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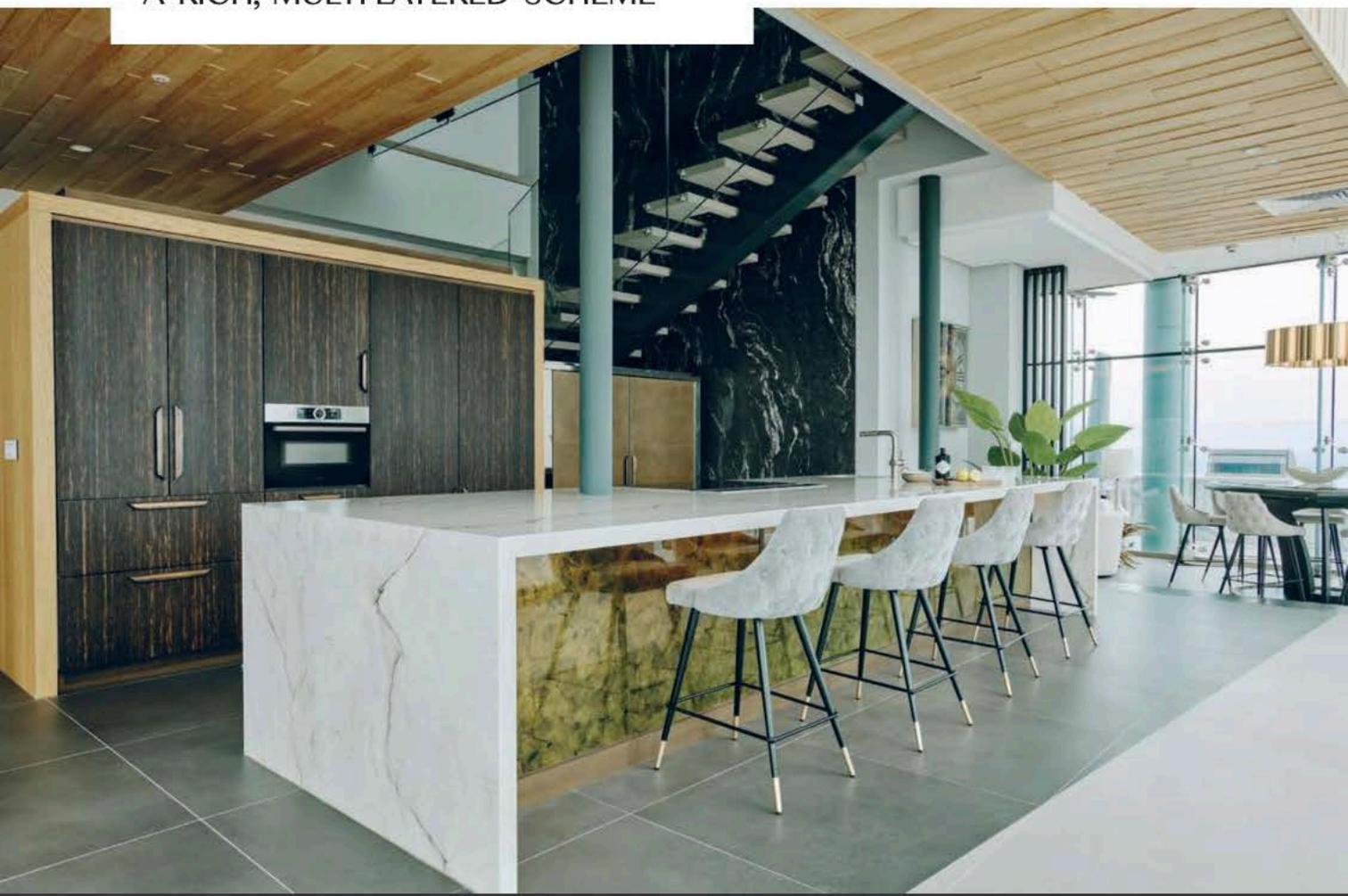
DESIGN MAESTRO

Reflections on the life of creative
visionary Paolo Pininfarina



Seeing the Bigger Picture

REVISITING ONE OF LAST YEAR'S DESIGNERATI AWARDS FINALISTS, WE TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT A LARGE PENTHOUSE KITCHEN FROM LEDBURY STUDIO WHICH BLENDED A RANGE OF MATERIALS TO CREATE A RICH, MULTI-LAYERED SCHEME





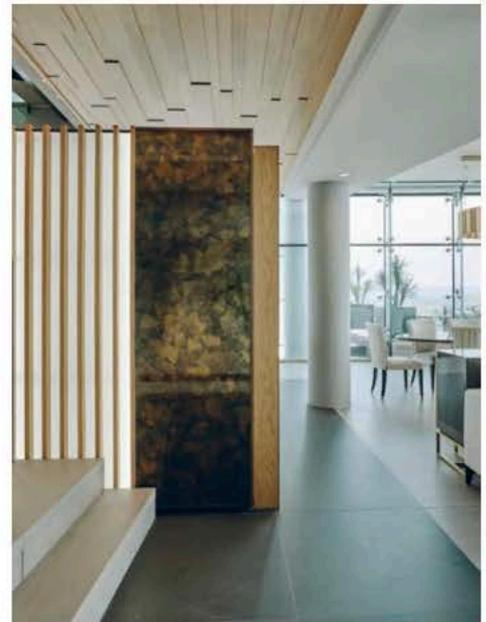
Creating a kitchen and bar area that would perfectly complement this luxurious penthouse in Malta was no small undertaking, but Charlie Smallbone of Ledbury Studio rose to the challenge with a highly detailed scheme that draws on years of experience of working with different materials.

The kitchen comprises a generous island that serves as the centrepiece, backed by a single row of cupboards that provide space for storage, appliances and a breakfast cupboard. The main challenge was that the kitchen is located in the middle of the space without any walls to work with, which meant that all components had to be freestanding and are visible from every angle, including from above when walking up the stairs.

Smallbone said: "To address this, we clad the backs in a mixture of beautiful materials that look good wherever you

stand in the space. On the back of the breakfast cupboard is polished fluted stainless steel. Meanwhile, the microwave section of the tall cupboard features a screen made from wooden slats with backlit opaque glass slivers, and the fridge-freezer is backed in polished mica panels."

The island dominates the main kitchen space and measures almost 5m by 1.5m. In any other space, this could almost be too big, but Smallbone explained: "When you're designing for a space of such huge proportions – with 10m-high ceilings – an average-sized island would look wrong. You have to work with the scale of the building to ensure the island is proportional. We then added to the drama with a waterfall worktop of Mont Blanc quartzite, which 'flows' over the end. On the front, we added polished mica panels and a liquid metal kicker."



The design by Charlie Smallbone of Ledbury Studio was a finalist in the Super Luxe Kitchen Design of the Year at the 2023 designerati awards



“You have to work with the scale of the building to ensure the island is proportional”

He adds that the island's size also made it possible to accommodate many of the working elements of the kitchen within it, as well as generous bar seating. It features a hob with integrated extraction, sink with Quooker boiling-water tap, plus a 900cm-wide built-under oven, a dishwasher and plenty of storage to keep the kitchen clutter-free. The tall cupboard includes a large cabinet with pocket doors, which cleverly hide prep space, storage and additional sink all in one area, so any cooking detritus can be concealed as needed.

There is further storage above and below the microwave oven and a fridge-freezer to the left. Smallbone grounded this

large piece of furniture in the room with black palm veneer for the fronts, with a stained oak frame that is the same shade as the oak ceiling.

Around the corner from the main kitchen is a welcoming bar area, distinct but also managing to feel connected. “To tie the bar's design to that of the kitchen, we once again used black palm for the base cabinets and the same bronze handles,” said Smallbone. “We then harnessed our signature use of metal to create hammered pewter fronts for the wine cabinets. To add a dash of theatre to the space, we chose crystal quartzite for the worktop and framing, both of which are lit from underneath”

Ledbury Studio / ledburystudio.com

