence Broadhurst's stunning hand-printed wallpapers from her 1920s Art Deco designs to her 1970s funky flock styles.

**Alma Home, 8 Vigo Street, W1, tel: (020) 7439 0925, www.almahome.co.uk**

Alma Home provides a fabulous range of leather furniture and accessories. The shop team combine traditional expertise with cutting-edge techniques and are passionate about leather. They also do special commissions.







'Music systems, underfloor heating and lighting are all controlled by computer'



grouped for dramatic affect in alcoves. It's luxurious and very liveable.

The master bedroom is a soothing yet sophisticated space, with creamy white carpet springing underfoot, delicate hand-painted chinoiserie wallpaper by de Gournay and a glamorous dressing table, circa 1940, echoing Hollywood's golden era. Accessories include beautiful crystal and silver lamps and a daring dressing-table chair, upholstered in zebra skin. To ensure the simple lines of the room were not disturbed, Brigitta designed bespoke, suede-panelled cupboards to house her client's expansive wardrobe.

'Storage is such a big issue, she says. 'Some of my clients have 200 pairs of shoes, 300 belts, 150 pairs of sunglasses that all have to go somewhere. Further questioning reveals the minute detail that's required to ensure Brigitta fulfils each brief successfully. 'It's essential to discuss precisely how a client likes his belts to be stored - coiled or hung? Will socks be balled or folded? Will sunglasses be in or out of their cases? Some of my Russian clients require fur fridges to keep their fur coats in tip-top condition. All these things affect exactly what type of storage will be most suitable.

Storage aside, the smooth running of this apartment is also due to its state-of-the-art technology. Plasma televisions, music systems, underfloor heating and lighting are all controlled by an electronic keypad/computer.

'It's incredibly hi-tech, she says. 'Take the lights, for example. One touch of a button and you can create different mood settings for different times of the day.

Intelligent mirrors are another popular device. They photograph you from every angle, so next time you're going to a film premiere or an important event, you can flick back and see what you wore last time. It's all very James Bond.

The guest bedrooms are sumptuous, too. One has silk panels at the windows instead of curtains, which when closed display two elaborate golden peacocks. Another has an Art Deco style en-suite bathroom, its mirrored units framed by antique brown marble.

In the dining room, Brigitta has chosen American oak flooring, inlaid with an Art Deco starburst design. She even had the corners of the room rounded off to make the room cosier. The statement piece here is a Baccarat chandelier that glitters above the dining table.

However Brigitta's star turn must be the dramatic staircase in the main hall. This cantilevered marble structure is a feat of modern engineering that merges contemporary technology with classic design. A balustrade, copied from an Art Deco design currently exhibited in the Victoria & Albert museum, leads to the upper balcony and media room beyond, and suede panelled walls, inset with stained glass windows, continue her 'modern deco' theme.

'I thought long and hard about what would turn this into a fabulous space, and I'm extremely pleased with how it's turned out, says Brigitta. ■

**Candy & Candy Ltd, 100 Brompton Road, SW3, tel: (020) 7594 4300, www.candyandcandy.com.**

Above from left: A huge, low-slung Christian Liagre sofa takes centre-stage in the drawing room; Nina Campbell provides the bedside table and lamp in the second guest bedroom