

# Welcome home!

A smart, modern entrance gives this house the wow factor

Glossy black planters, grey slate tiles and a sleek black door set the tone for Serafina's impressive house front



BEFORE

The house had a garish front door and a scruffy piece of lawn in front of it

When Serafina Lipizzi, 44, who runs a home accessories company, bought her townhouse in Hendon, northwest London, two years ago she had to prioritise the most important jobs and left the hall and exterior until last.

'First impressions count and from the first time I saw this house, I hated everything

about its exterior – especially the horrific yellow door,' she says. Beyond the front door were a set of double doors a couple of metres from the main entrance: 'It felt tomb-like and I was desperate to open up the whole area, making a brighter and larger space.'

After setting a strict budget, Serafina hired a reliable building team who removed the internal

double doors and the Artex ceiling, installing a new banister and oak wood floor.

Outside, the two concrete strips in the driveway were set so deep it took the builders three days to drill them out. Next, the area had to be levelled and lowered to allow for the new paving to be laid.

Serafina had seen a fabulous front door and her builder

adapted the design, using a plain MDF door, painting it black and inseting strips of frosted Perspex. Grey slate tiles and tall, black planters completed the look.

'It was worth it,' says Serafina. 'Every time I arrive home, I get a thrill from what I've achieved here – it's such a contrast to the original look and was well worth waiting for,' she says.

CONTINUED OVER PAGE



The striped wallpaper draws attention to the beautiful oak stairs

## In more detail

**DOOR** Serafina found the perfect front door but it had a price tag of £3000! Fortunately, her builder was able to cleverly recreate the look with an inexpensive flat MDF door, out of which he cut horizontal strips and filled the spaces with pieces of frosted

Perspex, achieving the desired look at a fraction of the price.

**FRONT STEP** The monochrome exterior is enhanced by grey slate tiles. Serafina bought the two square metres required from a local supplier, who happened to have this amount

leftover from a larger order, so negotiated a competitive price.

**PATH** Paving the entire frontage gave a practical and smart exterior with no risk of visitors tracking mud into the house, and provided space to park another car on the drive.





**CLEVER IDEA**  
A TEXTURED RUG PROVIDES WARMTH AND INTEREST IN A HALLWAY WITH LIMITED SPACE FOR FURNITURE

## GET THE LOOK

Turn a dull exterior into a modern entrance with a simple colour scheme



Siena oak veneer exterior door, **£379.99**, Focus DIY



Louvre stainless-steel wall light, **£29.99**, Homebase



80cm tall squared planters, **£80** for two, Next Home

**HALL (ABOVE)** The front door now opens up onto a spacious-looking hallway. Removing an internal pair of double doors, just beyond the main door, has made the hallway far more open, light and welcoming.



A niche in the outside wall displays a small plant that brings a decorative touch to the exterior

## Shopping list

**OUTSIDE** Painted in Jasmine White gloss paint, £14.98 for 750ml, Dulux. Grey slate tiles, £70 a square metre, Checkalov. Tegul Priora Pennant Grey paving stones, £28 a square metre, Marshalls. Satin chrome door knob, £45; spy hole, £15; Yale lock, £25; numbers, £7 each; all A&H Brass. Brushed steel outdoor light, £45, The Lighting Store. Fake plants, £65 each, Dragon Shed. For similar tall planters, try B&Q. **INSIDE** Walls painted in Natural Calico emulsion, £25 for 10L, Dulux. Zinc Six wallpaper, £28 a roll, Osborne and Little. Oak wood flooring, £20 a square metre; wooden banister, £180; front door, £350; all M Team Property Care. Bench, £350, Graham and Green. Star round silver leaf mirrors, £600 a set; steel torso sculpture, £395; Dream Weaver rug, £475; all Lina Interiors **IB**

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

WORDS: RENEE GREEN. PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID GILES

**DOOR**  
£350  
**DOOR FURNITURE**  
£99  
**PAINT**  
£29.96  
**PAVING**  
£928  
**TILES**  
£140

---

**TOTAL**  
£1546.96