



URBAN LIVING

DAVINA PRECA talks about a compact Sliema flat designed for a busy town life.

Photography: ALAN CARVILLE



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>This project varied from anything I had previously set out to work on. It is my own flat, and this gave me free rein to do whatever I pleased, though of course within the usual budget constraints which shape all projects, large or small, to a greater or lesser extent.

My flat is in Sliema, which has changed over the last three decades from a quiet seaside town to a busy urban hub. I wanted to reflect that. The brief I set for myself was to create a space for modern and contemporary living – functional, if you like, but also pleasing to the eye. I wanted it to be versatile, light and organic.



Though the bathrooms and bedrooms are closed off for the desirable reasons of privacy, the rest of the space is open plan. This fits in with today's way of living, and it also maximizes the use of the floor area and draws in the light. To be successful, this kind of layout must be planned so that each function works in synchronization with the others, while still being clearly defined.

An angular line in the flooring and the ceiling clearly outlines the living/sitting area and visually hives it off from the dining space. Another line in the flooring divides the public from the private space which includes the bedrooms.

The flooring is mainly in high-gloss epoxy resin with contrasting wood, with the central open-place space in deep, rich red and the passageway and bedrooms in pale yellow. They are glowing colours, a mix of summer and autumn. When you walk through the front door, the deep red floor sits in striking contrast to the warm tones of the wood. This combination of high-contrast flooring materials and colours gives the flat a daring modern edge.

Custom-built kitchen units and plain white lacquered doors blend in with the walls and don't break up or clutter the visual line. Large cabinets in beech wood provide visual continuity with the wooden flooring in the living area. The lines are clean and simple, but more important still they are great for storage – which is essential in a compact space. The kitchen-sink backsplash is painted blue and can be easily wiped down. It complements the scheme as a variation in tone from the red. The layered panel-blinds introduce patterned organic shapes and soften the hard flooring. >p59





I FURNISHED THE SECOND BEDROOM IN MEDIUM-BROWN WOOD AND OFFSET IT WITH A WARDROBE BUILT OF TRANSLUCENT GLASS.



>The guest bathroom is plastered in Venetian stucco, and the brass wash-hand basin came from Morocco, giving the space a tactile Mediterranean feel. I had it recessed into an azure blue Corian base and had a mirror hung low to reflect the intricate faucet. The metal light-fitting adds to the mood by casting the right sort of shadows.

I kept the main bedroom simple, using shades of violet and yellow, which work so well together. An elevated built-in bathtub clad in dark grey tiles and wood fittings makes for a relaxing space in which to enjoy a warm soak. I furnished the second bedroom in medium-brown wood and offset it with translucent glass. Then to soften it all, I used organic patterns on the walls and blinds. ■

Davina Preca graduated in interior architecture and design, and worked for several architectural design practices before setting up her own: Lime Interior Architecture and Design. Davina works with her sister Maria Preca, who graduated in design management and brand-orientation for commercial interiors.

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