



# a good investment

CONTEMPORARY COOL AT A MALAHIDE APARTMENT.  
WORDS AND PHOTOS BY **SASFI HOPE ROSS**



THE USE OF SUEDE COUCHES, LEATHER CHAIRS, LEATHER LIGHTS AND TWO-TONE LEATHER CURTAINS LEND A MASCULINE, BACHELOR PAD FEEL

Three years ago Barbara Kinsella, an international marketing manager, decided to change her career radically and set up *Investa Property*, a property development company. Now working as an interior designer within the firm she works her magic on clients homes on a regular basis. Recently she was asked to undertake the design of a newly purchased apartment, with the aim of renting it to the corporate end of the market.

The apartment, in a new development in Malahide, was similar to many other

investment properties. "If you wish to rent a property quickly and at a good rate you need to add a little something extra to make it appeal," Barbara explains. In this case the client wanted something extra special in order to target the high-end, stylish, corporate market.

In the future the client's father will live here, but that knowledge did not restrict Barbara's style in any way, especially as he is quite comfortable with modern surroundings. Once the colour scheme of chocolates and creams was agreed on, she was given *carte blanche* to work as she pleased.

The apartment was the only one in the



**THE CLIENT WANTED SOMETHING EXTRA SPECIAL, TO TARGET THE HIGH-END STYLISH, CORPORATE MARKET**

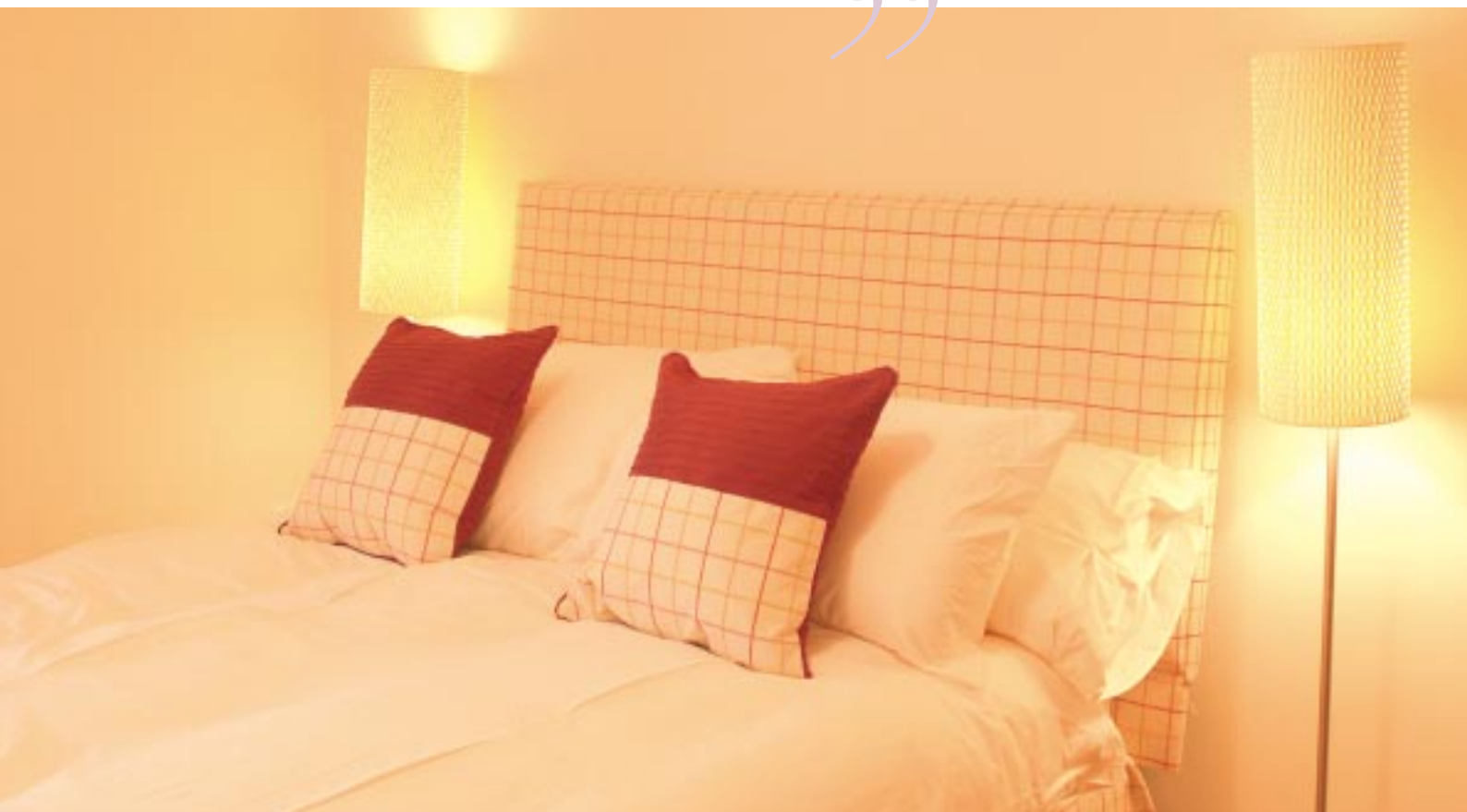
development that had a separate dining room and kitchen; most of them would have been one room. This gave her another dimension to work with. Starting with the basic palate in the living areas she used a chocolate-coloured textured paint from the Dulux suede range on one wall in the living room, the kitchen and in the dining room. The resulting texture is like sand, although when she put it up initially she felt a bit anxious. "I thought it looked like rag rolling, which is so-ooo gone! But as the layers went up it really did look like suede and it linked the three living spaces seamlessly."

The use of lots of different textures - suede couches, leather chairs, leather lights and two-tone leather curtains all lend quite a masculine style to the apartment; in fact it has decidedly a bachelor pad feel. Barbara got the idea for the leather curtains from a show in London last year and she had them specially commissioned. Although leather is quite difficult to work with she feels the results are worth it. To complement these she chose a leather mirror from *Academy Mirrors* in Clonee. This has a dark chocolate leather surround with bronze beading and unifies the





“The core theme would have started out as a masculine one, but I balanced it out with the bedrooms, which are quite pretty.”



whole theme. To soften the look rugs were added with lots of scatter cushions.

A large solid walnut table in the dining room seats six easily and fits comfortably into the spacious dining area. The dining chairs continue the two toned leather and suede theme, matching the colours of the walls and the antique walnut floors. Modern cube lighting from *Illumination* in Swords has been used





“It is important if you wish to rent a property quickly and at a good rate to add a little something extra to make it appeal”

in the two rooms in both the standard lamps and the ceiling lamps. The walls provide a canvas for an eclectic assortment of artwork, all of which was commissioned from Barbara's sister, Alison Keating. The textured colours within the paintings unify the scheme with bronzes, tangerines and dun. The beauty of these paintings, apart from the fact that they are tailor made to the décor of the apartment, is that they are one offs.

In the kitchen the textured colour provides a warm backdrop to the stainless steel Neff appliances. The accessories and plants from *Jungle Flowers* in Malahide lift and add colour to the kitchen.

By using brighter colours in the bedrooms a more feminine and softer side is added to the apartment. Matching headboards, valances and cushions in the main bedroom came from *Dream Interiors*. Similarly the art in the hall balances with a brighter prettier décor. “The core theme started out as a masculine one, but I balanced it out with the bedrooms, which are quite pretty and floral,” Barbara explains.

The client was delighted with the results and, not surprisingly, the property was rented out very soon after going on the market, making it a good investment all around. \*  
Barbara Kinsella may be contacted at Investa Property on 01 845 7711.