

COMFORT ZONE

De Le Cuona has furnished an apartment above its Chelsea showroom to display its expanded range of fabrics, furniture and paints to best advantage

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Getting the balance right between cushions and curtains, walls and upholstery can be tricky, which is why Bernie de Le Cuona has filled an apartment above her Chelsea showroom with an inspirational combination of her acclaimed fabrics and a range of new products, including handmade curtains, a 10-piece furniture collection and specially created paint shades.

'People kept coming in to the showroom and asking if they could buy the paint we had mixed for the walls or the stools that we made to display some of our fabrics so eventually we decided we should try to offer a more complete service,' explains de Le Cuona.

Having started out selling handmade cushions to interior designers 18 years ago, de Le Cuona gradually switched focus to the production of high-quality fabrics woven from the best natural fibres and her company now enjoys a reputation for creating materials that combine understated elegance with sensuous glamour and comfort.

'My intention when I started the company was just to produce beautiful fabrics,' she says. 'I didn't know much about it — I just

did what I liked and that's the same way I've approached the furniture and other products.'

The furniture collection includes chairs, storage seats, a bench, bedside table and four headboards in simple, timeless forms. 'We tried to combine the fabrics with shapes that complement and show them off really well,' says de Le Cuona, who is also particularly excited about the bespoke, in-house curtain making service that will enable customers to specify fabrics and detailing to match their furniture or colour scheme.

De Le Cuona hopes the showroom and apartment will act as a one-stop shop for designers and retail customers looking to source an entire scheme by showing them how forms, textures and colours work together. 'People coming in are excited when we show them one of our embossed linens actually on the wall,' she says. 'It helps them to visualise how it could look in their home.' The apartment will be stripped bare and refitted four times a year, presenting a rolling display of the brand's wares.

In her quest for quality, de Le Cuona is intent on working with textile manufacturers



HOLISTIC SERVICE
Bernie de Le Cuona has created a one-stop-shop for interior designers and retail customers

based in the British Isles as she believes that there remains a legacy of knowledge and skill in this industry that needs to be supported. 'The issue is that it's very expensive to produce in the UK,' she explains, 'but because we operate in the luxury end of the market, I think it can still work.'

With showrooms to oversee in London, Moscow and New York, regular commitments as a creative consultant for Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein Home and a constantly evolving collection of products to develop, de Le Cuona has a lot to manage but she doesn't seem phased: 'It's an exciting time!' she exclaims. 'We're taking chances and so far it's going well so we'll definitely be looking to expand this more holistic service further in the near future.' www.delecuona.co.uk

