

Friday 12 May 2017


 Life Newsletter

 Life Homes

Home of the Year: Inspired kitchen with counters made from local dance hall's floors stuns judges





Patricia Murphy  

April 20 2017 9:00 PM



A couple who split their time between London and Ireland impressed the judges of RTE's Home of the Year, who said the picture windows and "cathedral" ceilings within the County Clare cottage gave them "goosebumps".

Entrepreneur Louise McGuane and her husband Dominic McCarthy renovated an old cottage which once belonged to the Clare native's grandmother, with a vision to pair modern architecture with the old spirit of the home.



10 

Louise McGuane and Dominic McCarthy's Co Clare cottage: The judges were impressed with the kitchen which made use of the local parish hall's old floors. Photo Credit RTE

Speaking on the programme Louise said the home was a perfect combination of old and modern, and pays testament to her travels around the world.

"The job that I had meant that I was travelling extensively. I got to see all these beautiful places, pick up bits of art and buy nice antiques but I had nowhere to put them," she said.



Louise McGuane and Dominic McCarthy's Co Clare Home: Judge Declan O'Donnell was thrilled with the frameless picture window in the Co. Clare cottage. Photo credit: RTE

The intimate kitchen of the cottage thrilled judges Declan O'Donnell, Hugh Wallace and Deirdre Whelan who were impressed by the couple's use of wood salvaged from the local parish hall, which still bears stiletto marks.

"I danced on that floor, my parents danced on that floor, my grandparents danced on that floor," said Louise.



The kitchen is a contrast to much of the house, with its low ceilings and stainless steel counters. A large chalkboard wall personalises the kitchen, a touch which pleased the judges.

Upon entering the home, the couple's focus on volume and height is evident with double height ceilings stretching to the roof of the build, the hall finished with large flagstone tiles.



Louise McGuane and Dominic McCarthy's Co Clare cottage: The living area in Louise and Dominic's home in Clare Photo Credit: RTE

A short angled hallway leads to the couple's open plan living and kitchen space, of which the large picture window framing the outside field is the focus. Architect Declan O'Donnell said the feature seamlessly connected the outdoors with the home's interior.

A 'floating' fireplace is the centre piece of the room, with a chimney breast stretching the length of the room's "cathedral" height ceiling.



Louise McGuane and Dominic McCarthy's Co Clare cottage: A staircase made from old railway sleepers leads way to the couple's comfortable bedroom Photo Credit: RTE

A staircase made from old railway sleepers leads way to the couple's comfortable bedroom at the top of the home, which sits next to a cosy bathroom flooded with natural light.

Interior designer Deirdre Whelan said the home gave her goosebumps, while Declan O'Donnell said he was ready to move in.



Louise McGuane and Dominic McCarthy's Co Clare cottage: Judge Declan O'Donnell was thrilled with the 'floating' fireplace. Photo credit: RTE

"The sheer volume of the rooms and that massive picture window it took my breath away. This home is really at one with nature," she said.

Giving the home a score of nine out of ten, Declan said: "There is a sense of home here and to accomplish that within such crisp architecture is what makes this home special. I'm ready to move in."



Louise McGuane and Dominic McCarthy's Co Clare cottage: The judges were impressed with the kitchen which made use of the local parish hall's old floors. Photo Credit RTE

The home will now be entered into the final of RTE's Home of the Year.

The final of Home of the Year is broadcast on RTE One next Thursday at 8.30pm and you can also catch up on the RTE Player.