

IRELAND'S HOMES INTERIORS & LIVING

SEPTEMBER 2026

Readers' homes in...

**DERRY, DONEGAL, MAYO,
TEMPLEPATRICK, VERMONT**

BRIGHT IDEA
STYLISHLY LIGHT UP YOUR HOME

**DESIGNING FOR
DEEPER SLEEP**
IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP QUALITY
AND BEDROOM DESIGN

FRESH THINKING

Ireland's largest selling interiors magazine for 31 years

Contents

ISSUE 373 SEPTEMBER 2026

Readers' Homes

36 STYLE, AUTHENTICITY AND CHARM

This Georgian townhouse in Derry City is full of period character and original features.

48 FINDING HOME IN KILLALA

An adopted Englishman followed an unshakable pull towards Ireland in the early noughties, and now he and his daughter have transformed a neglected Mayo cottage into an attractive coastal retreat inspired by the Wild Atlantic Way.

58 ATLANTIC OUTLOOK

There are homes with beautiful interiors, and then there are homes where the architecture, landscape and design come together so beautifully that it's difficult to imagine one without the other.

72 DESIGNED WITH INTENTION

This Templepatrick home had potential in its bones, but it took Charlene Turkington of BUNKR Interior Design to unearth it.

84 AMERICAN DREAM WITH IRISH SOUL

For one homeowner from Ireland, creating a holiday home in the Vermont woods became an opportunity to celebrate both her Irish roots and her husband's Norwegian heritage.

Readers' Kitchens

110 A BEAUTIFUL CLASSIC

Studio Four Interiors has reimagined the kitchen in this period property with a focus on timeless design, exceptional craftsmanship and cleverly integrated storage.

116 VISUALLY IMPACTFUL

An abundance of natural lighting allowed Timbercraft to play liberally with a moody timber palette in this kitchen.

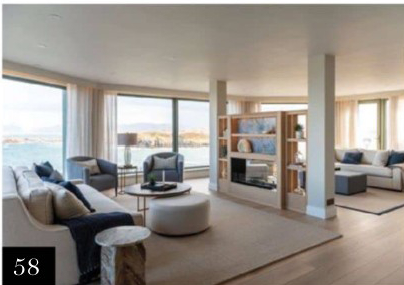
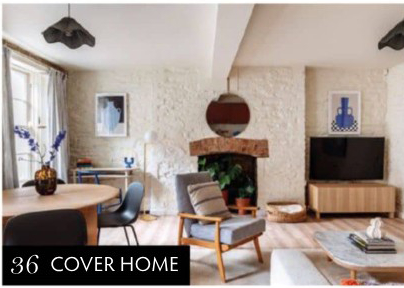
Competitions

26 Win two tickets courtesy of Cohen & Co for its Autumn Seasons Market, a goody bag full of gorgeous pieces and four soy wax candles.

32 Kate Broderick is offering one lucky reader the chance to win an acrylic and ink A2 artpiece, titled 'Lady,' worth £350/€410.

99 One lucky follower could win a £500 MAVEN gift voucher in our latest social media competition.

133 One lucky reader has the chance to win a copy of TOASTIES The Alchemy of Cheese, Bread, Butter and Heat, worth £15/€17





American Dream with Irish Soul

For one homeowner from Ireland, creating a holiday home in the Vermont woods became an opportunity to celebrate both her Irish roots and her husband's Norwegian heritage.

EDITORIAL BY EMMA DEIGHAN. PHOTOGRAPHY SUPPLIED BY GINGHAM AND GABLE INTERIOR DESIGN.



‘Ireland is in her bones and in her blood,’ begins Lisa Ehrlich, Partner at Connecticut design business, Gingham and Gable Interior Design. It’s a simple sentence, but one that became the foundation for Lisa and business partner April Shen’s most memorable projects.

Sitting proudly among the forests of southern Vermont, Nordmarka is far more than a holiday home. It is a deeply personal retreat that tells the story of three countries and three landscapes.

Designed for a Kerry native and her Norwegian husband, the woodland escape carefully combines Scandinavian restraint, treasured Irish traditions

and the rugged beauty of New England into a home that is beautifully authentic.

For designers Lisa and April, it was unlike any project they had undertaken before.

‘Nordmarka is definitely a favourite,’ says Lisa. ‘It went beyond just good design. There was a real ethos and essence to the project. The husband is from Norway, the wife is from Ireland and they both spent their childhoods in their respective countries before eventually building a life in America. They wanted this special home to be symbolic of all three countries.’

That emotional brief shaped what we see today. The homeowner was born in Kerry before growing up in Cork.

Childhood summers were spent among the sand dunes of Banna Beach, exploring Fenit and returning time and again to Dingle, where she would later marry her husband. After graduating, she moved to Dublin, then London for work, before accepting what was intended to be a one-year opportunity in America. She never left.

Yet despite decades abroad, Ireland has never left her either. ‘When I spoke to her before our interview, she said Ireland is still very much who she is,’ Lisa explains. ‘She told me that Ireland is in her bones and in her blood. She has such a profound love of the outdoors, the mountains and the sea, and she attributes so much of that to growing up in Ireland.’



Those conversations were at the heart design process. 'It really felt as though we weren't simply creating a beautiful house,' Lisa continues. 'We were creating a legacy for her children and for the generations of family who would come from Ireland and Norway to visit.'

The property itself was an existing traditional saltbox home, appreciated by the owners for its character but firmly rooted in the design language of the 1980s. Rather than rushing into a renovation, the family chose to live in the house first, allowing themselves time to understand how it worked and what it lacked.

'They wanted the home to feel elevated without ever feeling fussy,' April adds. 'It needed to feel refined and beautifully designed, but also warm, inviting and comfortable. They wanted texture, layers and character while creating spaces that genuinely suited the way they live.'

The result is Nordmarka, named after the vast forest region surrounding Oslo where the husband grew up.

'We loved the idea of giving the house a name,' says Lisa. 'Holiday homes have their own identity. You don't just say you're going to the house; you say you're going to Nordmarka. There's excitement attached to that.'

The home's name carries another layer of meaning.

A gallery wall in the family room charts the family's journey, from the husband's childhood in Norway's forests and the couple's early trips to Nordmarka, to





more recent Christmas celebrations welcoming more than 20 members of the homeowner's Irish family to Vermont.

'It started with Norway, but now it's growing into a celebration of everyone who's shared the house,' Lisa adds.

Gingham & Gable looked for quieter ways to honour both cultures. Nothing is cliché. 'Irish warmth isn't about shamrocks or clichés,' Lisa says. 'It's about craftsmanship, textiles, wool, warmth and people.'

Throughout the home, authentic Irish blankets gifted by the homeowner's sisters are draped over sofas and chairs. Irish sheepskins, imported, soften bespoke dining benches, while handmade pottery by Irish ceramicist Louis Mulcahy sits proudly on open kitchen shelving rather than being tucked away.

A striking photograph of Three Sisters in Dingle by Irish photographer Giles Norman hangs prominently near the staircase, because it reflects the homeowner's three sisters and the family memories made there over decades.

The lower ground floor bathroom provides another nod to home, with framed album covers celebrating some of the homeowner's favourite Irish musicians.

'We wanted those Irish elements to reveal themselves gradually,' Lisa explains. 'As you walk through the house you begin to notice them one by one. Nothing feels forced. You don't walk through and think, 'That's the Irish room,' or, 'That's the Norwegian room.' They blend naturally.'

That same philosophy extends to the architecture. Working alongside architect John Guminak and builder Innovative Construction, Gingham & Gable reimagined the arrival experience by relocating the entrance and introducing a larger front porch that immediately establishes a stronger connection with the woodland setting.

'We wanted homeowners to feel they'd arrived at their happy place,' says April.

Inside, expansive floor-to-ceiling glazing frames the

surrounding forest like living artwork, while soaring vaulted ceilings create scale.

The designers softened that volume with subtle interventions, painting the structural beams a deep charcoal to visually lower the ceiling and carefully positioning statement lighting so every fixture feels more intimate.

'We wanted the house to feel grand without ever feeling cold. Everything from the beam colour to the height of each chandelier was carefully considered,' says April.

The great room is the heartbeat here. 'It had to be the first space that welcomed you after coming through the mudroom,' April adds. 'More importantly, it needed to become somewhere everyday life naturally unfolded.'

In this space the team created a series of moment including a naturally lit reading nook, a vintage camel hide stool pulled close to the bespoke fireplace, generous custom sofas for family gatherings and uninterrupted

views through to the kitchen and dining area beyond.

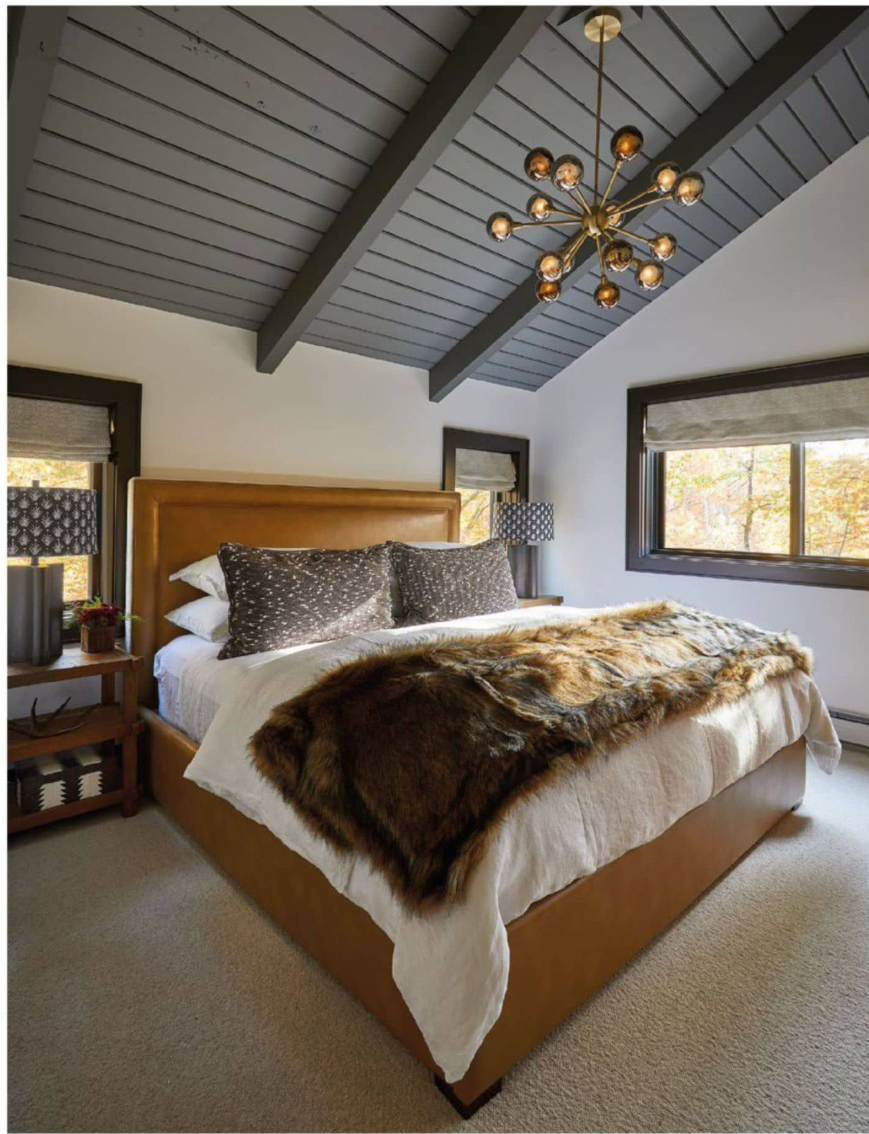
'The best spaces don't need instructions. They simply tell you how to live in them,' adds April.

From the great room, the eye is drawn towards the kitchen, where a rich green colour palette echoes the surrounding woodland.

'The kitchen needed to feel grounded, refined and connected to the landscape,' explains April. 'It had to work incredibly hard for everyday living, but still feel like somewhere everyone naturally gathered rather than a separate, utilitarian space.'

The homeowners wanted a green kitchen. Gingham & Gable created a bespoke shade by blending two Benjamin Moore paints until they achieved exactly the right tone.

April explains, 'We wanted something elevated and timeless rather than trend driven. The colour shifts beautifully throughout the day as the light changes. It feels equally at home in spring sunshine as it does against



snowy winter woodland.'

Handmade tiles introduce another layer of craftsmanship. 'There is a subtle imperfection that only handmade materials can bring. You might not immediately identify it, but you feel it the moment you're in the room. Those slight variations create depth, authenticity and soul,' she adds.

Restrained brass hardware lifts the cabinetry, while floating shelves display meaningful rather than decorative objects, including handcrafted mugs by celebrated Irish

potter Louis Mulcahy. Nearby, Irish wool blankets and sheepskins gifted by the homeowner's sisters soften the bespoke dining benches.

'The dining area was designed around togetherness,' says Lisa. 'Bench seating means there's always room to squeeze in one more cousin.' It's a small detail that perfectly reflects the family's priorities.

Downstairs, the mood changes. Gingham & Gable wrapped the family room entirely in timber, creating an enveloping retreat where children and adults alike



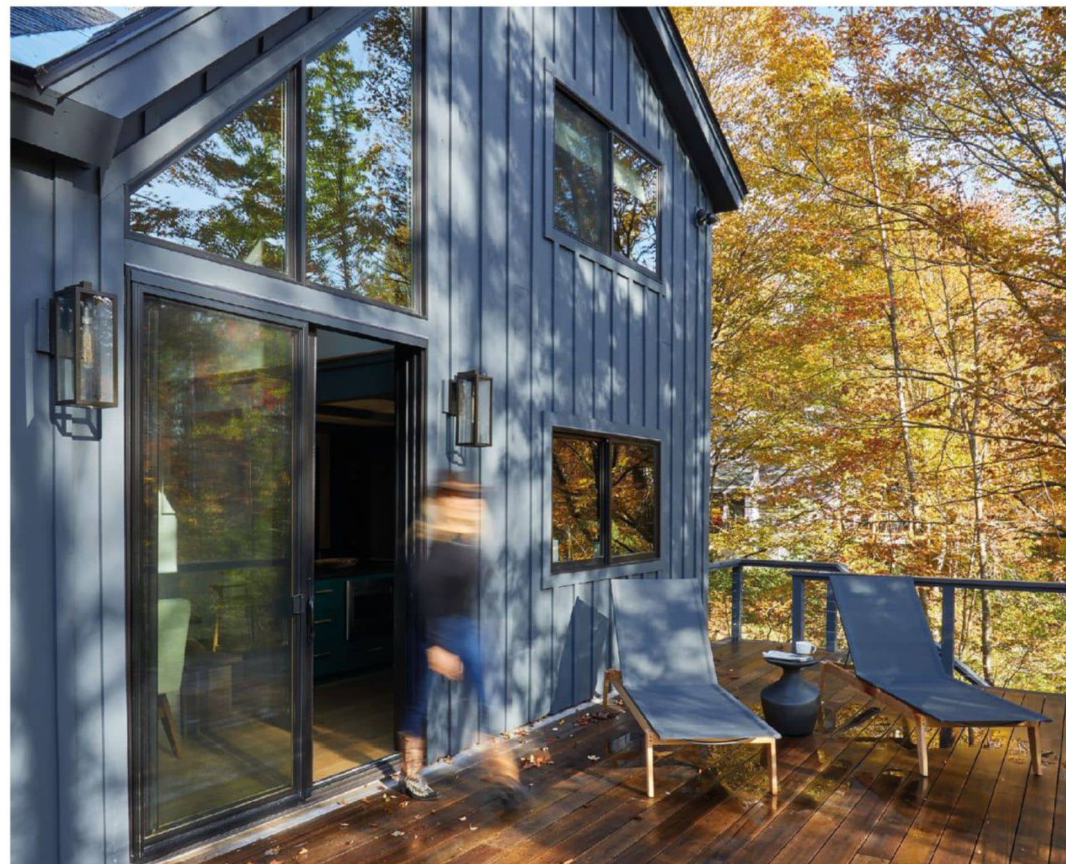
naturally gravitate.

'Lower-level spaces can often feel forgotten. We wanted this one to become somewhere the family genuinely wanted to spend time,' Lisa says.

A bespoke double-chaise sofa stretches across the room, layered with cushions



'We didn't want a house that simply looked beautiful. We wanted a home that honoured who we are.'



and faux fur throws, while a custom ottoman doubles as additional seating when guests arrive. A leather armchair sits beside the picture windows, and a bespoke banquette offers the perfect spot for puzzles, board games and long conversations.

Above the sofa hangs a Slim Aarons print celebrating the family's shared love of skiing. 'The room is always in use,' Lisa says. 'It's become a real favourite.'

The considered design approach reaches the bedrooms too. With three children and demanding careers, the homeowners wanted the principal bedroom to become a sanctuary.

'The entire house was designed intentionally, but particularly this room,' Lisa says. 'We wanted somewhere serene that still carried all the warmth and texture seen throughout the rest of the home.'

Neutral tones allow materials stand out. A bespoke leather bed, finished with a shearing headboard, introduces richness, while custom lampshades and a sculptural Sputnik light fitting provide subtle moments of interest.

'When it's dimmed at night, it almost feels like you're sleeping beneath the stars,' she says.

Elsewhere, practicality meets imagination in the bespoke children's bunk room. Designed in collaboration with Innovative Construction, the handcrafted bunks maximise sleeping space for cousins and friends who regularly descend on Vermont from both Ireland and Norway.

The wallpaper, depicting delicate Queen Anne's Lace growing wild throughout Vermont's meadows and forests, quietly anchors the room in its American setting.

Rather than repeating finishes throughout the house, Gingham & Gable approached each bathroom individually. 'There are three bathrooms and a powder room,' Lisa explains. 'We wanted every one to have its own identity.'

No tiles are repeated. No vanity is duplicated. Even the brassware changes from room to room.

The principal ensuite features a bespoke vanity topped with marble and elegant Armac Martin hardware, while the whimsical green powder room combines custom marble stonework with playful Josephine Munsey

wallpaper featuring winding mazes and woodland stags.

Downstairs, another surprise awaits. Framed album covers celebrating the homeowner's favourite Irish musicians line the walls, creating an entirely unexpected reminder of childhood and home.

'They're deeply personal touches,' Lisa says. 'They remind everyone that this house tells the family's story.'

Throughout Nordmarka, oak, leather, stone, wool, boucle and handcrafted timber replace bold colours or fashionable finishes.

'When you're working with a neutral palette, texture becomes absolutely essential. It's what creates depth, refinement and interest,' Lisa advises.

Many of the home's standout pieces were designed exclusively for the project, including the dining table and chairs by Vermont Farm & Table, the great room sofa, the bespoke marble powder room vanity, the principal ensuite vanity, the family room banquette, ottoman and seating.

'We're very aware of trends,' Lisa says, 'but we're not trend followers.' She encourages homeowners to create spaces that genuinely reflect who they are.

'I hope this project shows the importance of designing a home that celebrates your own story,' she says. 'Think about how you want to live. Do you love gathering people around the table? Then design for that. Do you want spaces that welcome family for generations? Build those into the layout. Trends come and go incredibly quickly, but authenticity never dates.'

That philosophy perhaps explains why Nordmarka resonates so strongly. It's an Irish childhood spent on Banna Beach, summers in Dingle, Norwegian forests, American craftsmanship and decades of family memories woven together beneath one roof.

Or, as Lisa says, 'We didn't want a house that simply looked beautiful. We wanted a home that honoured who we are.' 🏡

If you have any queries regarding this reader's home please email enquiries@ihil.net or phone +44 (0) 28 9147 3979 and we will try to source the information for you.