

# Designer style

Here in Surrey, we're spoilt with some of the best designers around, so each month we will be showcasing their work

Words by Janet Donin



## Mary Georgiou at Designer Touches

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**W**HEN it comes to designing interiors, Epsom-based Mary Georgiou, 51, is overflowing with ideas. Mindful of her client's budget, she will happily come up with suggestions for everything from a chic 'hotel-style' bedroom to an entire multi-million pound mansion.

"Many people have difficulty in visualising a new look and the thought of making a costly mistake is more than scary," says Mary. "I aim to take that fear away and I must be doing something right as many of my clients come back to me for a repeat performance."

With her background in fashion design and 12 years creating fabulous interiors, Mary is one of those people you immediately warm to and trust.

### Small beginnings

From very small beginnings, she has built up a team of professional furniture makers, electricians, plumbers and general all-round fixers to turn her designs and her client's dreams into a reality.

Of course, such schemes don't come cheap. Recreating an entire living room or bedroom, with everything from flooring to fixings and furniture, can end up coming to several thousand pounds.

But let's face it, in these days of economic uncertainty, with professional help you could have a completely new home for less than the cost of moving.

When assessing a new interior, Mary not only takes on board the style of the property itself but also the lifestyle of its owners as well.

"In a traditional home, I wouldn't sling out a classic fireplace for a hole-in-the-wall fire, or suggest expensive carpets when there's a house full of kids," she says.

### Grand designs

Instead, she tunes into her client's dreams and creates a mood-board of ideas, working around architectural features and budget constraints to give them a visual interpretation of ideas.

At the moment, bold colours and patterns on wallpapers and fabrics are popular ways of making an impact in a room, but it's the way they are used that reflects a designer's skill.

"Sometimes, I really go out on a limb," admits Mary. "Recently, when I suggested a lime green scheme, everyone thought I'd completely lost the plot."

### Bold ideas

However, for every bold idea, there's a practical element that makes the scheme work.

"Lime is such a fresh colour and in the right room it brings the beauty of a lovely garden right into the home," she adds.

Making the most of every situation is what really defines a designer's job, and Mary certainly excels at that.



Clockwise from top left: Lime green looks fabulous with neutral shades; horizontal stripes create a feeling of space; Mary always works around existing features like a fireplace; bold wallpaper has real impact in a large room; a bedroom with impressive hotel style headboard; pale, neutral shades are always restful.