

Your lifestyle guide

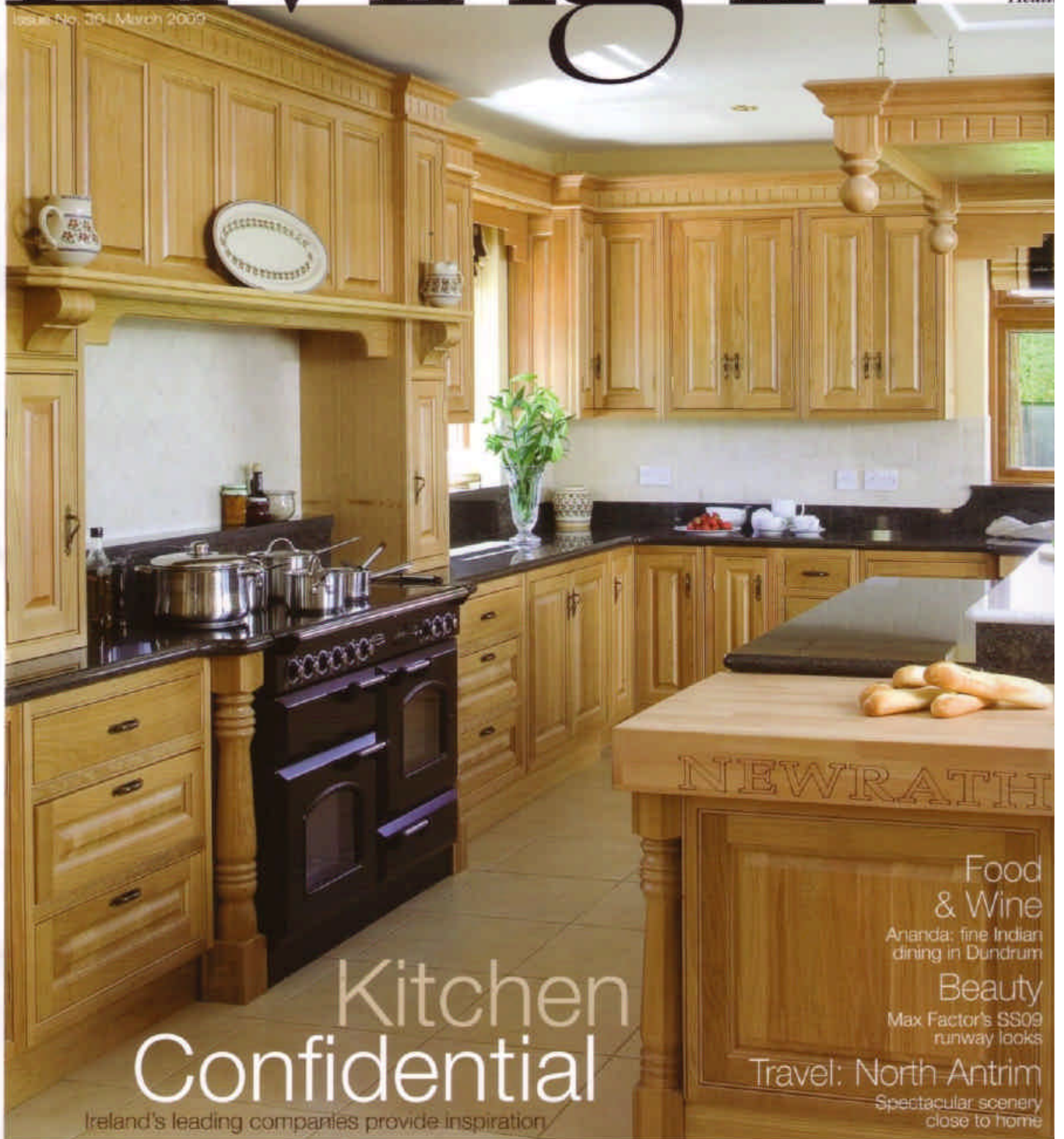
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Ambient Architecture – German Architecture meets Italian flair

When German architect Stefan Hoeckenreiner of Ambient Architecture came to Ireland in 2003 he set up his own architecture practice and specialised in designing domestic extensions for private clients, mainly in the Dublin area. Here he gives Living In an insight into how his designs can transform your home.

Since starting to work in Ireland I knew that my clients should benefit from the experience I have using German architectural style, building techniques and products," says Stefan. His contemporary designs respond to the context in which a building is set and ensure the maximum use of natural light as well as a minimalist approach in the use of forms and materials.

Stefan applies German insulation standards and eco-technologies to his buildings, which makes them 'future proof' and energy efficient. "Because of the harsh climate conditions in Germany I am well aware of the need for properly insulated buildings. Also, by way of design and orientation, I aim to make the best use of solar power to reduce energy consumption."

"We also design kitchens from an architectural point of view and import Italian high-end kitchen furniture into Ireland directly on site. With our low overheads, this is a unique price advantage to our clients." The kitchens are made by TecnoCucina, located near Venice; "this medium-sized, family-run manufacturer produces high-end kitchen units and offers total design flexibility in terms of unit sizes, finish and colour. You are not limited to a colour in a particular range; they will custom spray to match any RAL shade."

To enable them to offer a greater range of services, Ambient Architecture also takes on small-scale kitchen renovation projects along with the sale of a kitchen. For example where a client wants to change only the layout without extending the space, the architects will design the layout, where possible introduce more natural light and manage all the trades involved to fit new tiles, move a wall, plumbing, electrical and painting as required.

"This is our niche," says Stefan, "as architects, we take away the headache of managing such a project and advise on layout and flow, light, tiles, materials and colour concepts. We liaise with builders and

specialists and control the build quality."

"We find it is of great benefit to clients to avail of professional advice and to have someone at hand who understands all aspects of the design and build process and who looks after the entire project; this is what we offer."

Stefan Hoeckenreiner is a Member of the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland

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