

Full of. surprises

Paul and Pawel blast the age-old design rule, that small spaces should be painted in pale colours, in their daring Dublin city apartment

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FACT FILE

Who lives here? Paul O'Rourke, a chef with his partner, Pawel, a barista

Where is it? Usher's Quay, Dublin 8

What we love Paul and Pawel's use of paint colour, statement pieces and their inspired, modern and brave interiors taste





WE LOVE

Paul's eclectic taste in art, photography and prints that you can see dotted throughout each room of this apartment

SITTING ROOM The red chair, to the right, is by HAY and was picked up at Industry & Co, (Industryandco.com), along with the floor lamp. The green and orange sofas are both from Arnotts (Arnotts.ie) On the walls, Paul has used Farrow & Ball's Downpipe (Farrow-ball.com)



KITCHEN The kitchen cabinetry and surfaces, as well as the flooring was fitted by Aidan O'Rourke of Ray Shannon Design (Rayshannondesign.com) Paul finds most of his art prints through Instagram and then orders them online. Farrow & Ball's Calamine graces the walls with Cole & Son's Palm Leaf wallpaper acting as a backdrop to accessories from Industry & Co., Debenhams (Debenhams.ie) and plants from The Garden at Powerscourt (Thegarden.ie) **SITTING ROOM (above left)** Paul accessorises with cushions from Abigail Ahern's range for Debenhams. The low pile tufted rug from BoConcept (Boconcept.com/en-ie) brings in a whole host of colour

Great Idea

Use strong contrasting paints to define areas in an open-plan space. Here, the mixture of Calamine (a blush pink) and the Cole & Son's leaf wallpaper, sections off the kitchen from the darker hues in the lounge. Rugs are also great when it comes to establishing areas



On a sunny morning in Dublin, I took a leisurely walk along the quays to meet Paul, a chef from Ballyfermot who has been living in his city apartment for the past eight years. I knew that this home tour would be a brilliant lesson on how to decorate with darkness, but nothing prepared me for what was behind the front door of Paul's unassuming home in Dublin 8.

Greeted by a large, powerful Cuban lady print accompanied by a curved green armchair, I knew that Paul takes interiors seriously; I could have stopped there, taken a seat and picked up a good design book, of which Paul has plenty gracing the carefully chosen coffee tables and shelves in his home.

But, as I'm lead into the sitting room, I realise that there's so much more to discover – very impressive for

an apartment just 70 sq/m in size. "The kitchen was closed in, when I bought the place, so I knocked the wall down. I did similar in the hall," says Paul, referring to the aforementioned reading nook. "There was a whole fitted kitchen in this space, and it wasn't very nice. Seeing as there's only two of us living here, I took it out," Paul continues. Luckily for him, his brother, Aidan, is a kitchen fitter. He made the cabinets and countertops, as well as fitted them. "I bought the sink, secondhand, so the installation and plumbing cost more than the sink," Paul says, highlighting the irony.

The kitchen is set against a backdrop of white subway tiles and Farrow & Ball's Calamine, a blush pink hue that brightens, and provides contrasts, to the rich woods and dark metal storage unit Paul picked up

“I’m constantly updating. If you were here next month, things would be different again”

BEDROOM As well as fitting the flooring, Paul's brother, Aidan also made the radiator covers, throughout the house. The yellow wallpaper shows a very faint geometric design that adds interesting texture. The calendar is from Violet + Percy (Violetandpercy.com)

HALLWAY This lounge chair, from Arnotts, certainly belongs in this space. Teamed with the Cuban Lady print and Cole & Son wallpaper, Paul has created an ideal reading nook



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at Industry & Co. – a piece he states is his favourite buy in recent times. A quick glance at this space and you'll see that deciding on a favourite piece would be a tough job; the iconic retro SMEG sits in the corner of the kitchen, a green velvet sofa and an orange two-seater make ideal bedfellows in the living area. Veering away from grey or white walls may be why this room works so well, ensuring it's more Abigail Ahern than Irish tricolour. Farrow & Ball's dark and moody, Downpipe, ensures that Paul's artwork pops and his furniture choices really stand out. An Orla Kiely sideboard with her famed print, modestly displayed within the shelving, proves that Paul is a fan of designer finds but isn't ostentatious about it; he lets the shapes and forms of his pieces do the talking, rather than letting the labels shout.

"I'm constantly updating," Paul says. "If you were here next month, things would be different again. I'm sure I kind of annoy Pawel, when I'm constantly moving things around," he jokes. There is one area that Paul can't wait to revamp, and that's the bathroom: "I don't like the bathroom at all, so I'm going to get that done next. I want to take the bath out and have a walk in shower with a brass shower head," he says, explaining that he wants blue/grey subway tiles covering the bathroom walls.

Paul knows that a bathroom overhaul can be a costly job, so for now, he's focussing on affordable ways to update his space. "I have a lovely a west German locker, in storage, that I picked up in Industry & Co. I want to put it in the hall," he says.

A tour of Paul and Pawel's home just proves that their interiors style is a true reflection of what they do for a living as a chef and a barista; they combine perfectly measured ingredients for the most impressive results. **H**

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