



DERKINA INTERIOR DESIGN

Of the interior designers in this feature, Amsterdam-based Derkina Wiegman's work leans the most towards a more restrained approach, demonstrating a talent for applying texture and form to create contrast and emphasise features. 'For this historic villa in Italy, the client loved Italian design, but also Dutch. There is a subtle Dutch sensibility to the scheme, in the sense that it is modernist, embracing bright colours, while also being functional - it needs to be liveable.'

'I looked at the original details of the Italian house and reinterpreted them in a contemporary way. It was important that the family felt at home. By drawing the colours from the existing floor tiles in the hallway, we quickly discovered that these colours aligned with those of their home in Amsterdam. It feels personal to the client and to the house at the same time.'



EVEN ELEVEN

'Architecture plays a central role in our work,' says Michelle Jager, co-founder of Bussum-based Even Eleven. 'Dutch homes often have strong structural features, such as large windows, defined proportions and historical detailing, which should always guide the design. I enjoy working with original elements like woodwork, ceiling details and the relationship between spaces, always aiming to enhance rather than override them.'

For this project, a country house with early Jugendstil features, the studio brought a modern renovation back in line with the home's original character, 'with a strong focus on craftsmanship and detail, such as carved woodwork and a rich layering of textures,' says Michelle. 'We complemented this with luxurious fabrics, soft materials and a carefully balanced colour palette of fresh greens and blues, enriched with warm, deep red accents.'

ROELFIEN VOS

'My work is always inspired by the people I work for - it's important that my clients recognise their own soul,' says Amsterdam interior designer Roelfien Vos. 'We are a very international team, with people from seven different countries, and individuality plays a big role in our schemes. People always want their homes in their image.'

The balance of materials and form in this bar is a prime example of Roelfien's approach. 'I have a great passion for form and the way that it communicates with texture and colour. I find that a very interesting play,' says Roelfien. 'By working with those three elements - colour, texture and form - and studying how they can have a dialogue with each other, you can make sure that it's balanced.' ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY WILLEM DE LEEUW/SPACE CONTENT STUDIO



Going Dutch

There's a change afoot in the Dutch interior design world, as a new group of creatives redefine how a home can (and should) look

FEATURE Ellen Finch

In our weekly review of homes pitched to *Livingetc*, we've noticed something interesting. Many of the most playful, pattern-filled and fascinating schemes we've seen are situated in the Netherlands. It felt like a departure from what we'd typically think of as 'Dutch design' – muted, minimalist, restrained – and had us keeping a keen eye out for more projects from this relatively small European country. And it seems it's a shift that the designers have noticed themselves.

'Dutch designers tend to be modest and unshowy, and this thread persists, but over the last decade the interior design scene has become much more interesting and has developed in notable ways,' says Nicole Dohmen, owner of interior design studio Atelier ND. 'We're seeing many designers embrace bolder colour and a mixing of styles. At Milan, Dutch design was visible across the scene, from Design Academy Eindhoven at Alcovia to Dutch designers at Rossana Orlandi and various Dutch events.'

'I would say Dutch interior design today is quite fluid,' adds Michelle Jager, co-founder of interior design studio Even Eleven. 'While there is still a foundation rooted in clarity, functionality and a connection to architecture, it has become much more layered. There is greater openness to combining styles, materials and historical references, while still maintaining a sense of balance. Minimalism is still present, but Dutch design is also about warmth and

liveability. There is often a quiet richness beneath the restraint, seen in materials, subtle colour use and attention to detail.'

There is a practicality to Dutch design compared to some of its European neighbours. 'In the Netherlands, people value practical things, like a well-designed wardrobe,' says Pascale Tóth, Chef de Bureau at Stock Dutch Design. 'In larger homes, they're more likely to choose a beautiful laundry room over a gym, which you can find on almost every street corner here. People who live in more rural or wooded areas often like to have a mudroom. Those living in the city want to make the most of their square metres, so layout and functionality tend to take priority over design.'

All these designers noted the ever more globalised nature of decor – thanks to social media algorithms, we're all seeing the same things. But they also name-checked the Netherlands' strong pool of creatives. 'The quality of Dutch design is high: for a small country, we have a lot of talent,' says Derkina Wiegman, founder of Derkina Interior Design. 'I look to brands and makers like Dirk van der Kooij, who crafts furniture from recycled materials such as kitchen appliances, and Floris Wubben, who makes really cool ceramic tables and objects. The tables by Mokko Amsterdam are inspired by Japanese craftsmanship. I love that we have so many designers who create furniture that is both a work of art and practical to use, just as Draga & Aurel do in Italy.'

For Linda Lagrand, of Lagrand Interior Design, playfulness is key to Dutch design. 'However, it's important to us to find the balance between playfulness and serenity,' she says. 'We like it when design can spark a smile, but also offer a sense of peace when you come into your home.' In Milan this year, she could relate less to what she saw as a vibe shift – 'lots of steel combined with stones, quite hard materials and

shapes' – but is excited by one material in particular. 'We saw a lot of glass: colourful glass, bubbled glass, glass as artwork. I think these different approaches to the material will become more and more popular.'

Each of the designers we spoke to shares a sense that a good interior scheme is based on craftsmanship, balance and having fun. 'Start with

simplicity and quality: focus on good materials, a calm and balanced colour palette, and a strong connection between architecture and interior,' says Michelle. 'Then add warmth through texture, textiles and carefully chosen details. And perhaps most importantly: don't take design too seriously! Even the most refined interiors benefit from a bit of playfulness and a subtle wink. A space should feel considered, but never precious. A little surprise, an unexpected detail or a mix that isn't "perfect" in a rigid way often makes it feel more alive and human.'

MANY OF THE MOST PLAYFUL, PATTERN-FILLED AND FASCINATING SCHEMES ARE SITUATED IN THE NETHERLANDS



PHOTOGRAPH WILLEMJUN DE LEEUW/SPACE CONTENT STUDIO



ATELIER ND INTERIOR

We turn to Atelier ND Interior, based in Amsterdam, for the studio's personality-filled schemes. 'I enjoy the idea that a house is a shared asset – something you live in and care for, and that you maintain for future inhabitants, even when it is yours,' says founder Nicole Dohmen. 'In addition to our architectural heritage, I draw on Dutch paint brands, garden and flower suppliers and fine ceramics.'

This scheme is a perfect example of the studio's approach. 'It features a refined stucco finish that gives the walls real depth; it's produced by a Dutch brand. I like the colour combinations, with contrast heightened by a lava-stone table by B&B Italia. I love statement pieces and rich colours used in a sophisticated way. The lighting is a bold choice, filling the lofty ceiling and creating a more intimate atmosphere around the dining area.'

