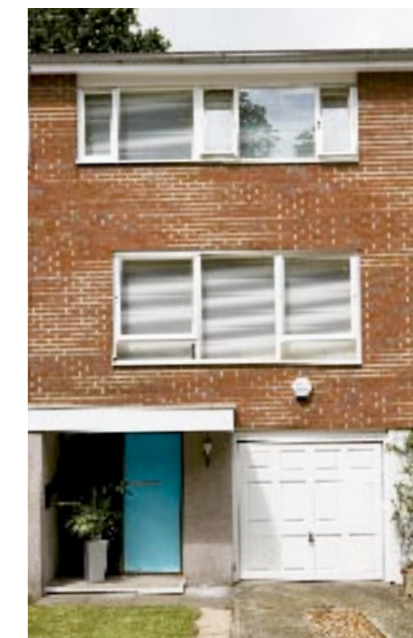


A cut above

When Lina Li Pizzi's hairdresser told her this 1960s townhouse was up for sale, she grabbed the chance to bring it into the 21st century

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MEET THE OWNER

Lina Li Pizzi, who is a property developer
PREVIOUS HOMES 'In 1995, I renovated a charming 1930s three-bedroom house in northwest London,' says Lina. 'Ten years later, I did the same to a four-bedroom Georgian property.'
CURRENT PROPERTY Three-storey terraced house in northwest London, built in the 1960s
ROOMS Open-plan sitting/dining room, kitchen, study, cloakroom, three bedrooms, two bathrooms
PURCHASED 2007 PRICE £399,950
RENOVATION COST £50,000 **VALUE** £550,000

A cut and blow dry, a cup of tea, and maybe a bit of local gossip – these are all things you might expect from a visit to the hairdressers. But when Lina Li Pizzi took a trip to her local salon, she received a life-changing tip-off. 'Knowing I was looking to move, my stylist mentioned that one of her clients had recently passed away and their house was now up for sale,' says Lina.

However, when Lina received more details from a local estate agent, her interest in this London property began to wane. 'It was a townhouse, a style of property I'd never warmed to, and the asking price was at the top of my budget,' she recalls.

Lina was in two minds whether to view the place, but when she walked into the spacious split-level ▶

SITTING ROOM Lina brought the cream sofa with her from her previous home; she originally bought it at SB Furnishings (01753 850729). Dramatic impact comes courtesy of a zebra print cowhide rug from John Lewis (08456 049049) and shots of red fabric – these include an antique Victorian nursing chair upholstered in a chenille by Brian Yates (01524 35035)



FAVOURITE ROOM *'The split-level sitting and dining room sold the house to me – it's got lovely big windows on either side, so the space is flooded with light'*



1 & 2 DINING ROOM The eye is immediately drawn to a wrought-iron mirror from Christopher Guy (020 7348 7366), which complements the glass-topped table and leather-upholstered chairs that Lina found at S B Furnishings (01753 850729)

3 & 4 KITCHEN A serving hatch ensures keen hostess Lina is never cut off from her guests while she is cooking. Dark wenge-look units supplied by Idea Italia (020 8200 6630) are in stylish contrast to the walls in Dulux's (0870 444 1111) Natural Calico and ceramic tiles from Venetian Bathrooms (020 8368 3998)



sitting-cum-dining room, she instantly felt at home. 'I had to buy this house,' she says, 'even though the decor transported me back to the 1960s. The dated kitchen, bathroom and wallpaper had to go, but I was sure I could make the rooms look amazing.'

Months later, Lina moved in and began stripping out the old fixtures, starting with the top-floor bathroom. 'As it was modest in size, I needed to incorporate all the essentials – a bath, storage and sanitaryware – efficiently,' she says. 'Luckily, my new neighbours had just renovated their bathroom, which is identical in size. I was so impressed with the end result, I followed the same template – it would have been foolish not to.'

Also on this level is Lina's master bedroom. Here she had fun with the opulent, over-the-top style of her native Italy. 'I usually prefer to use light colours on walls to make a room look bigger,'

says Lina. 'But when I came across this dark, textured wallpaper, I couldn't resist it.'

'I developed the dramatic theme further with a headboard buttoned using Swarovski crystals, and contrasting leopard-print throw with floral curtains. I'm not afraid to make a statement by mixing things up,' says Lina, who is thrilled at how the room looks. 'It's striking but feminine,' she smiles.

With the first-floor split-level sitting and dining room, Lina was more practical in her approach. To modernise the space she put down wider timber floorboards, then strengthened the link between the two distinct areas by choosing furniture in the same black, red and cream palette.

'I retained the original banisters, mainly because I couldn't decide what to do with them, but painted the posts black and the rails white to match the walls,' says Lina. 'I love this monochrome detail ▶



1 MASTER BEDROOM Lina spent a lot of time sourcing material for this space; the silk for the headboard and bedspread came from Zimmer + Rohde (020 7351 7115), the curtains are a Kai (01707 635258) fabric, and the cushions came from Temptation (020 8458 5868). The leopard-print throw is actually a sarong from Accessorise (020 3372 3000) and the wallpaper is from Brian Yates (01524 35035). The pair of lamps and bedside tables came from Lina Interiors (020 8349 4444)

2 BATHROOM The Villeroy & Boch (020 8871 4028) fittings were supplied by Venezia Bathrooms (020 8368 3998)

FAVOURITE SHOP *'I love a local emporium called Temptation – it always lives up to its name'*

because it gives a little retro appeal, that is sympathetic to the original look of the house.'

The last room to be tackled was the kitchen. Lina made use of every available space, opting for tall fitted wall units, pale large-format floor tiles and underfloor heating. 'The small kitchen was a bit of a compromise,' Lina says. 'After all, entertaining is in my blood – but I've reinstated the serving hatch in the wall so I can talk to my guests in the dining area when I'm cooking.'

In fact, her home's layout has changed Lina's view of townhouses. 'I love them,' she smiles. 'Because this place is arranged over three floors, I'm not rattling around when I'm here on my own, but I always have room for my friends.' **BH**



INSPIRED BUYS

Lina's contemporary townhouse is the ideal setting for some fashionable mirrored-glass bedroom furniture. Here are our top three buys



▲ Chichester bedside table, £1,757.60, The Conran Shop (020 7589 7401, conranshop.co.uk)



▲ Astoria half-moon console table, £195, John Lewis (08456 049049, johnlewis.com)



▲ Amelia two-drawer chest, £259, Harvey's (0844 844 7575, harveysfurniture.co.uk)