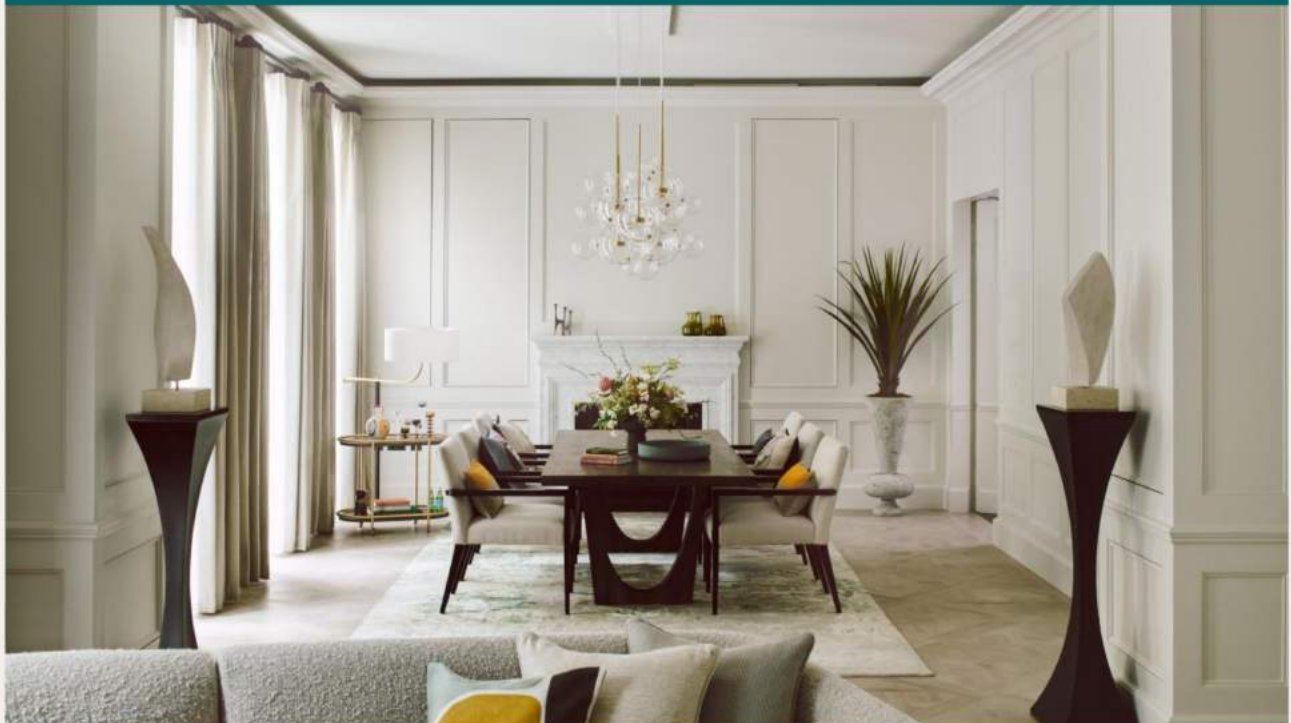




MAKEOVER MASTERCLASS

Charu Gandhi on how to get the luxury Knightsbridge look

The founder and director of Elicyon design studio brings warmth and contrast



The scale and repetition of the dining room's panelling is designed to be calming

Katrina Burroughs | Friday December 18 2020, 12.01am, The Times

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Charu Gandhi, the founder and director of the interior design studio [Elicyon](#), describes her recent project in Beaufort Gardens, a seven-storey development in a garden square in Knightsbridge, central London, as “purposefully restrained, not minimalist, but very warm, very considered”.

A trained architect whose early career included working on Candy & Candy projects such as One Hyde Park, Gandhi practises origami and the Japanese art of kintsugi, and she brings a meticulous eye for detail and a love of crafts and materiality to her luxe schemes. At Beaufort Gardens she wanted to celebrate the grand proportions of the 19th-century stuccoed building, while creating

lively, chic interiors with elements to surprise and delight.

Dining room

The dining room is in a triple-fronted lateral apartment on the first floor of Beaufort Gardens. We intentionally left the walls pared back, with simple panelling in a plain paint finish. The large scale and repetition of the panelling are calming and create a rhythm to the room. The eye enjoys repetition, symmetry and sequence. Once you establish that base, you can weave in elements that are unexpected.



The GioBagnara drinks trolley features 1960s coloured glass candleholders

We sourced the plant in the far right corner from New Covent Garden, with its earthenware planter. The rustic texture is a contrast to the sleekness of the room. It looks like something that should be outdoors. We love it when something has a bit of otherness. It's where it shouldn't be, but it still works.

Archway

The entrance into the dining space is framed by an archway, either side of which sit these handmade metal Capricorn plinths by [Tom Faulkner](#). The dark, patinated finish is quite industrial, and throughout the project we've juxtaposed sleekness with more earthy finishes – ceramic, metal and timber textures, as well as bursts of colour. We found the vintage dining table on [1stDibs](#); the curve of the legs speaks to the curve of the two plinths.





Colour

We've brought in subtle colour with glassware, ceramics and the Picasso cushions on the chairs. There has been a real revival of artist-inspired decorative accessories — there are Matisse textiles too — it's a bit of a trend that's quite fun.

Accessories

Many of the accessories are vintage. On the mantelpiece are two glass jugs from the [Old Cinema](#) in Chiswick, and a sweet pair of candleholders from [Alfies Antique Market](#) in north London. On the [GioBagnara](#) drinks trolley the 1960s coloured glass candleholders are by English manufacturers.



Charu Gandhi
GEORGINA VINEY PHOTOGRAPHY

Rug

The rug is a bespoke piece by [Jennifer Manners](#), hand-knotted in silk and wool. The painterly design, in teal and ivory, brings a softness and a movement that contrast nicely with the room. It's not symmetrical, it's not formal — it has an almost fractal quality to it.

Lighting

The glass globes of the chandelier, by [Giopato and Coombes](#), have this ephemeral quality, like soap bubbles floating in the air. The dining table is quite

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monolithic, and the light, with this slender, elegant connection to the ceiling, seems to hover above. The roundness is a lovely response to the orthogonal nature of the room.

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Kitchen and breakfast room

The doorway between kitchen and breakfast room is picked out in gloss paint, and the rest of the room is matt. I like to use the same paint colour, but doing some portions in gloss and some in matt. It changes how you see the space. It depends on the placement of light, but if you have reflectivity it can lend depth or shorten your field of vision. In this case it draws the eye through to the jewel-like breakfast room.

In the kitchen the coffered ceiling, with concealed lights, creates a pleasant ambient glow. The floor is a mix of white marble, a Greek stone called volakas, and a black Italian marble called nero marquina. It culminates in this diagonal pattern, which celebrates the small square space of the breakfast area.



The kitchen counter is a dark slate in a matt finish, which echoes the marble in the floor

One detail I love is how the kitchen counter is inset into the top of the cabinetry. It sits flush with the top of the drawer. It's a dark slate in a matt finish, and it echoes the darkness of the marble in the floor. The hot tap is from [Quooker](#) — they are so handy — and the sink is [Franke](#), a really robust, good brand.

Breakfast table

We had the high breakfast table made bespoke because we wanted something quite sculptural, with these pin legs. It's a small space and we didn't want the table to have too much of a presence. The bar stools are [Robert Langford](#), upholstered in a really lovely soft leather. The lights hanging above are fulcrum pendants in polished gold finish, from [Lee Broom](#). They are quite shiny and jewellery-like, and we've chosen these polished lights as the finishing touch to create a luxe little space.

Property prices from £2.45 million to £25 million; [beauchamp.com](https://www.beauchamp.com) and [harrodsestates.com](https://www.harrodsestates.com)

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