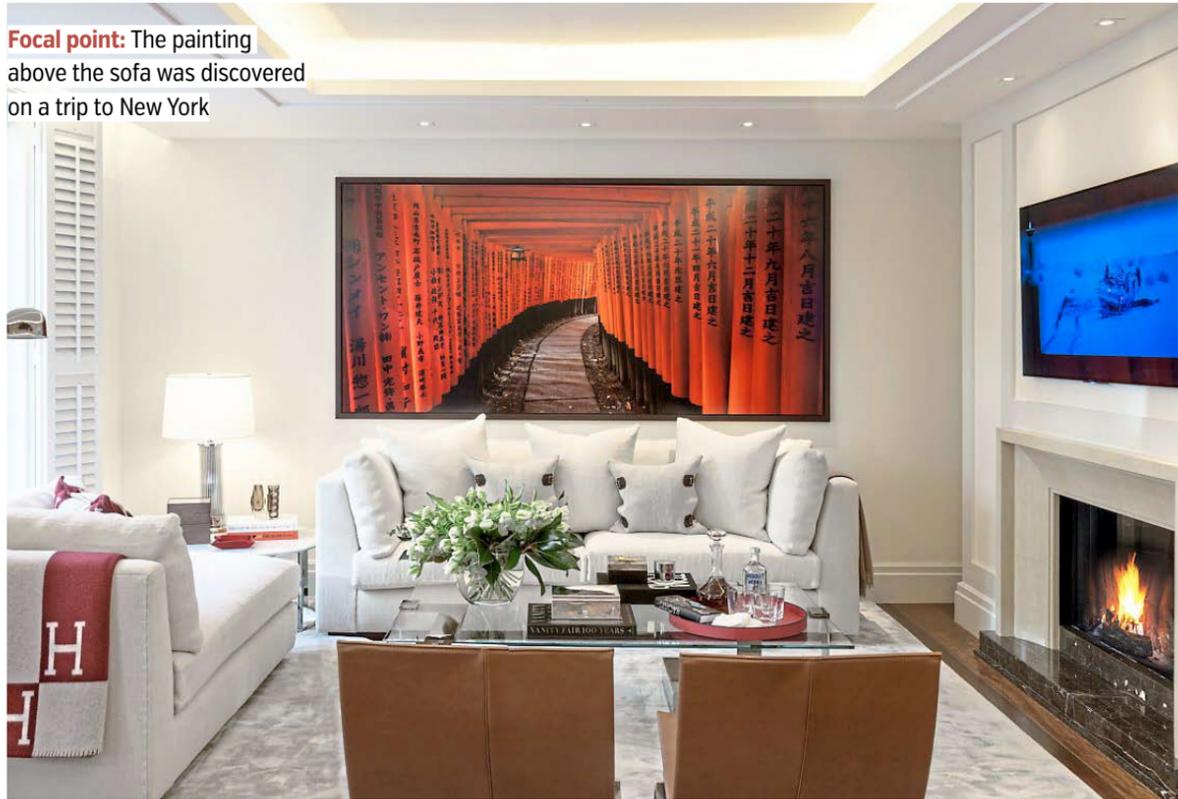


METRO Property

Focal point: The painting above the sofa was discovered on a trip to New York



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Timeless: Touches of red and dashes of gold complement the neutral palette

£4million pad that's banished the bling

Oliver Stallwood talks to interior designer Maurizio Pellizzoni, who's famous for creating opulence without the ostentation

HOW do you make a luxury £4million pied-a-terre, well, slightly less luxury? Interior designer Maurizio Pellizzoni could be your man for the job. With one of the most enviable big black books of contacts in the business, Pellizzoni is a master of creating luxury without the bling.

One of his latest projects is a deluxe, two-bed pied-a-terre with three bathrooms, situated in exclusive Ebury Square in the heart of Belgravia. The brief was to strip away the typical show-home appearance that had aimed to attract Russian investors and to create a sophisticated yet masculine look that encapsulates subtle luxury. This move away from

glitzy interiors has been a recent trend, according to Pellizzoni. 'The new meaning of luxury has shifted from showing off to creating a comfortable home,' he says.

The buyer of the Belgravia property is a businessman from Singapore who regularly travels to London for work and wanted a balance between comfort and style.

'I took inspiration from the luxury lifestyle of a single man who lives his working life in beautiful boutique hotels,' explains Pellizzoni. 'I wanted to give him the same feeling he would get when staying in hotels, but at the same time create a place for him to call home here in London.'

It was hardly a cut-price budget –

the cost for the whole refurbishment was £290,000. Out came the herringbone flooring, replaced with large long floorboards to create a contemporary feel. They now run throughout the open-plan living area and the two bedrooms. Most of the pendant lighting was removed, leaving only feature lighting and one sculptural pendant from the Italian lighting specialist Terzani above the dining table.

The colour scheme is neutral, lifted with touches of red, dashes of gold and signature artworks. Luxurious textiles – from linen and fine leather fabrics from Ralph Lauren to Italian marble – provide the final flourishes.

'Despite using rich finishes,

Chic: Luxurious items are everywhere

materials and furniture for this project, I chose something unique, which is modern, timeless and elegant,' says Pellizzoni. 'I can certainly say this boutique apartment is luxurious, but without extra bling that can often look too ostentatious.'

Those living in a tired maisonette in Twickenham might disagree, but this apartment is toned down compared to a lot of multi-million-pound properties. The kitchen was converted into an open-plan space to make the flat flow easily and be more comfortable. The top-spec appliances from Miele, Gaggenau and Sapphire are seamlessly integrated into the kitchen.

The most challenging part of the

Refined: The elegant entrance hall

project was liaising with the client in Singapore, says Pellizzoni, which made the design process much longer. They built a strong relationship, with the client coming to trust his designer's judgment completely. In fact, they are still in contact now and meet up when he's in London.

Everyday pieces co-exist with luxurious items to create a welcoming yet polished environment. If you are trying to recreate this effortless luxury in your own home, Pellizzoni has his tips. 'To create an organic yet luxurious scheme, choose a neutral colour scheme, combined with a touch of colour for continuity throughout, and integrate with signature artwork and gold finishes.'

Pellizzoni prides himself on sourcing elusive pieces from around the world. He is particularly proud of the sculpture between the windows in the sitting room – a Bronze Wave Table Sculpture by Curtis Jere from the 1970s costing £3,600. The aquarium is from New York specialists Okeanos Aquascaping (okeanosgroup.com).

'The red painting above the sofa is probably my favourite piece of the apartment,' he adds. 'I found this piece during one of my trips to New York and it determines the final dressing of the living room.'

Pellizzoni is delighted with the finished look – and, more importantly, so is the client. 'The client was extremely happy with the result,' adds Pellizzoni. 'The first time I met him after the apartment was completed, he said that I managed to deliver exactly what he wanted and fully capture his way of living.'

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Sophisticated: One of the three bathrooms, which is fashioned in Italian marble



Comfort: The high-spec kitchen was converted into an open-plan space