

# Into the Light

Having taken great effort to involve their clients every step of the way, Spain-based Itta Studio transformed a cramped, gloomy Madrid apartment, devoid of any personality, into a luminous open living space that reflects the ethos of its inhabitants and exudes a modern yet classic vibe.

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COURTESY ITTA STUDIO

The decor of the living room is a beautiful combination of the old and the new. Classic-style furniture from Villdis, a vintage-Turkish rug, an old painting belonging to the client flanked by modern-looking lamps from El Corte Ingles atop iron side tables by Oscar Vautherin, and a Travertine marble coffee table by Creaciones Moll adorn this room.





The blue-printed cushion and the red vase add a pop of colour to the neutral palette. The mouldings and artwork seen on the walls have been retained from the old house.

Leaving the fate of your home in the hands of a group of strangers can be intimidating, especially when it means throwing out cherished belongings and starting from scratch. But when you end up with interior designers Israel Egio and Alejandra Fontelos of Itta Studio — who believe in collaborating with their clients every step of the way, understanding their needs and incorporating their personalities into the home with a refined aesthetic — all worries go out the window. This young and enthusiastic firm based in Spain takes on decoration, interior design and furniture design (and other services such as energy certifications) work for any kind of project; and turn them into beautiful, awe-inducing spaces.

Such was the case of this 1,500 square feet apartment in Madrid, Spain which Itta Studio designed for a couple in their 50's. When they approached Israel and Alejandra to renovate their dull, prosaic and cramped apartment, their brief to the team was simple: a modern space with a classic touch that could incorporate all the art and some of the accessories close to their hearts. As is a practice of the studio, they involved the clients in the project from the very beginning — multiple discussions took place on key points such as the structural changes, colours schemes, accessorizing and the budget.

A dining and living area, kitchen, sitting room and three bedrooms make up the spatial composition of this apartment. When Israel and Alejandra first stepped into it, they saw a huge space punctuated by several doors and antiques that seemed out of place. Devoid of light, openness and character, the first instinct was to strip these down and create a seamless, light-filled home that radiates a classical style.

The multiple doors and walls cramming the hallway, which runs through the entire length of the flat, were eliminated at once. On one side of the hallway lie the living, dining, sitting rooms, master bedroom and a second bedroom while the kitchen, another bedroom and two bathrooms fall on the other side. The designers broke down two walls — one that led to the living room and the other that created a partition between the living and dining areas. This resulted in both rooms becoming one cohesive space with renewed length and vivacity. This unification and the creation of a point of access to the living room through a large passage with sliding doors added to the square footage as well as the openness of the space. Since the couple spent minimal time at home due to their respective jobs (the military and a commercial company respectively) and love having friends over on weekends, this area was designated as a space for socializing.

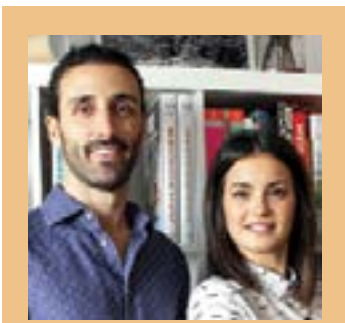


An unobstructed view of the living area and passageway has been achieved by demolishing the dividing wall and creating a sliding door. Coupled with the porcelain tile flooring and the white walls, it makes the entire space look expansive. Even when the door is closed, the glass panels add to the visual breadth of the space.

**CONCEPT:** To renovate an apartment that uses the clients' collection of art and accessories and has a classic, modern and comfortable vibe.

The architects also increased the height of the ceiling and stripped down the gotele (a technique of applying a thick layer of paint to create an uneven finish, used in Spain). The mouldings, however, were retained as they supported the classical look the architects had envisioned. Porcelain tiles with a wood finish from Marazzi were used for the flooring throughout the house. This lends warmth as well as ties the entire space together. The walls in the apartment have been kept white in contrast to the classical-style furniture. The sofas and the wing chairs in the living room are upholstered in textured fabric from Roma that looks elegant and suave. Colour was introduced by way of a kilim and table lamps.

A modern and sleek look has been achieved in the dining area with the earthy walnut wood furniture and the ceiling lamp. The passage leading to the bedrooms has been illuminated with indirect lighting while a number of artworks adorn a wall. Adjoining the living room is the sitting area. A comfy grey sofa, a set of three side tables and a study



**INTERIOR DESIGNERS**

Israel Egio and Alejandra Fontelos



**CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT** Like the living room, the sitting area also has an elegant and classy vibe. The iron nest tables by Kare Design in copper, bronze and silver stand with pride beside a simple grey sofa bed by Ecus.

An African figurine (which the couple bought in Cameroon) stands tall on vintage trunks purchased at a flea market. Placed in one corner of the otherwise plain hallway, it is bound to catch one's attention.

Pretty and vibrant, floral-printed fabric by Coordonne has been used to upholster the bow window in the daughter's bedroom.

The Austin Bark wing chair from Romo in the living area has been clothed in an Aztec-inspired small-scale geometric pattern woven with lustrous viscose and linen yarn.

Sliding doors with glass panels lead to the living and dining areas.

A trumpet bought at a flea market sits atop the walnut sideboard in the dining room.

The ikat silk cushion by Tailak and cotton cushions from Maison du Monde merge well with the beige bed in the master bedroom.

Dinner at the La Paz house will be a glorious event when served in porcelain dinner plates by Capeans with cutlery and glassware by Villeroy & Boch.

The Kendal Sandstone fabric from Roma on the sofa comprises a classic herringbone design woven with a soft viscose chenille yarn.





The bow window acts like a little private sanctuary. The colour of the bedding and cushion pops against the pristine white of the walls and curtains.



**ABOVE** The beige bed linen, *ikat* cushion, kilim and chair help create a cosy and comforting ambience in the master bedroom.

**LEFT** Seen here is a colonial-style teak table from Original House with a table lamp that has a white porcelain base.

**MATERIALS**

**Flooring** TreverHome wood effect porcelain tiles by Marazzi Walls Plastic paint Furniture Wood



desk are kept here. The teenage daughter's bedroom has a youthful aura, achieved through the use of bright upholstery. The highlight of this space is the vibrantly coloured box window seat created for her to relax, read and unwind.

Neutral colours, minimal furniture and clean lines have been employed in the master bedroom as well. Mirrors on the wardrobe not only reflect the beautiful artwork hung on the opposite wall but also create an illusion of space. Meanwhile, a Tailak cushion, kilim and teak side tables break the monotony of the otherwise pale room.

The architects have employed restraint while designing this space; and with the use of limited materials, colours as well as furniture



types, they have managed to refurbish this dull, gloomy apartment into one that is warm with positive, welcoming vibes. Each of the furniture pieces, artworks and accessories have a niche here and in turn reflect the simple yet sophisticated sensibilities of both the architects and the home owners. By trusting Israel and Alejandro, the clients were able to achieve a look they were hoping for. In turn, the architects combined their design ethos with the sensibilities of the client and the result is for all to see. Simple, sophisticated and classic; this apartment in Madrid just got better by design. **BI**

**TOP** The walnut wood dining table, beige upholstered chairs and ceiling lamp by Wever & Ducre have a modern design and lend a refined aura to the space.

**ABOVE** White cabinets and Roma white wall tiles by Porcelanosa make the kitchen look sleek and smart. A small breakfast table has also been included.

**FACT FILE: Project La Paz**  
**Location** Madrid, Spain **Area** 1,500 sq ft  
**Principal designers** Israel Egio and  
 Alejandra Fontelos