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LIFE PROPERTY

MY SPACE

Abigail Ahern,
interior designer

My husband, Graham, and I have lived in this four-storey Victorian terrace house in east London for 12 years, since we relocated back here from the United States. I used to work as the interior designer for a big architecture firm in the Great Lakes which built amazing glasshouses. I loved the idea of blending the inside and outside, so we took the back off the house and have one huge wall of glass. I've planted up the garden with foliage on all sides, things like jasmine and honeysuckle. Sitting in here, you feel like you can touch the garden. Outside, it's quite jumbly; you have to delve to see what's there, but that's the golden rule: you should never be able to "read" a space instantly, you design so that the eye is pulled in different directions.

I once worked for Terence Conran's publishing division. When I was interviewed by the architectural firm they thought I had designed the properties in his books. I didn't correct them – I don't know how I had the nerve – so I ended up working for clients by day and studying interior design by night. It was terrifying, but I learnt very quickly!

Abigail is a RatedPeople.com ambassador

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Mirror This vintage mirror came from Belgium and was meant for my shop, but I loved it on this wall. You can see the opposite wall reflected in it, where I have hung Deborah Bowness's bookshelf wallpaper; pattern helps to soften the space

Doors Glass can be quite harsh and sterile, so these really tall doors affected the design for the room. I'm naturally drawn to a dark, rich colour palette, so the right lighting is crucial. It's the second most transformative aspect of a room, after colour. As well as lamps, I've used squishy textures for a warmer atmosphere

Table I'm not a fan of occasional tables, so I wanted something really different for this room. I found this African drum table in a flea market in Paris. I love its texture, it's the perfect coffee table height, and it introduces a circular shape to an otherwise quite linear room. I have a couple of other drums in the house, too

Chairs I paid £60 for each of these chairs in Kempton Antiques Market. They're covered with fabric made by Bute for the designer Tom Dixon. I love the shot of bold colour, and the fabric is really hard-wearing – it is mainly used in places like hotels, and it doesn't date at all

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The Telegraph

My space: Abigail Ahern, interior designer

Interior designer Abigail Ahern shows Maria Fitzpatrick a favourite room in her Victorian terrace house in east London



Abigail Ahern at home: 'Sitting in here, you feel like you can touch the garden' Photo: Andrew Crowley

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4 Comments

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