



Exterior: the shell of the building was kept but given a modern makeover



# A FLAIR FOR THE DRAMATIC

TAKE A MONOCHROME PALETTE AND ADD IN THE WARMTH OF WOOD AND THE RICHNESS OF BRASS ALONG WITH STRIKING DESIGN TOUCHES AND THE RESULT IS ONE YOUNG COUPLE'S DREAM HOME...

**Architect:** (X,Y,Z) ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

**Photos:** Alan Carville

**Words:** Rachel Loos



Living room: the TV sits on a minimal custom-made unit with natural oak wall panelling which also conceals the door that leads to the garage. The carpentry in the apartment was done by ChillisChilli

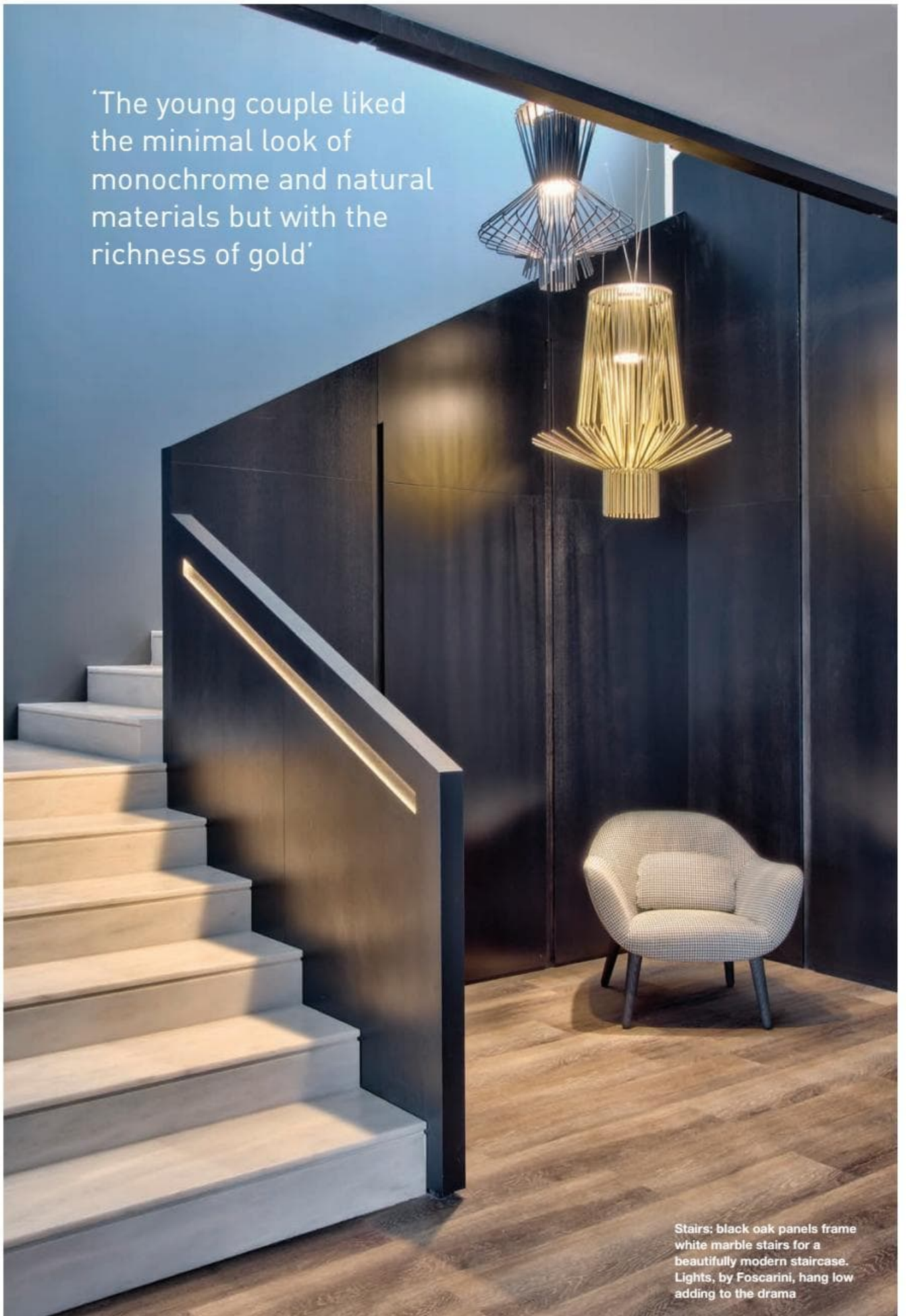
**H**aving lived in spacious homes as children, but started out their married life in a small semi-basement maisonette, the young couple who bought this property were sure about what they wanted from their new home. 'We both agreed that we are the kind of people that need space and natural light. We both work hard and coming home to a small and cluttered place was not good for us.'

To help them create their dream home, the couple called in (X,Y,Z) Architecture & Design. The first step in the transformation was gutting the inside and the addition of large-span steel beams to give support. Then the re-modelling began. The young couple liked the idea of a minimal look of monochrome and natural materials but at the same time, the richness of gold. The design team from (X,Y,Z) interpreted this with a scheme that teamed black and white with details of polished brass.

A custom-designed eight-seater dining table, for example, is in black granite with brass details, and emerges dramatically out from the kitchen island to break the straight lines of what was the corridor. The pendant lights over the dining table in eye-catching triangular and circular shapes also add a strong metallic accent. ▶



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Stairs: black oak panels frame white marble stairs for a beautifully modern staircase. Lights, by Foscarini, hang low adding to the drama



Kitchen/diner: a wall of white cabinets along with a smart island create a chic, streamlined look. A striking contrast is the dining table with its eye-catching brass Plane lights by Tom Dixon



Keeping things neat: the bank of white units hides away accessories, groceries as well as the white goods



**Bedroom (above):** a monochrome palette combined with texture create a cosy bedroom. The ensuite bathroom (below left) has smart slate basins while the family bathroom (below right) is in travertine.



The living room is divided from the kitchen by a three-sided peninsula wood burning fireplace that warms up the entire space in winter and is done out in darker colours and natural woods to create a cocoon within the large space.

Leading the way to the first floor are sleek black oak panels that form a dramatic yet elegant staircase railing which along with the darkly-painted stairwell enhances the natural beauty of the white marble slabs. Upstairs, the monochrome look is continued with a palette of grey and black that extends into the master bedroom and ensuite bathroom. ▶



The guest bathroom with the Volacas marble basin connects to the pool



The outside was made new too. While the existing shell of the building was retained but with added insulation, it was redone as a white cube with contrasting black apertures that emphasised its geometry. The finishing touch is a pool in the garden, which in black and surrounded by black slate, is a similar chic contrast to the white of the building.

Today, the young couple have the house they wished for and find it impossible to choose their favourite area. 'The pool area is fantastic in the hot summer days, whereas the living area is ideal for snuggling whilst enjoying that movie night experience; our huge kitchen is ideal for holding dinners and entertaining guests, and our bedroom is very cosy and intimate. Deciding on only one is simply not enough.' HW