

Magical makeovers

For more than 20 years McGlashans Interiors has furnished stunning apartments in the Mayfair area. Here Natasha Higgins meets Andrea McGlashan, the owner and founder, and gets to know more about their business and what makes them such a success.

In 1988, Andrea McGlashan, owner and founder of McGlashans estate agency and interior design store spotted a gap in the London furniture market: Tenants from overseas who were relocating to London, mainly for work, wanted attractively furnished homes without spending a fortune.



Andrea McGlashan

“There seemed either to be stunning, bespoke and wildly expensive furniture for sale or furniture for hire which looked like it belonged in a hotel. Our aim was to create something personal and gorgeous, for sale or hire, without having to pay crazy amounts,” explains Andrea.

Over 20 years have passed and the company’s ethos has very much remained the same. Upon entering McGlashans Interiors on Crawford Street you’d be forgiven for thinking you’d stepped into one of Mayfair’s most exclusive boutiques where a box-set of five gorgeous candles might push the boat out in terms of affordability – wrong. As Andrea stresses, “the last thing we want is for a young couple not to come into the shop because they don’t think they’ll be able to afford anything!” The business works on the basis that it sells large amounts of stock at low prices and smaller profit margins.

Each of the furniture displays, within the shop, create a vision of

warmth and style that has customers saying they want their entire house ‘to look exactly like this’. “Every piece we choose is carefully selected to blend in with the others. We’ve aimed to furnish all sections of the shop as living spaces in an attempt to give shoppers an idea of how they could decorate their house.”

The shop is stocked with chandeliers, sofas, lamps of all shapes and sizes, coffee tables, candles, soft furnishings, custom-made sofa

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beds, quirky objects like a reproduction of an old steamer trunk and anything else one might need to design a tasteful interior. The majority of the pieces come from Belgian suppliers, Flamant, giving the ‘McGlashan look’ a continental twist.

Many of the items such as the coffee tables are made of weathered oak – some of the wood is entirely raw creating a rustic look and other surfaces are more refined. Andrea’s use of colour tends to be



Bright ideas: Lamps on display within McGlashans Interiors

earthy and natural and she prefers to add colour with soft furnishings and plants. “The end goal is to create a beautiful flat or house for a home-owner or tenant,” she states.

Downstairs, the shop has just been decorated as ‘the Christmas room’ with red walls, holly, mini-rocking Santas, large cloches, twinkling Christmas tree baubles and lots of other decorations for the festive season. Next door, is the lamp room with a variety of traditional, crystal and chrome lamps as well as elegant wall lights. “Some of our customers say we have the most interesting collection of lamps they’ve seen in London”.

An interior designer also works with McGlashans. She does all the home visits and dresses the property for the client. Her services are free providing the customer spends at least £1,000 in store once the consultation has been carried out.

“We’re currently doing up an amazing house in Sandbanks on the beach in Dorset,” Andrea says.

Andrea relates the success of her business to her large extended family who all help run it: her five nephews are all trained in different areas including law, IT and accountancy – “Their skills come in handy!” she admits.

Her and her immediate family grew up above a family-owned pub in Wiltshire in the 60s and have always worked together. Andrea initially

trained as a chef at one of France’s most prestigious cookery schools and she still has a passion for cooking and the presentation of food. “At Christmas we have huge dishes piled high with different foods across a long oak farmhouse table – I love it!”

She is also very grateful to the locals in the area who’ve supported the business from the start: “Without them the business would not have

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taken off as it has. From the moment we opened we were furnishing stunning apartments in Montague Square”.

Perhaps one of the leading factors in why the business has excelled to the extent it has stems from Andrea’s passion for property: “We treat every property as if it were our own and I never get fed up of looking at houses and doing them up!” she concedes.

Terrific transformation: A property furnished by McGlashans Interiors



Get the look (also left and right): Furniture displays on show in the shop

