

# Bringing ideas to life



03330 116878  
www.monacointeriors.co.uk

This month we caught up with Joanna Lopez, founder and lead designer of London-based interior design company Monaco Interiors. She talks about her passion for design, her plans for her business and their latest project – a beautiful show home in Hertford.

I have always adored style; style in fashion, style in interiors. My family always encouraged me to be creative and for as long as I remember I would walk into a room and immediately think about how I could change or improve it. “Fashion you can buy but style you must possess,” said Iris Apfel who is a great inspiration to me.

My background was in the hospitality business. I worked for a large facilities management company in London, whose clients included some of the big hotel chains like The Hilton, Marriot, Radissons and Four Seasons. A lot of their projects involved refurbishment and redesign briefs, which is how I got involved in the corporate side of interior design.

My other design influences come from my love of travel. I speak Spanish, French and Italian, and have travelled all over the world. I’m fascinated by historic and contemporary design styles from different countries, from Renaissance Italy to Moorish Spain to Fifties New York.

For some people design is purely a functional thing, but that is not what it is for me. An interior reflects the soul of the person or organisation that uses it. It needs to resonate with their hopes, with their dreams, with their aspirations. It also needs to sit harmoniously with the character and history of the building itself.

This is why, although I have a design philosophy, I do not have one fixed style. If you look at a few of my projects, you will see they are all quite different but all with that sparkle of glamour. The most important part of a project, for me, are the initial consultations and meetings I have with my clients. These include individuals, developers, representatives of hotels and people from many other walks of life.

When working with individuals or businesses, each client has a story to tell. This comes across in the styles they like and the colours they are drawn to. It may be associations from their childhood, memories from their first business or design influences from places they’ve lived and people they have known.



My job is to weave these influences together into something that is at the same time familiar and also completely unique.

This show home (right) here in Hertford says a lot about my approach. The design is classic, cleanly executed and arranged to make the best use of light, but there are lots of quirky, personal details there too as the client wanted an Art Deco influence. It gives the place a homely, approachable feel while retaining a contemporary edge.

When working with property developers on their show homes, some different rules apply to when working for individual clients. The interiors still need to be unique, stylish and vibrant, but they can’t be so ‘loud’ that viewers can’t envision how the property will look when imprinted with their own personality. My approach to show home design is to open up a creative space that demonstrates the value and potential of a property. When viewing it I don’t want potential buyers to feel this is how it has to look, but to excite them about what it could look like. The idea is for people to come away with their imagination fired, keen to leave their mark on the property. This approach is designed to encourage sales and owes as much to my marketing background as it does to my design philosophy.

The key to success is to understand the property developer’s target market. What makes them tick? What are their aspirations and what design styles and colours are likely to appeal to them? When creating a show home interior I’m designing a tool to encourage more sales for my customer, but the design itself is not aimed at them. The goal is to act as a creative prompt for their viewers, to encourage them to make a purchase. ■

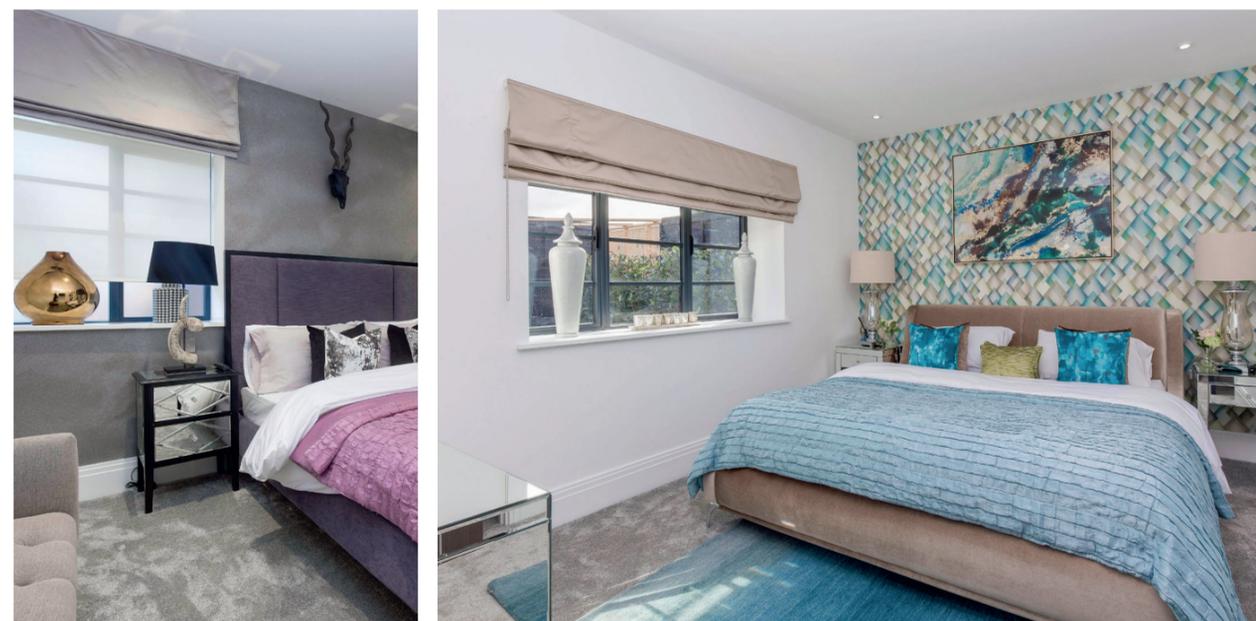
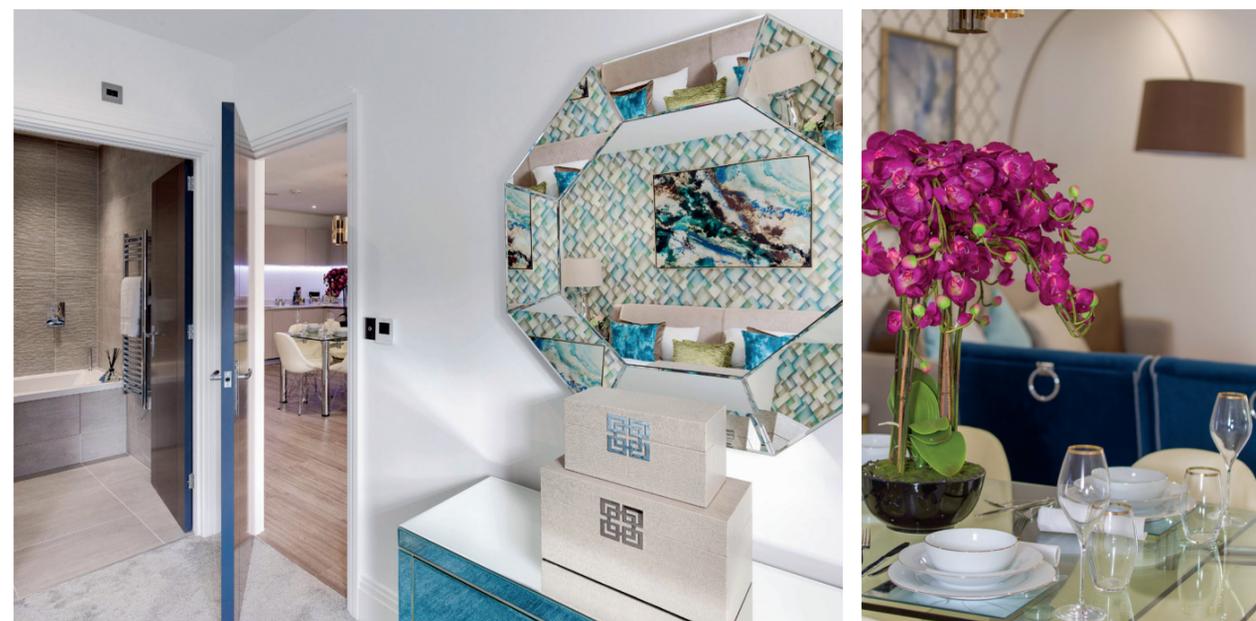
CONTACT MONACO INTERIORS ON:

Tel: 03330 116878

Email: [info@monacointeriors.co.uk](mailto:info@monacointeriors.co.uk)

Web: [www.monacointeriors.co.uk](http://www.monacointeriors.co.uk)

Twitter: [@monaco\\_interior](https://twitter.com/monaco_interior)



Images from a property by LW Developments