

Design advice: *'I think it's very important to have a really clear picture in your mind of what you want before you brief architects and builders'*



**1 & 3 Sitting room** Sheila Aylward at Ormond Soft Furnishings (00 353 820830) designed the curtains. W Sitch & Company (020 7437 3776) can supply similar chandeliers. The sofa and chairs were upholstered in Cabriole from Osborne & Little (020 8812 3000), while the rug was designed by The Dixon Carpet Company (00 353 91 552113) **2 Conservatory** The curtains are in a silk from Christian Fischbacher (fischbacher.com)

are all still very large rooms that retain a classical, opulent feel.'

When it came to designing the layout of the interior, Celia's priorities were light and space. She didn't want a separate dining room, so the kitchen was designed to be large enough for dinner parties.

'I love entertaining and felt that, if the kitchen was sufficiently stunning, I'd never need a separate dining room as everyone could congregate in here,' she says. 'I love the look of traditional, handpainted kitchen furniture and I think it's a must to choose good-quality timber.'

By linking the kitchen furniture with the traditional mahogany dining table and chairs, Celia has given herself the best of both worlds – a country-style kitchen with the feel of a formal dining room. Directly off the kitchen, the conservatory doubles as a family sitting room that benefits from natural light and underfloor heating.

Celia called in interior designer Sheila Aylward, who imbued the sitting room



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*know...*  
Property prices in Ireland have tripled since 2000 – and they show no signs of slowing down.

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*Favourite item: 'I love the beautiful gilt chandelier in the sitting room. It perfectly sets off the rich colours of the furnishings and adds an element of glamour'*

with the same classic feel, using luxury fabrics that add comfort and elegance. In keeping with the marble fireplace, traditional pelmets adorn the windows.

The imposing hallway, with its sweeping staircase in polished mahogany, has a stunning domed roof, flooding the main

areas of the house with light. Tiles for the polished marble floors were imported from Marbella and provide a practical as well as eye-catching entrance. 'I spent ages searching for the right marble for flooring tiles and the bathrooms. I wanted a unique motif for the hall and was told the simplest

thing would be to find a pattern that could be copied,' she says. 'I was on holiday in Spain when I spotted the most fabulous bathroom shop. The owner showed me a choice of designs that could be used for the motif in my hall. I gravitated to a wonderful bathroom and asked him jokingly if ►



**1 Guest bedroom** The gold curtains are from James Brindley (01423 560757), and match the bedspread, which Celia made herself, decorating it with a Nina Campbell trim from Osborne & Little (020 8812 3000) **2 & 4 Master bedroom** Celia bought the bed in a local shop. The walls were papered in Osborne & Little Zinc and the curtains are Fleur Japonaise by Nobilis (020 8767 0774) **3 En-suite bathroom** Celia chose a wetroom style shower to complement the two-tone marble tiles, which she sourced during a holiday to Spain



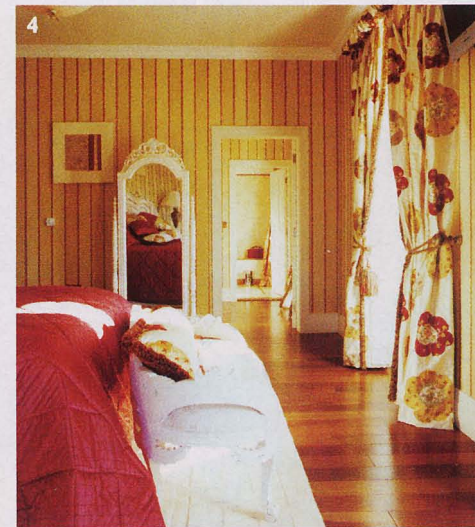
*Favourite room: 'My bedroom – I just love everything in it, from the colours, wallpaper and curtains, to the bedspread'*

he could repeat it in Ireland. His response surprised me: "I could and I would love to". He not only came to Ireland to look at the site, but he also suggested that he could return with everything – including his own plumbers, tilers and plasterers. I was so thrilled with the tiles that I used them wherever it felt right in the house.'

Upstairs are five bedrooms, four of which have en-suite marble bathrooms. 'I love the attention to detail, such as the trim around the archway into the shower,' enthuses Celia. 'I think the matching pillars by the side of the sink give the bathroom a real feel of luxury.'

The master bedroom is a large, light-filled room with views across the fields. The walls are papered in a rich stripe to give warmth and create a restful feel. Initially, Celia found it difficult to find the right furniture. 'Most of the pieces I saw seemed as if they would be dwarfed by the size of the room, but I fell in love with a magnificent French-style bedhead and, once it was in place, I soon found matching pieces with a limewash finish and the room came together well,' she says.

The result is a bright yet tranquil home that has taken perfect advantage of the beautiful countryside and Celia's sense of family heritage that surrounds it. **BH**



## Inspired buys

Celia has a very sleek bathroom. For similar, these accessories are all new to Samuel Heath (0121 772 2303, samuel-heath.com)

Nickel-finish 18-inch towel rail, in the Xenon collection, £66.70.

Tilting 24-inch chrome mirror, in the Skye collection, £118.70.

Nickel-finish soap dispenser in the Xenon collection, £121.

