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'Jaw-dropping' cottage crowned Home of the Year 2017



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Jessica Casey

Salvaged flooring with stiletto marks on it and a traditional farm cottage exterior – RTÉ's Home of the Year 2017 is far from a trendy new build.



The 18th-century cottage in Co Clare has been in Louise McGuane's family for generations.

And the owners of a “jaw-dropping” 18th-century cottage in Co Clare are delighted that their home has been crowned the winner of this year’s top prize.

Dominic McCarthy and Louise McGuane scooped the coveted spot in the competition after their unique home left the judges speechless.

The cottage has been in Ms McGuane’s family for generations, having originally belonged to her grandmother. Ms McGuane’s father still farms the surrounding land.



The home’s kitchen is made from salvaged flooring from the local parish hall.

“We’re delighted – we worked very hard on the house,” Ms McGuane said.

“The competition on Home of the Year was very stiff, there were some amazing houses. We love our home mostly because it allows us to create great memories with our friends and family.

“Our architect Jean Glaude Girard created a house that is beautiful but also functional as a family home. There is a lot of love in our home and we hope to make a lot more memories here.”



Louise McGuane and Dominic McCarthy, owners of RTE's 'Home of the Year 2017'.

With a traditional farm cottage exterior, the interior features cathedral height ceilings, a suspended fireplace and a big picture window that helps bring the landscape into the living room.

Although they carried out significant work on the home, the couple was keen to stay true to the original spirit of the locality when they renovated five years ago.

The home's kitchen is made from salvaged flooring from the local parish hall.



The interior of RTÉ's 'Home of the Year'. Its features include a suspended fireplace and big picture window to maximise the light and allow for views of the surrounding countryside.

"I danced on that floor, as did my mother and grandmother – there's still stiletto marks on it!" Ms McGuane said.

Judges, Deirdre Whelan, Hugh Wallace and Declan O'Donnell, were blown away by the home.

"I was dumbstruck, it took my breath away and gave me goosebumps," Ms Whelan said.

"What a worthy winner," Mr Wallace said.

"This home was quite extraordinary. It was exceptional," he added.

"The height, the light, the windows. This house is an absolute gem," Mr O'Donnell added.

Twenty homes opened their doors to the nation during the series to showcase their style, individuality and quirky nooks.

The runners up were a "sophisticated and brave" Co Wicklow bungalow owned by Gitte Trench; and a romantic and charming railway house owned by Susan Gorman and Alan Ross, also in Co Wicklow.

"Deciding on a winner was exceptionally difficult. These homes are all winners," said Mr Wallace.