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MOVING ON

'WITH EACH NEW HOME I START AFRESH'

January 2015

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COVER STORY



Rich textures and fresh colours help this beach retreat blend beautifully with its surroundings (see page 101).



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WELCOME

I WAS RECENTLY AT A GATHERING TO WISH ONE OF OUR NEIGHBOURS FAREWELL as they are moving away from the village after more than 25 years. Laughingly, they described their new home as exactly the house that everyone tells them they shouldn't be moving to as they enter their seventies. Set between two villages, it is off the road and not in walking distance of any amenities. However, this modern property offers a complete change from their Georgian home, with great views of the countryside, and they are looking forward to moving. In their present home they have a wonderful garden, which has been opened under the National Gardens Scheme. However, their new garden will revolve around the view, with not one herbaceous plant in sight. It made many of us wonder when we might move from our present homes and where we might go – what came out loud and clear was that we all wanted a house we could love without compromises. I hope you have found the home that works for you whatever your stage in life, and I wish you a very happy New Year.

Deborah

DEBORAH BARKER, EDITOR IN CHIEF

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COMING NEXT MONTH - ON SALE 2 JANUARY



DEEP AND MEANINGFUL

A Victorian villa has been given a modern update with rich, moody hues throughout



RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

This 1930s rectory was extended and refreshed to create a sociable family home



COFFEE AND CREAM

How a sophisticated palette of soothing neutrals gives this mews house its calm, elegant feel

JANUARY

TRENDS | WHAT'S NEW | MUST-HAVE BUYS



A WHITE CHRISTMAS

Enjoy the gift of giving this festive season with our selection of bright and humorous hand-picked presents

COMPILED BY ERICA MILLER

1 TUNE IN

Finisterre DAB radio with Bluetooth, £200, Ted Baker

2 CANINE CUTIE

Scottie dog bookends, £45, Graham and Green

3 LIGHT BREW

Teapot lampstand, £135, Osprey London

4 CAFE SOCIETY

Sophie Conran for Portmeirion porcelain cafetière, £44.99, Lakeland

5 FELINE FUN

Cat Monocle tray, £35, Rume

6 MOBILE MUSIC

Boom Boom wireless speaker, £199, The Conran Shop

7 HANG ON

Bamboo coat rack, £59, Dwell

8 GOURMET TREAT

Domed cheese board gift set with biscuits, chutney and a knife, £20, Laura Ashley

9 WAKEY, WAKEY

Breakfast in bed tray, £50, The White Company



FUN AND FABULOUS

Make someone smile with these quirky gifts – there's something for all the family, from food lovers to budding bus drivers

- 1 ON TOP OF THE WORLD**
Europe Map cushion, £20, Aspace
2 CLASSY GLASS
Pop Dot decanter in turquoise, £58, Anthropologie
3 INDULGENT DELIGHTS
Joules Fresh Fields toiletry bag

- with body wash, scrub and lotion, £20, Boots
4 HOME SWEET HOME
The Complete Bee and Bug biome, £25, RHS Shop
5 TALKING ITALIAN
Festa dei Limone hamper,

- £29.95, Carluccio's
6 WHAT A CORKER
Brass Muse bottle opener, £98, Jonathan Adler
7 TICKET TO RIDE
Wooden London bus, £50, Museum of London Shop

- 8 WATCH THE BIRDIE**
Plaid Robin mug (blue tit design on reverse), £10, National Trust Shop
9 SCENTSATIONAL
Mila fragrance diffuser, £45, Notonthehighstreet.com

Q&A

Our resident interiors expert Rachel Leedham is on hand to answer all your decorating queries

SMALL PENDANT LIGHTS

We need to find five industrial-style pendant lights to suit our kitchen scheme of red, cream, wood and antique brass. Most on the market are Dia26cm and upwards but we require something about half this size. Can you help?
SARAH DIGGLE, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

If the red in your kitchen is bright, you might like the striking Duo pendant (shown right) by Anglepoise (02392 224450, anglepoise.com), which also comes in white, black and chrome, Dia14.5cm, £70. For an even slimmer design, Davey Lighting (020 7351 2130, davey-lighting.co.uk) offers a simple Dockside pendant measuring Dia13cm, £259. Also try Holloways of Ludlow (020 7602 5757, hollowaysofludlow.com) for Opal Bell, a clear, blown-glass pendant with a choice of four finishes, including antique brass, Dia14cm, £120, and the Elongated Prismatic pendant, Dia13cm, from £83, available in five finishes.



FAUX CORAL

I'd like to decorate my new bathroom with pieces of coral in different sizes and shapes, but I'm struggling to find anything.
TRISH YALE, BEDFORDSHIRE

Coral is now protected so you won't be able to buy real pieces unless you find vintage ones at an antiques fair. In the past, I've picked up coral at the tri-annual Decorative Antiques & Textiles Fair in London (decorativefair.com); the next one takes place from 20th to 25th January. The other option is to buy replica

coral, and Kelly Hoppen (020 3701 9333, kellyhoppen.com) sells a highly realistic collection made from resin (shown above). There are eight different styles available and prices start from £17 for a small coral sponge. For the festive season, she has added a large sponge design in a gold or silver finish, £32.

BEDSIDE DRAWERS

Please can you tell me where I can purchase the pair of bedside cabinets pictured in the guest bedroom of Gaby and Theo Karpathios' house (p85, September 2014)?
JANIE HILDEBRAND, BY EMAIL

The cabinet you spotted is no longer available, but the New Hampshire bedside cupboard by The Dormy House (01264 365808, thedormyhouse.com) is a good match. It can be supplied unpainted or in a choice of nine colours with an optional antique finish; there is also a range of different handles. The piece measures H68 x W44 x D44cm and starts at £175. Scumble Goosie (01453 731305, scumblegoosie.co.uk) sells a two-drawer Empire chest that also comes unpainted or in a choice of six colours, H66 x W51 x D38cm, £199 unpainted and £399 painted. If you're after an investment piece, have a look at the GUS 036 (shown) from the Gustavian collection at Chelsea Textiles (020 7584 5544, chelseatextiles.com). It is available in a wide selection of colours and finishes, H75 x W50 x D38cm, £745.



RENOVATING A TABLE

The heavy oak table in my kitchen has a shiny varnish on it and doesn't work with the room's scheme. I had thought about painting it, but then wondered if it would be possible to sand the table down and give it a simple matt finish?
AMANDA FLANNIGAN, CAMBRIDGE

I contacted woodcare specialists Liberon (01797 367555, woodcareexpert.co.uk), who offered the following advice: first, you will need to prepare the wood by removing the varnish. You can do this by sanding it or by using the company's Fine Wood Stripper, then neutralising the surface with its Wax & Polish Remover. After this, degrease the wood with methylated spirits. The table can now be refinished, and

the company suggests its Pure Tung Oil for oak, which will enhance the colour of the wood while maintaining a matt appearance. Tutorials for preparing wood and oiling it are available on the website, where you'll also be able to locate your nearest stockist. Another product to try is Bestwood Danish Oil, £17.99 for a litre (0115 963 4396, danish-oil.com). Advice on how to apply the product can be found on its website.



FLORAL FABRIC

I appreciate it was a while ago, but I was hoping you'd be able to tell me where I can find the fabric that was used to cover the sofa on p23 of the November 2011 issue?

EMMA WILLIAMS, BY EMAIL

Despite an extensive search, I haven't managed to find that exact design, but I can suggest a couple of similarly

exuberant oversized florals that have a slightly folksy edge: Harlequin (0845 123 6815, harlequin.uk.com) offers an iconic design called Caspia (shown above), from its Jardin Bohème collection, that's reminiscent of canal boat art, £42m; while Sanderson (0844 543 9500, sanderson-uk.com) first produced its attractive Roslyn print in 1920 and it's now a floral classic, £59m, from the Vintage Fabrics collection.

GOLD ROCOCO MIRROR

The ornate mirror in Anita Grossman and Lee Redmond's bedroom (p148, November 2014) is exactly what I have been trying to find. Do you know where I can buy one like it?
SHELLEY HINDE, BY EMAIL

Anita and Lee showed off their glamorous mirror by placing it against a pale wall. La Maison London (020 3538 4310, lamaisonlondon.com) is a great port of call for elaborate Rococo-style mirrors; you might like its hand-gilded LXV design, H128 x W95cm, £568. Another striking option is the Keswick gold-leaf mirror, which is handcarved from mahogany, H138 x W83cm, £699, from Lucy Willow (0845 803 0988, lucywillow.co.uk). Also try Miss Lala's gold looking glass (shown), H103 x W132cm, £395, from The French Bedroom Company (01444 415430, frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk).



GET IN TOUCH

EMAIL RACHEL LEEDHAM at 25_beautiful_homes@timeinc.com or write to her at 25 Beautiful Homes, Time Inc. (UK) Ltd, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU

A HOME FOR

Kate Pols transformed her dark, 200-year-old cottage into a light-filled home where she can enjoy year-round views of the garden

GARDEN

Kate, who runs Kate Pols Garden Design, created this stunning outdoor scheme.

Trees and shrubs supplied by Hungerford Garden Centre and Yew Tree Garden Centre

FEATURE AMANDA HARLING-COLLINS
PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL

ALL SEASONS



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Detached late 18th-century cottage

LOCATION Berkshire

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, study, utility, cloakroom, orangery, three bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2008

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I used to live in a detached country house nearby,' says Kate.



SITTING ROOM
The roaring fire and giant tree create an idyllic setting for celebrations. Candy Stripe Accent chair, £194, Furniture 123, has this look. See Iznik urn, £320, Oka, for a similar table lamp (right)



KITCHEN
The traditional island has a host of mod cons including a dishwasher, induction hob and built-in oven. Hahn Premium large rectangular ceiling rack in oak, £512, John Lewis, is just as practical. For a similar candlestick try the Nkuku Akello, £44.95, Occa-Home



ORANGERY
This extension contains an informal open-plan living and dining area that's perfect for Christmas entertaining. Gustavian oval back chairs, price on request, Chelsea Textiles. For a rugs like these consider the Tribal Kutchi kilim by Cotswold Mat Co, £89, Notonthehighstreet.com



HALL
An archway of pretty greenery leads guests to the dining area. Antiques Atlas is a good source for ornate table lamps, like these ones

FAVOURITE ROOM
'The orangery. So much light floods into this end of the house, and I'm very proud of the walled garden beyond. I added displays of fragrant white flowers to help create a link to the outside – it's a lovely place to spend time all year round'



Having run her own antiques business for 20 years in a picturesque Berkshire town, Kate Pols decided that it was time to make some changes in her life. 'Apart from antiques, my other great interests are gardens and interior design, so five years ago, when I sold my last house, I began searching for a property that I could nurture, both inside and out,' she says.

'Nothing was of any interest until I received the details for this one, and as soon as I studied the floorplans I realised its potential. The added bonus was that it wasn't listed, which meant there would be fewer

restrictions on any alterations. I drove over to take a look and was thrilled to see that not only did it have lovely views, but that the garden was virtually untouched.'

Without looking inside the property, Kate put in an offer the same afternoon and in due course the sale went ahead. 'During those months of waiting, I drew up plans for the changes I wanted to make,' she continues. 'I didn't see the need for an architect, as I know an excellent builder who'd worked for me before. With his help I submitted the planning application myself.'

Kate's intention was to replace the existing windows on the front elevation with

Gothic designs and to extend the house at one end to create a glass-roofed orangery leading off from the kitchen. 'The kitchen felt dark and claustrophobic before, but now it's bright throughout the day and is a lovely place to be in winter or summer,' says Kate, who designed the extension so that it could be used throughout the year. 'I installed underfloor heating along with a woodburning stove, and in the warmer months I fold back the doors so the orangery and walled garden beyond become one large space, which is wonderful.'

The heavily beamed sitting room at the opposite end of the house has an inglenook fireplace, so that's generally where Kate

DINING ROOM

With an open fire as a backdrop, the candlelit dinner table looks elegant and welcoming.

Create the same effect with the solid glass candlestick by London Garden Trading, £24.95, Notonthehighstreet.com.

Robin Reed Decadence Gold crackers, £18.95 for six, Selfridges & Co, are equally decorative





GUEST BEDROOM
An antique wooden desk doubles as a dressing table. The Rosseau chair, £299 (excluding fabric), Chic Shack, is a good alternative



GUEST BEDROOM
A period-style fireplace and exposed beams add character. Walls painted in Old White estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Antique wooden table lamp with natural cotton shade, £32, J'adore Décor, would suit this room

FAVOURITE SHOP *'Chelsea Textiles is where I head to first whenever I'm working on a new project for myself or a client. The fabric designs are as exquisite as the workmanship'*

spends the winter evenings. 'As soon as it gets dark, I light the fire and curl up on the sofa with a pile of garden books,' she says.

When furnishing the house, Kate opted for a combination of decorative English and continental antiques. 'Mostly it is the sort of furniture I dealt in. I love mixing periods and styles, and I prefer my home to look as though it has evolved over years rather than as a result of a mad rush round the shops.'

Two dining tables allow her plenty of scope for entertaining family and friends. 'The table in the orangery is next to the

kitchen so that tends to be used for casual lunches, but for Christmas parties I set places at the circular table off the hall, and lighting the fire adds a welcoming touch,' says Kate. Her daughter Charlotte lives nearby and grandsons Harry, six, and Zac, four, are frequent overnight guests.

While Kate loves to entertain she maintains that she is a reluctant cook. 'The AGA was here when I bought the cottage and while I appreciate the heat it gives off, I really can't remember the last time I baked a cake,' she says. 'When friends come to stay,

I'm only too delighted when they put on an apron and start preparing dinner!

'Over the years, I've made lots of friends nearby so the festive break is a busy time for me,' says Kate, who takes her inspiration from nature when dressing the house at Christmas. 'I make good use of what I find in the garden and while I'm out walking the dogs. When it comes to decorating the tree, that's something I leave to Harry and Zac, though I might give it a little tweak after they're safely in bed. I tell them Father Christmas popped in for a mince pie and added an ornament here and there.' 25



NATURE'S FINEST

FEATURE JACKY PARKER | PHOTOGRAPHY CLAUDE SMEKENS/CHILLI MEDIA

NEW BUILD



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

New-build farmhouse

LOCATION Belgium

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms, two bathrooms

BUILT 2005

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a duplex apartment above our lifestyle shop and florists in the city,' says Nico.



DINING ROOM
The simple white plates and clear glassware enhance the drama of the festive floral centrepiece. Henriksdal chairs, £90 each, Ikea, would suit this room. LinenMe has a range of similar table linen



Soft neutral shades and natural materials provide the perfect backdrop for Nico and Brigitte Beyls' spectacular floral displays



SITTING ROOM
Unusual ornaments,
like this cherry,
add a whimsical touch.
For a similar console
table try Manado,
£575, Lombok



KITCHEN
Stone flooring brings
a rustic touch to the
modern farmhouse.
Porter Leather bar stools,
£229 each, West Elm, would
suit this kitchen. Find glass
jars and cake stands at Brissi

Nico Beyls and his wife Brigitte have run Polyanthus, their thriving lifestyle shop and florists in the city of Kortrijk in Belgium, for more than 20 years. But, despite working with plants and flowers on a daily basis, they were keen to escape the city for a more rural way of life. ‘We work with nature, but it’s not the same as being in nature,’ says Nico. ‘We wanted to move to the country and live somewhere that would feel like we were on holiday every day.’

The couple couldn’t believe their luck when they found a 200-year-old derelict farmhouse, which was not only surrounded by a forest, but also just a 10-minute drive from their shop in the city centre. ‘As soon as we saw it, we thought, “This is it”,’ says Nico. ‘It felt so peaceful and was perfect for us.’

The farmhouse was uninhabitable and, unfortunately, too dilapidated to

renovate, so the couple decided to pull it down and build a new home from scratch. It took five years for Nico and Brigitte to complete the project, working with architect friend Bernard De Clerck to achieve their dream of a modern-style farmhouse where they – and their two grown-up daughters, Charlotte, 21, and Sophie, 19 – could relax and entertain their family and friends. ‘We also wanted an open space, with views of the surrounding countryside,’ explains Nico.

The family had to be patient when it came to creating their new home. ‘To do the entire project at once would have been too expensive, so we stayed in our apartment in the city and did it in stages,’ says Nico. ‘Each time we had the money, we’d complete the next phase of the project.’

Working with their architect and builders, the couple were able to salvage a few of the original materials from the

SITTING ROOM
Alcove doors that hide clutter ensure the fireplace is the centre of attention.

Bespoke Fireplace Designs offers a made-to-measure service. Brunel coffee table, £129, Out & Out Original, is an alternative

FAVOURITE ROOM

‘The sitting room’s open fire makes it the perfect place for curling up with a good book on a cold winter’s day’





MASTER BEDROOM

A floating shelf is a sleek storage/display solution.

Navy St David's Cross Wool throw, £175, and cushion, £69.95, Melin Tregwynt at Liberty, would create a cosy cocoon



BATHROOM

Built-in cupboards and a wall of mirrors increase the sense of space.

Try Archive 800 basins, £120 each, and Trend Freestanding bath, £589, all Bathstore, for a similar suite

old building to incorporate in their new home. Reclaimed bricks were used around the front door, and some of the stone from the farmhouse was used for the fireplace in the sitting room. 'It was important to us to keep some essence of the old farmhouse,' says Nico.

He and Brigitte positioned the windows to make the most of the views outside. They were also careful to ensure that the new house reflected the countryside that surrounds it. 'We did that with rustic touches, such as the exposed oak beams in our bedroom,' says Nico. They also used wood flooring in the three bedrooms and two bathrooms upstairs, as well as the cosy sitting room downstairs, while in the kitchen and dining room they went for practical natural stone floors.

To keep things modern, they chose a neutral palette. 'We've used cream, sand and earthy tones,' says Nico. 'And we like to create bold accents with

flowers and colourful pieces from the shop.' With an emporium of gorgeous homeware and flowers on hand, Nico enjoys regularly changing the look of the family home to chime with the seasons. 'I like to keep it looking fresh, so every three months I swap lots of pieces,' he explains. 'Vases, cushions and ornaments move from the shop to our home and then back again. Every season it feels like new.'

For winter, Nico has chosen red as his theme in the main living areas, culminating in a lavish display of roses, rosehips and red berries, all placed in small white vases and surrounded by pretty flickering tea lights on the dining table. 'Brigitte and I both enjoy cooking, but much of the fun of Christmas for me is in decorating the house and the table,' says Nico. 'We love having friends and family over for dinner – it's what life is all about, and this house is perfect for it.' 25

SCENIC ITALY

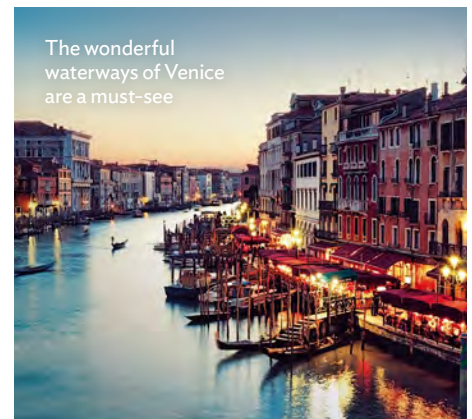
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Eight days half-board from £809pp

The Sorrento peninsula and the Bay of Naples is one of the most beautiful and historically fascinating corners of Europe. Add to that the excellent food and wine, and you have all the ingredients for an unforgettable tour.

SELECTED DEPARTURES APRIL TO OCTOBER 2015, INCLUDES:

- Return flights to Naples from most UK airports and Dublin
- Seven nights in a choice of three- and four-star hotels in Sorrento with breakfast and dinner
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- Visit to the volcano of Vesuvius
- Guided tour of Pompeii, a city frozen in time
- Visit to the Naples Archaeological Museum
- Walking tour of charming Sorrento
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LAVISH LUXE

Lucy Goodman's coastal home is a fabulous mix of rustic finishes, glamorous buys and vintage finds

FEATURE JO MESSENGER | PHOTOGRAPHY FRASER MARR



UNIQUE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY A ground-floor apartment set in a Grade II listed Georgian townhouse

LOCATION Brighton

ROOMS Hall, family room, sitting room, kitchen-diner, cloakroom, three bedrooms (all en suite), dressing room, roof terrace

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a Victorian terraced house nearby,' says Lucy.

HALL

The bespoke staircase leads up to a secluded roof terrace with a skylight above to let in natural light. Walls painted in Brinjal estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

FAMILY ROOM

Colourful cushions, throws and rugs enliven the muted palette.

Kivik two-seat sofa and chaise longue, from £630, Ikea. Walls painted in Skimming Stone estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres; woodwork painted in Elephant's Breath estate eggshell, £51 for 2.5 litres, both Farrow & Ball







I KITCHEN-DINER
Lucy didn't want a formal run of cabinets so instead teamed an island with a smaller freestanding sink unit and painted wall cupboards. A vintage union flag hides the boiler.

Walls painted in Great White estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres; woodwork and cabinetry painted in Plummatt estate eggshell, £51 for 2.5 litres, both Farrow & Ball. The Barrington steel ceiling pendant, £70, John Lewis, is comparable



Lucy Goodman is no stranger to finding unusual properties. She's had lots of practice, having moved every three years in recent times. 'I'm used to getting itchy feet and looking for a new project,' she says, referring to this apartment in Brighton, which she bought in 2011. 'It needed work but that didn't faze me. I've spent most of my life reviving old properties.'

Looking at the exterior, it's hard to imagine how one level of a townhouse contains so much

space, but the rear opens into a huge room, with an original glass dome ceiling, now Lucy's bedroom. 'When it was built back in the 1800s, this was designed as a gallery,' she explains. 'Luckily when I bought the apartment, the dome was still in good condition – it's amazing looking up at the stars at night. I'd love to find out more of its history.'

It took some vision to rework the apartment's living areas, but Lucy's understanding of period properties and eye for design came into play. 'The

DECORATING TIP 'If you buy vintage taps, make sure they've been completely refurbished; sometimes the washers don't work and it can cost a lot to repair them'



previous owner had tried their hand at restoration, but the space didn't flow properly,' says Lucy. 'The kitchen and living room at the front of the property were arranged as three small separate rooms and the ceilings and floors were all different heights.' Fortunately, Lucy had the courage to strip it back to its bare bones and reconsider the space as a whole. When it came to the vast proportions of her bedroom, she decided to go back to basics. Along with her daughter Uma, 12, she pulled off a new layer of plaster from the walls to reveal

the old plaster beneath. Then they applied a couple of coats of PVA glue to seal them.

The flooring in the hall is another example of Lucy's eclectic style. She bought salvaged boards with the intention of having them stripped and stained to match those in other rooms, but found that she liked their irregular textures and tones and decided to leave them as they were. 'I suppose you could describe the look here as "rough luxe"; vintage teamed with a little glamour, and urban and industrial pieces mixed

2 FAMILY ROOM

The original arch makes an impressive entrance.

For a similar light try the Shona Teardrop pendant, £250, Bhs

3 SITTING ROOM

This looks out on to the seafront with a bird's eye view of the Brighton Eye and pier.

Tam Tam stool, £17.40, Made In Design. Holdenby mirror, £195, The Chandelier & Mirror Company, is a good alternative

MASTER BEDROOM

The wood panelling was restored and the floors sanded and varnished. Lucy stripped the walls to reveal the original plaster complete with 1920s graffiti.

PS Maskros pendant light, £90, Ikea. Linen duvet set, £60; linen pillowcases, £15 each, all H&M

FAVOURITE ROOM

'The planners suggested using this space as a living room, but with the magnificent glass dome, I knew it would make an amazing bedroom'





I



BATHROOM
Period-style fittings give this space old-fashioned charm. The Winchester bath, £1,481, CP Hart, is a match



HALL
Lucy made a feature of the doorways by painting the woodwork in a bold colour. The solid wood industrial shelving unit, £395, Eastburn Country Furniture, is equally rustic



2

in,' she says. 'I like nothing more than wandering around salvage yards and antiques fairs.'

Lucy's whole apartment is furnished with a surprising collaboration of old and new, investment pieces and high-street finds. In the kitchen-diner, bespoke cabinetry sits alongside a modern dining table. In the guest rooms, where Lucy's grown-up children, Freddie, Lily and Tareq stay when they visit, vintage furniture is teamed with patterned floor tiles. 'I find beauty in many different things and each item in my home tells a story,' says

Lucy. 'I often choose pieces to restore and then decide I like them just the way they are.'

Influences from Lucy's holidays to California, India, Turkey and Greece can be found all around the apartment. As well as her passion for travel, Lucy is also developing her flair for design by starting an interiors business. 'It's aimed at inspiring people to come up with their own schemes,' she says. 'It's not about inflicting my style on clients but about helping them to recognise their own, and that's very satisfying.' 25

I GUEST BEDROOM
A masculine feel was created by using moody tones and lighting. The Madrid faux-leather frame, £199, Very, would look just as good in this setting

2 UMA'S BEDROOM
Patterned floor tiles add an Eastern flavour. Henley Warm ceramic floor tiles, £49.33sq m, Topps Tiles. Try the four-poster bed in Glossy White, £2,895, Love French Interiors



DUTCH *courage*

Robert van der Linde's brave design decisions have transformed a small riverside house into a rural idyll for his young family

FEATURE PENNY BOTTING
PHOTOGRAPHY HOLLY MARDER/INSIDE LIGHT

SITTING ROOM

'I chose a combination of paint colours that would make the room warm and cosy. The sofa is my own design,' says Robert.

Walls painted in Charleston Gray estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Mouflon mount on chimney breast, price on application, De Jong Interiors

UNIQUE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Traditional Dutch stone house
LOCATION Just outside Rotterdam, Holland

ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen, four bedrooms, three bathrooms

PURCHASED 2006

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I lived in a bachelor apartment in downtown Rotterdam,' says Robert.



STAIRS

The wood used for the steps came from a 150-year-old piece of oak from a farm in France. Stairwell painted in Off-Black estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



Following a divorce, Robert van der Linde moved from a countryside farm into an exclusive bachelor apartment in downtown Rotterdam. 'It was on the 33th floor, almost in the clouds and had a concierge service and a pool for me and my two young daughters, Zarah and Mirthe,' says Robert. 'It was lovely, but as the girls got older, I decided to look for a property with a garden.' After searching for about four months, he found a tiny house with beautiful, natural surroundings. 'It's on the small river Rotte, from which Rotterdam gets its name,' he says. 'Being on a waterfront was really important for me as I love boats and my girls love swimming. So when I heard from a neighbour that the house was up for sale, I found the owner's number, called, and within 10 minutes we'd struck a deal.'

Although Robert had big ideas for the property, he decided to move into the little house straightaway to check that he really liked the area and, most importantly, the whole feeling of the place. 'I loved it from the moment I stepped over the threshold,' he says. 'It feels as though it's in the middle of the countryside, but it's only a 30-minute cycle ride to downtown Rotterdam.'

Once he was happy with the plot, Robert began drawing up plans. 'I wanted a perfect house for my family – something that felt like a relaxing holiday home. There's a lovely feeling of freedom here, and it's close to my ex-wife and the girls' school, so when they're older, the kids can cycle to both,' he says.

When it came to the plans to restructure the property, Robert decided on a totally new project, making use of his talents. 'My job is designing houses, interiors and landscapes

**FAVOURITE
DESIGN FEATURES**

'I really like the fireplace and the doors, which I designed and made myself in my carpentry workshop'



KITCHEN

The suede curtains are made from Tuscan sheepskin, supplied by a fur company.

For similar suede try the Sahara range, £45.50m, Fabrics & Papers. Kitchen sink made from concrete. Kitchen units all handmade from oak



for clients, so it was nice to do something for myself,' he says. The project took three months and involved expanding the house from a single-storey property into a home with three bedrooms, one bathroom and two dressing rooms. 'When work started, I was a bachelor with two daughters. When the house was almost ready, I met the love of my life, Gabriella, and we had another beautiful daughter, Linde! As a result, one dressing room became my third daughter's bedroom and we built an additional bathroom.'

For the decor, Robert had a clear idea of what he wanted. 'My inspiration comes from all sorts of sources – new people, scenery, the media and magazines. On the ground floor I chose dark colours, similar to those in Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum.'

When working with clients, Robert is very aware of the surroundings and has the same considerations in his home. 'I work with natural fabrics and materials, and colours are vital. But what's more important is that a person's attention goes to the right focal point, and that visually, nothing jars,' he says.

'Our house is a very sociable space that makes everyone feel at home,' he continues. We love the unique location. The only thing we might do in the future is build a pool in the garden, although the kids seem at home just swimming in the river.' 25

MASTER BEDROOM
'The bed is bespoke and extra large. We spend 30 per cent of our lives asleep, so I want to sleep like a king.' Bedside tables are made from Scottish reindeer hide. For similar try the range at City Cows, from £119



BEST BUY 'I love the bathroom, but the couch by the fireplace is my favourite piece of furniture'



BATHROOM
'The oversized basin is made from natural stone. Find similar grey towels at House of Fraser – try the Christy Collection in Pewter, from £6. For metal storage, try The Old Cinema'

INSIGHT

Using rustic materials

Wowed by the natural look of Robert van der Linde's Dutch home? Pick organic materials, rough finishes and soft textures to recreate his style



From exposed beams and brick walls to sheet metal and vintage timber, the natural materials woven into the fabric of Robert van der Linde's home combine to create a tactile environment. This look can be achieved architecturally or decoratively – either way, the key is to blend the features and ensure you soften them with texture.

A HOUSE IN ITS ELEMENT

Rustic decor is characterised by unfinished or roughly finished building materials whose natural qualities are allowed to show through rather than being covered with plaster or paint. The result is a home that blends with its environment, and breathes naturally in its surroundings. The look can be achieved as simply as exposing the qualities of the original building – removing coverings to reveal brickwork, timber joists or flooring. These features can then be

complemented with reclaimed or untreated timber fittings. This is a popular approach for new-builds, as it creates an organic, weathered feel. Older properties can equally benefit from this aesthetic, particularly where the site has an unusual history or the original building is constructed from good-quality materials. A rustic style can also work well in a contemporary or urban setting, such as a slick city apartment or a warehouse conversion, as well as in a country home for extra charm.

NATURAL SELECTION

The secret is to ensure your home is comfortable. Although exposed brick and galvanised metal look great, they are not always the easiest materials to live with – so if you've introduced rustic elements architecturally, try adding tactile pieces to cocoon the scheme. Deep wool or silk rugs work well on polished concrete and roughly hewn wooden floors; faux fur throws and cashmere cushions will add a touch of warming luxe; and painted elements and soft lighting – warm yellow rather than cool white – will make the space feel cosy. Finally, complete the look with natural decorative pieces such as driftwood lamps, handmade furniture and weathered wood.

EXPERT EYE

‘Enhance the effect with an exposed brick wall, add cast-iron legs to wooden tables and use driftwood or stone to create lamp bases. Contrast these elements with soft furnishings such as comfortable chairs, candles and ambient lighting’

ANGIE PINKNEY, INTERIORS SPECIALIST, DECARA HOME

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE ...



- If you are aiming for a rustic approach in a new-build project, decide at an early stage which structural features of the building are to be left on show rather than covered over.
- You can often use reclaimed brickwork or other materials found on site, which anchor the new building to the site's history.

● Rustic materials add interest to most settings. Introducing them is as simple as replacing carpets with a reclaimed timber floor and choosing a zinc or concrete kitchen worktop.

● Creating this look requires a larger initial investment of time and money in terms of quality materials and design, as well as skilled installation. But, once fitted, the materials are low-maintenance and will improve and gain character as they age, providing a visual record of the property's history. They are also usually more sustainable and cost-effective over the building's lifetime.

JULIAN COWIE, JULIAN COWIE ARCHITECTS

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RUSTIC RETREAT

*Deep in the Swedish countryside,
Marica Lådhö has filled her home with a
collection of treasured and vintage finds*

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE | **PHOTOGRAPHY** CECILIA MÖLLER/LIVING4MEDIA

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

19th-century farmhouse

LOCATION Sweden

ROOMS Hall, kitchen,
dining room, sitting room,
two bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2003

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived
in Stockholm,' says Marica.



KITCHEN

Marica favours a freestanding theme. 'I like to be able to reach utensils easily, plus I enjoy the casual atmosphere of this scheme,' she explains.

For similar freestanding units try Olofstorp, from £170, Ikea. Source similar botanical prints, from £20 unframed, £80 framed, at rhsprints.co.uk

Walking through the quiet country fields on the approach to this traditional red-painted Swedish farmhouse, it's not hard to see why Marica Lådhö and her late husband Marten swapped the bustle of Stockholm for this backwater idyll. Located in a peaceful spot in the middle of a potato field between the medieval towns of Vadstena and Skänninge in southern Sweden's East Gothland province, the plot incorporates the 19th-century main house and two outhouses.

'We moved here because of my job,' explains Marica, who works in retail and whose grown-up daughter Sofia lives further south in Skåne. 'We fell in love with the beauty of the plot along with its size which meant we could have horses, as well as our cat and dog.' Now,

more than a decade since the relocation, evidence of Marica's love for her home is everywhere and time has mellowed its appearance.

The rustic, freestanding kitchen looks as though it has evolved along with the property, although Marica installed it when she moved in, customising vintage cupboards with glass doors. 'The simplicity suits the building and its surroundings,' she explains, 'I like an eclectic look but with everything to hand. I found a simple oak, open-shelved unit at a local flea market and gave it a new lease of life by painting it pale blue, and then I added a twist by topping it with Spanish tiles.'

The property's heritage played a big part in Marica's respectful treatment of it. During the renovation of the kitchen, she peeled back layers of wallpaper and uncovered a small window through to the





SITTING ROOM

Tucked under the eaves, this room is flooded with natural light. White-painted walls and shallow shelves show off Marica's books, artwork and mementos. Ektorp three-seater sofa, £475, Ikea. An Original BTC Task Polished Aluminium Floor Lamp, £420, Heal's, is similar to Marica's reading lights. The Karlstad round dining table, £1,185, Oka, is comparable to her antique round table, and Ikea's Tärnby, from £70, is a good match for the flatwoven rug



DESIGN TIP 'You'll never go wrong if you mix classic pieces with personal treasures that mean something to you'

DINING ROOM

'I love pattern and colour and I'm inspired by nature,' says Marica.

The Firenze dining table, £325, John Lewis, is a similar style to Marica's upcycled white table.

Match the wall colour with Cornforth White estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball





LANDING
‘I love that this house has a history – every room has a story.’ Ikea Leran rattan pendant light, £27. Shopstyle sells similar Native American-inspired throws, from £285

dining room, which she thought charming, and kept. ‘I find myself moving pieces around to suit the seasons,’ admits Marica. ‘Pastel pottery or blue hydrangeas look beautiful in summer sun, while others, such as rich rugs and cosy throws, suit a mellow winter light.’

The dining room features an upcycled painted table and chairs that Marica has had for 30 years, anchored by a colourful pendant overhead. Walls are filled with botanical prints, family photographs and casually hung bags, hats and throws – all reflective of her love of pattern. Firm favourites are US-company Pendleton’s hand-knotted rugs, inspired by Native American culture. ‘They give a glorious splash of colour,’ reflects Marica. ‘I’ve been collecting them for years.’

Upstairs, the sitting room fits snugly in the eaves, flooded by light from a window and brightened by white tongue-and-groove. Large

floor lamps make the sofa an ideal spot for reading and among Marica’s favourite books on display are numerous tomes on wood. ‘Useful, considering how much timber I need in winter,’ she laughs.

Traditional, grey-painted furniture and pastels keep the look light in the master bedroom, where a rustic iron bed surrounded by objects and frames propped on shallow shelving takes centre stage. ‘I love pieces that have a strong DNA and tell a story,’ reflects Marica. ‘The sense of connection created by a vintage piece is important to me.’

After a hearty winter walk or ride through the adjoining fields, Marica is always ready to return home. ‘I travel for work and enjoy contrasts – I could be sitting in a boutique hotel in New York one day or lighting the woodburning stove here the next. But nothing has yet given me greater pleasure than the simple, rural life.’ 25



MASTER BEDROOM

Marica’s painted tongue-and-groove panelling and beams accentuate the rustic nature of her home. Create a similar country style with Feather & Black’s wrought-iron Palio bed, £675. An Oratorio tapered shade, from £30, John Lewis, is similar to the one on Marica’s table lamp



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Marie console table, £345;
Diamond cut glass vases, from
£27.50; Silvered peahen, £49.50 for
a pair; Bacchus metal urn, £44.50



Foxwood leather
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Anjou extending table,
£695; Orsay French chairs,
£425 for a pair; Orsay
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HALL

A large Christmas tree is an impressive feature in this generously proportioned space.

For a similar lamp try the Emilia, £44.99, Maisons du Monde. The Aubusson handmade rug, from £850, John Lewis, would suit this setting



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Georgian manor house

LOCATION

County Carlow, Ireland

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, TV room, study, library, music room, utility room, cloakroom, seven bedrooms, six bathrooms

PURCHASED 1997

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'My London flat, which I still own and spend time in,' says Christopher.

WINTER *welcome*

Christopher Bielenberg's home is a relaxed and elegant place to spend the festive season

FEATURE PENNY CRAWFORD-COLLINS | PHOTOGRAPHY PHILIP LAUTERBACH



KITCHEN

Christopher's family enjoy cooking together and this room is big enough for everyone.

Reconditioned four-oven Aga, from £4,900, John Wray Country Stoves. Ruby Kilim Rustic Red Holiday decorative tablecloth, £35, Saffron Marigold, is a good match

There can be few houses more suited to Christmas entertaining than Christopher Bielenberg's handsome home. The generously sized reception rooms all have open fireplaces that play a key role in creating a cosy and magical atmosphere, while the dining room with its huge table is the perfect setting for festive lunch with friends and family.

A ranch-style drive through horse-filled paddocks leads visitors to this 18th-century house, which is situated in beautiful countryside on Ireland's Carlow/Wicklow border. Retired company director

Christopher bought the property in 1997 and, although structurally in good condition, it required extensive redecoration. His plan was to turn it into a comfortable home without diminishing its innate charm.

'Although the rooms are large with high ceilings and could probably take dramatic colours, I opted for a neutral scheme that wouldn't date,' reflects Christopher. 'Instead, I've introduced colour and texture through accessories and artwork. I wanted the house to feel elegant without being too formal.' The well-proportioned rooms combine a sense of grandeur with homeliness and each has been furnished with



1 KITCHEN

Open shelves keep essential items within easy reach.

Create this look with Ekby Östen shelf in White, from £5, Ikea. Falcon White round enamel bread bin, £32, Home Cook Online, is similar

2 DINING ROOM

A blazing fire and candlelight create a welcoming effect.

Try Kelvin Furniture Georgian reproduction oval medium extending dining table in mahogany, £935, Furniture123. Brissi silver-plated double champagne bucket with handles, £189, John Lewis, is comparable

3 DRAWING ROOM

The piano is played often over the festive period.

Piano, price on application, Holland Pianos. For a similar coffee table try Maharani, £225, John Lewis. Kashkuli Gabbeh Persian rug, £303, iRugs.co.uk, would look good here

FAVOURITE ROOM

'The study has plenty of shelving for all my books. It's comfortable and light – perfect for relaxing in'



a thoughtful mix of contemporary art and antiques. 'Along with updating the decor, the most important job was modernising the bathrooms,' explains Christopher. 'They were very antiquated, so each was retiled and equipped with showers and modern fittings.'

The kitchen is now a welcoming room, dominated by an AGA at one end and a large table and sofa at the other. Everyone in Christopher's family, which includes four grown-up children, enjoys cooking and

this room is usually a hive of activity, particularly at Christmas. 'There's always a lively atmosphere – even the grandchildren get involved in preparing treats,' says Christopher. 'It's a real party house.'

When it comes to decorating for the season, Christopher keeps things simple with natural materials and candles on the mantelpieces and windowsills. 'I buy the tree locally and always take time to select one with just the right height and proportions,' he says. 'It's positioned



LIBRARY

At Christmas, guests gather here to play board games. Handmade Mazar Kilim stool, £489, Olney Rugs, is a close match. Large log basket, £70, Sue Kirk Willow Baskets, is equally rustic



TV ROOM

This is a comfortable spot to relax and watch films. Canton black coffee table, £645, Lombok, is an attractive alternative



BATHROOM
Views over the garden can be enjoyed from this luxury tub. Trafalgar roll-top slipper bath, £300, Victorian Plumbing, is similar



GUEST BEDROOM
Christopher has created a cosy space up in the eaves. The White Company sells Egyptian cotton bedlinen, £35 for a single duvet cover. Atkinson Harlequin double wool blanket in Ochre, £99, The Wool Company, has the same look



MASTER BEDROOM
The rich tones of wooden furniture and vibrant cushions add accents of colour. For a sleigh bed like this one, consider Versailles Tiroir, from £695, Island Furniture Co. Primrose & Plum linen button-back armchair, £525, Notonthehighstreet.com, is a comparable design



BATHROOM
Sleek fittings look chic. Try Aquaglass D-shaped Quadrant shower enclosure with tray, £435, Bathroom Hunter



in the hall for maximum impact and adorned with decorations and treasured pieces I've collected over time. This year, I'm opting for red and gold with a pop of neon pink added to the mix.'

Over the festive period Christopher's house is often brimming with guests. Due to his German ancestry, celebrations usually start on Christmas Eve, when all the fires are lit so that the house is warm and atmospheric. 'We have mulled wine, roast goose and red cabbage, before opening presents from our German relatives,' says Christopher. 'Then,

on Christmas Day we have a glass of champagne and a leisurely lunch in the dining room with turkey and all the trimmings.'

Realising the property's potential as a venue for entertaining, Christopher now occasionally rents out the space for private parties, which provides some extra income and helps with the upkeep of the place. 'It also gives me great pleasure that others can enjoy this elegant home,' he says. 'It's a splendid building on a grand scale, but it feels cosy and relaxing, and that's precisely why we love it.' 25



MASTER BATHROOM
Wood panelling gives this space period charm. Tongue-and-groove painted in Bone White elements eggshell, £50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth

FAVOURITE SHOP
'I love auctions – you can always find unusual pieces to make your home more interesting'

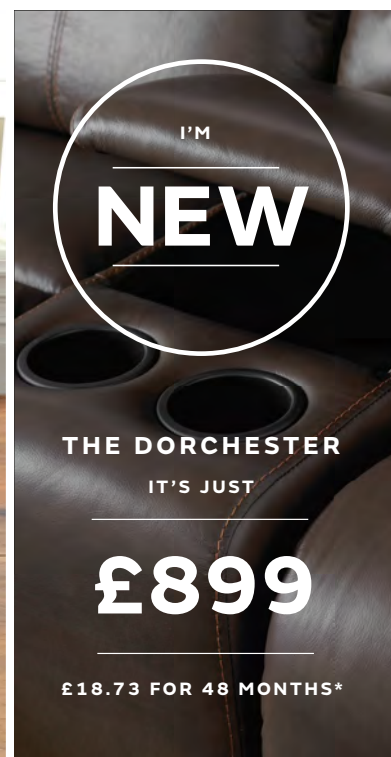
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SITTING ROOM

The Christmas tree is displayed in all its glory against a simple white painted wall.

Arne Jacobsen Swan armchairs, £2,828 each, The Conran Shop. The Pearl rug, £310, John Lewis, would work here

A fresh APPROACH

Betina and Simon Stampe's 1930s property epitomises Scandi chic, with neutral shades providing the backdrop to ever-changing accessories

FEATURE JANE BOWLES
PHOTOGRAPHY MARTIN SØLYST/LIVING INSIDE

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached villa, built in 1935

LOCATION

Herning, Denmark

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen-diner, family room, study, five bedrooms, four bathrooms

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a smaller lakeside house nearby,' says Betina.



KITCHEN-DINER

Striking lighting and artwork enliven this monochrome scheme.

Copy Betina's style with Beads White Octo pendant, £1,800, Heal's; Integra Astral White kitchen, from £4,313, Magnet; Icelandic glass table in Black, £2,155, Furniture Village; and Tolix 'H' stools, £180 each, Made In Design



SITTING ROOM

Shape and pattern is subtly introduced through the bookcase and retro pendant.

Random bookcase by MDF Italia, £1,709, Made in Design. PH Artichoke pendant light, £5,295, Skandium, is similar. Woodfire Nx10i inset stove, £2,522, Stoves Online, has the look of this one

DESIGN FEATURE *'I love the sheer spaciousness of our home, and that it has four bathrooms, which is ideal for a family of six'*





FAVOURITE ROOM *'It has to be our open-plan kitchen, because we all gather there in the evening and sit and talk for hours'*



FAMILY ROOM
A wooden table and woollen rug bring texture and softness to this cosy spot.
 Bloomingville Elm wood coffee table, £599, Lagoon. Flokati pure wool rug, from £35, John Lewis. Acapulco armchairs, £314 each, Made In Design. Eka at Notonthehighstreet.com has crochet cushions, £50 each

Betina Stampe's personal style is a skilful blend of contemporary and vintage, and this is also reflected in her home, a large villa in Jutland, Denmark. An interior designer by profession, Betina is the cofounder and creative director of Danish furniture and home accessories company Bloomingville, which she runs with her husband Simon. 'Christmas is the only real break we get, as our office closes over the holiday season,' says Betina. 'It means we can completely switch off and relax with the family.'

When it comes to Christmas, Betina is the first to admit that she's a traditionalist at heart. 'I love it, it's such a wonderful time. There are always lots of candles and colourful decorations – our home looks really festive,' she says. 'In early December, I decorate the house and make marzipan goodies with our four daughters, Sofie, 18, Simone and Emma, 16, and Alberte, 12. As Simone's birthday falls on Christmas Eve, we always have a double celebration. On the day itself, the whole family joins us for a traditional meal

– here, in Denmark, that means roast duck, red cabbage and white potatoes, followed by Danish Christmas rice pudding.'

Fortunately, there's plenty of room for everyone in their large villa. 'Back in 2010, we realised we'd outgrown our previous house, and desperately needed more space,' explains Betina. 'So we hired a real estate broker to carry out our property search, and were delighted when he found this place. It's in a great location, right in the city centre, and had just been completely renovated, so I could focus exclusively on the interior design and styling, which was ideal.'

With a spacious open-plan layout, white walls and pale wooden flooring, the villa provided the perfect blank canvas. 'I like to create a monochrome background with neutral paintwork first, then add cool Nordic shades, such as charcoal grey,' explains Betina. 'This is then offset with splashes of colour through soft furnishings and accessories, which vary according to the seasons and my changing personal tastes. It's a great way to decorate, as you can alter

the feel of your home by making just a few simple alterations.' Textured wool rugs are used to soften the streamlined, contemporary decor, while feature wallpaper in striking patterns adds interest and colour in the bedrooms.

Betina's seasonal approach to interior design is very much in evidence after Christmas, when she welcomes in the new year by giving her home a quick makeover. 'I like to switch everything around, and set the theme for spring,' she says. 'The tree and decorations are taken down and replaced with smaller items, such as vases, votives and cushions.' These accessories are all in a palette of pretty pastel shades: pale rose, mint green, lemon yellow and sky blue. Betina then adds spring flowers, such as early hyacinths and rose-coloured tulips.

'When I've finished making my changes, it's time to get ready to party, as we always have a big New Year's Eve celebration with our friends and family,' says Betina. 'Giving your home a fresh look is a great way to start 2015, and I thoroughly recommend it.' 25

MASTER BEDROOM

A crochet bedspread and cushions give this room a vintage feel.

Recreate the look with Bedeck's Honesty crochet throw, £75, House of Fraser, and Laura Ashley's Issy pendant light, £80



BATHROOM

With a soothing palette of white and muted green, this space is ideal for a long, relaxing soak.

Lotus mosaic tiles, £10.96 per sheet, Mosaic Tile Shop, have the look of these. Godmorgon/Odensvik two-drawer cabinet, £250, Ikea, is similar. Graham and Green's Roebuck antlers, £69, would work here



INSIGHT

Contemporary heating

Modern options like Betina Stampe's inset fireplace are the perfect fusion of style and functionality

Nothing beats the aesthetic appeal of a crackling log fire or glowing stove on a chilly winter's night. And now, thanks to recent heating innovations from wall-mounted woodburners to dual-aspect gas fires, you can achieve this while making a style statement and saving money – whether your home has a chimney or not.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

As well as adding a focal point, contemporary fireplaces like Betina Stampe's are energy-efficient and cost-effective. Striking examples include built-in wall-mounted designs, available in wood, multi-fuel, gas and electric versions, with simple frames for a streamlined feel. The latest electric stoves offer the look of a woodburner without the mess. Inexpensive to run and easy to install, these can be used where gas is unavailable or solid fuel inconvenient. Glass-fronted dual-aspect gas fires evoke loft living in an open-plan space, while Scandinavian-inspired freestanding stoves add drama.



SMOKE SCREENING

You'll need an adequate flue, or chimney space, to allow smoke to be safely expelled if you are burning solid fuel conventionally, and this must be at least 150mm in diameter and properly lined. All reputable retailers should carry out a site survey and a flue inspection prior to installation. Stoves come in all shapes and sizes and can burn wood, coal or pellets. The latest ranges incorporate a Cleanburn system, which burns off gases before they escape through the chimney, meaning homeowners can boost their eco-credentials without compromising on style. This is useful if your property is in a designated Smoke Control Area. Contact your local council to check the current rules.

EXPERT EYE



'There are many options for homes built without a chimney. Installing a stainless steel chimney system allows for multi-fuel or woodburning stoves, while integrating a gas fire and flue into an open-plan space is also possible, and makes an eye-catching connecting feature between two areas'

GREG TAYLOR, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, STOVAX

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE...

- A contemporary woodburning stove not only looks beautiful but is also energy-efficient. You can decrease the oxygen feed for a slow burn or increase it for a fast and furious flame – but either way the logs last longer and the heat output is substantial, making it an affordable way to heat your home.
- **Traditional fireplaces are also adopting a modern look.** Simple limestone surrounds with steel fire baskets and slips are now very popular as they offer an elegant, pared-back style.
- As more urban apartments are being built without flues, homeowners are seeking alternatives to provide the illusion of a working fireplace and add a focal point to a room. As a result, electric fire baskets, stoves and ethanol fires are becoming popular.

PAUL CHESNEY, FOUNDER, CHESNEY'S

ADDRESS BOOK

● **CHESNEY'S**
020 7627 1410, chesneys.co.uk
Supplies a range of appliances.

● **STOVAX**
01392 474000, stovax.com
Provides contemporary

British-designed fireplaces.

● **ENERGY SAVING TRUST** 0300 123 1234, energysavingtrust.org.uk
Offers advice on how to be energy efficient and save money.





SITTING ROOM

'I enjoy the juxtaposition of old and new,' says May of pairing antique Chinese chairs with a glass table and modular sofa.

Ligne Roset Pont coffee table, £380, Heal's. Yoke-back armchair in Warm Elm, £365, Shimu, is a good alternative. Walls painted in Night Jewels 6 paint mixing matt, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux

BACK FOR GOOD

When May Ping Wong returned to the UK after years living abroad, she found the ideal place to lay down roots and explore her creative side

FEATURE ALIX BATEMAN | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

A late-Victorian mansion flat

LOCATION London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, study, bedroom, bathroom

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, I lived in a New York penthouse apartment overlooking Central Park,' says May.



DINING AREA

Dark wood furniture creates an Eastern feel. Green Lacquer mid-sized cabinet, £895, Shimu, is just as stunning



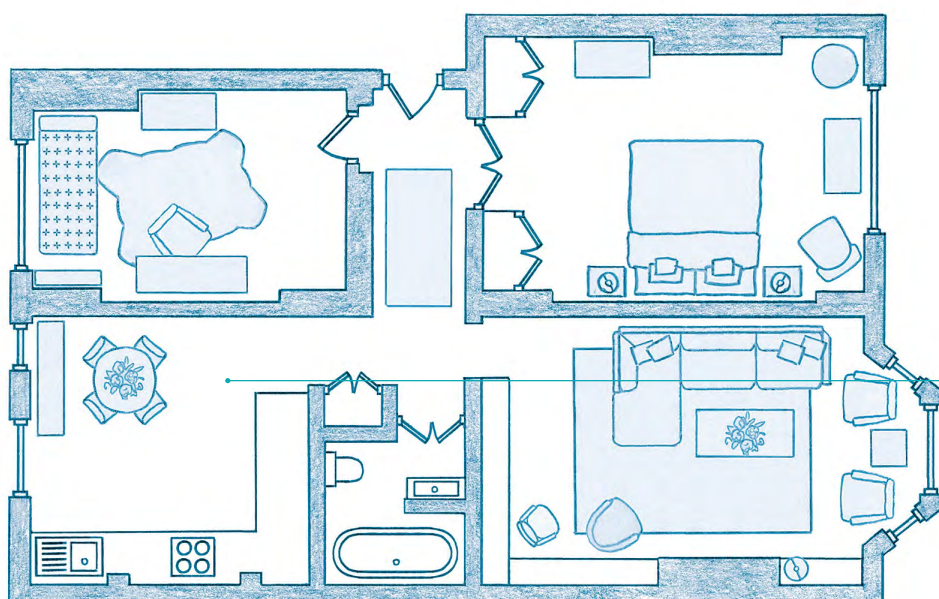
KITCHEN

'I wanted this room to have a warm mix of materials, but not to feel overcrowded,' says May.

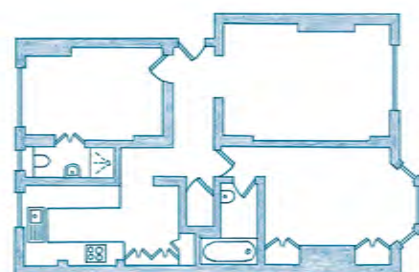
Saariinen round table, £3,350, SCP. Eames DCM chair in black ash, £622, The Conran Shop

INSPIRATIONS *'Living all over the world has been a major design influence. Being surrounded by things that evoke memories or have personal meaning is crucial'*

AFTER



BEFORE



KITCHEN-DINER

May removed the en suite and reconfigured the main bathroom to create a larger kitchen with a dining area. Changing the bathroom also made the sitting room bigger. The apartment now has a much better flow between the rooms and a feeling of space that belies its small proportions.

Following years spent working on the marketing and branding of homes for a property development company, May Ping Wong decided she wanted to spread her creative wings. In collaboration with a partner, she started her own business transforming homes into modern spaces. 'Our projects took us all over the world, but I felt it was time to settle down and find a place of my own,' she says.

After living in New York for 10 years, May returned to her old neighbourhood in London in search of a suitable home. Straight away she was drawn to a Victorian mansion block surrounding a communal courtyard, which she'd long admired. And, as luck would have it, an apartment in the building was for sale.

THE MASTER PLAN

Despite the interior needing a complete overhaul, May relished the chance to unleash her creative talents and remodel the space. And soon after buying the property, she removed numerous internal walls and altered the floor-plan to make way for a spacious kitchen-diner and sitting room. 'The layout was so higgledy-piggledy, and I wanted it to make more sense,' she explains.

For the decor, May had a texturally rich and uncluttered design in mind, and chose antiqued oak floors as a contrast to the clean, contemporary lines. The look has a classical feel with a modern edge and subtle Oriental touches. Plenty of glass doors were installed to allow light to flow between rooms, and a warm palette was used throughout. 'The grey adds a touch of formality and is an effective backdrop to my collection of *objets*,' says May. 'And I picked a soft green for my bedroom as it creates a calming atmosphere.'

All of May's artwork and treasured finds are out on show, and floor-to-ceiling shelves in the sitting room accommodate her beloved books. 'One of my priorities was to have a snug place to curl up for a good read,' she says.

CREATIVE OUTLET

A combination of exceptional craftsmanship and personal pieces has resulted in a home that's both luxurious and full of character. The flat is comfortable and sophisticated, and what it lacks in square footage, it more than makes up for in understated elegance.

'I feel like my creative potential has been completely fulfilled here,' says May. And although she's looking forward to her next project, which involves a beach house in Thailand, what's more important is that she now has a place to call home. 25



BEDROOM

Soft shades create a relaxed ambience. Walls painted in Forest Lake 3 paint mixing matt, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux. Curtain and bedspread in Voyage Classic Amira Lemon fabric, £35m, Graham Sanderson Interiors



BATHROOM

Contemporary fittings give a streamlined look. Element 60cm 1 drawer basin unit with Catalano Zero 60 - 1 tap hole white basin, £785, Designer Bathrooms and Kitchens



STUDY

Deep-purple walls add a glamorous edge. Walls painted in Purple Infusion matt emulsion, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux. City Cows sells cowhide rugs, from £189

TREASURE TROVE

Monica Vinader and Nick Zoll's love of travel is reflected in the vast collection of artefacts that fills their historic home

FEATURE LAURA POWELL
PHOTOGRAPHY MARK LUSCOMBE-WHYTE

DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Grade II listed 12th-century house, formerly a hospital

LOCATION Norfolk

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, study, three bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2000

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We moved here to escape the hustle and bustle of life in London's Chelsea,' says Monica.

SITTING ROOM

Splashes of pink and canary yellow add a whimsical twist. Valencia chaise end sofa in chalk, £1,999, John Lewis, is comparable. Moroccan leather pouffe, £95, Bohemia Design, would complement this setting

DINING ROOM

An antique chandelier from the Connaught Hotel hangs above Ikea chairs in an unlikely juxtaposition.

Venetian mirror, £199, Constance Interiors, is similar. Hendriksdal chairs, £90 each, Ikea. Tiverton table, £1,200, Laura Ashley. Candle in glass, £35, Monica Vinader



Tired of hectic London life, Monica Vinader and Nick Zoll traded their house in Chelsea for a rented Norfolk cottage. 'I fell in love with the area straight away,' says Monica. 'I adore the wild, open spaces and being near the coast.' Deciding Norfolk would be perfect for their long-term home, Nick visited this Grade II listed house, knowing instantly it was the one for them as he walked up the long driveway. But only when the restoration began did the couple uncover the layered history of their new home.

Built in the 12th century, the brick-and-flint property was first occupied by the Knights of Saint Lazarus, when it was a hospital. The

original Yorkstone flags are well worn, apparently the result of being trampled by livestock. The rounded walls, still filled with daub and straw, were added in the 14th century. Then, some 500 years later, architect AJ Humbert – who had worked on the nearby Sandringham estate – turned the building into the house it is today, adding a Gothic front door and a carstone façade, which gave the medieval exterior the air of a grand Victorian pile. 'Architecturally, it is fascinating,' says Monica.

Careful to preserve its heritage, the couple restored the windows and replaced only what was necessary – the roof and heating system. They also connected the main house



HALL
Antique European furniture decorates the entrance.

Anecy console, £452, Artisan, is similar. Try Raja kilim rug, £299, The Rugs Warehouse

SEATING AREA

'The walls are adorned with mounted antlers collected by Nick,' says Monica.

Lutyens four-seater teak bench, £425, Heritage Gardens, has a similar appeal. Amlapura Indigo rug, from £995, Designers Guild, is a good alternative



KITCHEN

Blood-red Spanish doors and rough flagstone flooring give this snug room a farmhouse feel.

Recreate the look with Cora terracotta tiles, £16sq m, Topps Tiles. Red Southsea stripe jug, £28, Laura Ashley, is a match



with the forge next door, creating a wing that was originally the office for Monica's eponymous jewellery brand before becoming the dining room.

Just as the building itself is a rich tapestry of architecture, the interior holds an assortment of treasures. Over the course of a year, the couple filled their home with personality using artefacts they had collected over the years: acid-bright leather footstools from Morocco; textiles from Argentina, where Monica and Nick once lived; coral

from Mexico; cashmere throws from a beloved Chelsea boutique; a French table from Monica's parents' antique business; and brass church candlesticks from her native Spain. Meanwhile, lacquered chests were imported from China, and a Syrian chest inlaid with mother of pearl took pride of place in the dining room.

It is a house in perfect harmony with its owners. 'Travel is part of who we are, but our Norfolk home is where I have been able to turn all our design ideas into reality,' says Monica. 25

INSPIRATIONS *'We put beautiful things together because we love them, not to recreate a particular style'*

MASTER BEDROOM

An earthy palette unifies the mismatched artefacts.

Fantasia fur and striped throw, £704, Sonia Rykiel
Maison at Amara, would look just as good in this setting.
Classic double duvet cover, £250, Josephine Home.
Small stone Buddha head, £25, Shimu, is similar



FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 141

BEDROOM

A sign salvaged from a fairground makes a fun, eye-catching headboard.

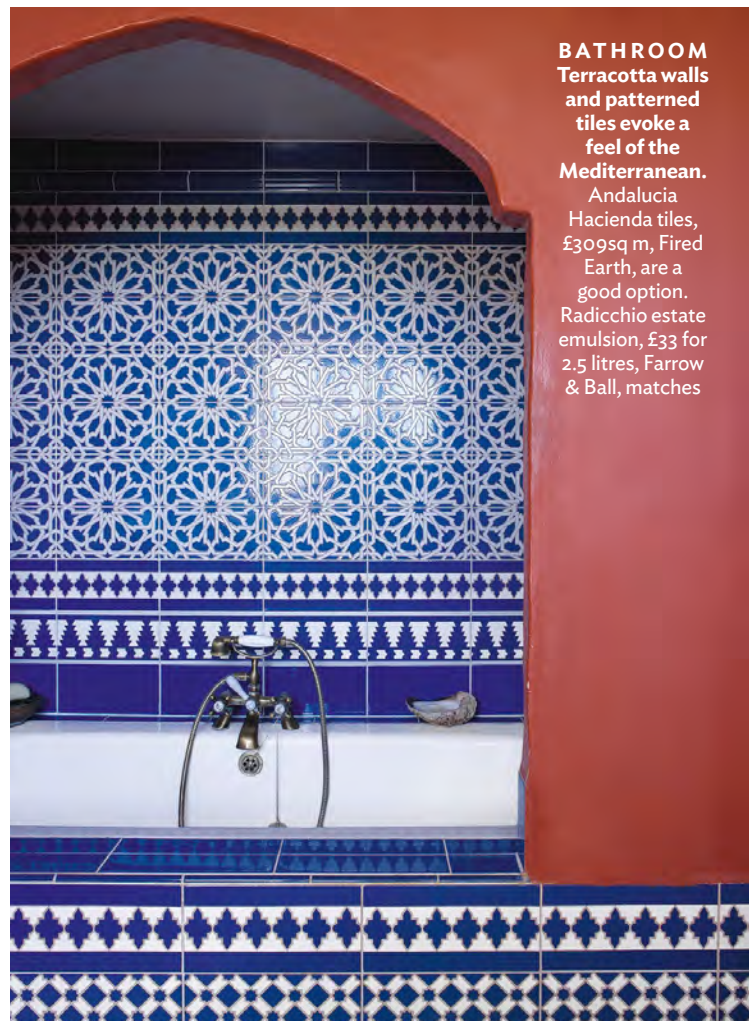
Louis Blue chalk paint, £16.95 for 1 litre, Annie Sloan.
Otomí cushion, £36, Casa Mexico, would work well



BATHROOM

Terracotta walls and patterned tiles evoke a feel of the Mediterranean.

Andalucía Hacienda tiles, £309sq m, Fired Earth, are a good option.
Radicchio estate emulsion, £33 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball, matches





DINING AREA
The window seat fronts were created from pages of Shakespearean text bought in a bric-a-brac shop. Ines oval dining table by Naken Interiors, £3,120, Furnish.co.uk, would suit this space. Blok oak stool, £99, Dwell, is a good alternative



INSPIRING

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Apartment in a three-storey townhouse

LOCATION West London
ROOMS Sitting room/kitchen-diner, two bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2007

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, I lived in a small apartment in central Madrid,' says Cara.

PRETTY IN PINK

Cara Connell worked hard to turn her flat into a dream space and used her favourite colour to add bright highlights

FEATURE RICHARD WEBBER | **PHOTOGRAPHY** COLIN POOLE

First-time buyer Cara Connell knew her apartment was right as soon as she stepped through the door. 'It was completely intuitive,' she recalls. 'The property possessed that indescribable atmosphere that tells you it's the one.'

Cara had returned to the UK from a spell in Madrid, where she went to learn to speak Spanish,

and immediately started property hunting. After viewing countless possibilities, Cara was shown an apartment in a townhouse. It was the amount of natural light flooding into the rooms that sealed the deal. 'Windows facing east and west either side of the property made it feel really bright,' she says.

'I knew I wanted to make a few alterations, including renovating the bathroom and knocking

FAVOURITE ITEM

'The large oval dining table came from a tree I used to see from my bedroom at my parents' home in Scotland. It got struck by lightning, so I had it chopped up and made to fit the bay window'



SITTING ROOM

Cara removed a wall between the kitchen and living area to create a more sociable space. For a sofa like this, consider the Santos, price on request, Loft Living. Belladonna and Penelope cushion covers, £49 each, Korla

I KITCHEN

Cupboard doors made from reclaimed French shutters are combined with modern units.

For similar cabinetry try the Metod range, £43 for a base cabinet with shelves, Ikea. Metallic Light Copper floor tiles, £88.22sq m, Bibliothèque

2 MASTER BEDROOM

Bright colours and clashing patterns inject vibrancy.

Ottori white leather double bed, from £1,300, Habitat. Bespoke lampshade, from £45, Molly Mahon

3 & 4 BATHROOM

Cara chose chocolate brown shades highlighted with her trademark pink.

For a similar bath try the Lagoon freestanding model, £1,799, Bathstore. Flamingo, £39, Props4Shows

down a wall in the kitchen to create an open-plan space with living and dining area.' But a lack of funds meant that Cara couldn't do the work immediately. 'So I moved in with my mum and rented out the property for two years to raise some money to pay for the renovation,' she says.

Now the work is complete, Cara couldn't be happier. 'The living area has really opened out. I can cook while watching TV – when I arrive home from work late I don't want to be shut away in an enclosed kitchen.' When it came to themes and colours, Cara admits it was a journey into the unknown because she hadn't decorated anywhere before. 'But I love Belgian designer Axel Vervoordt's ability to play with simplicity, elegance and scale, so I aimed to use cool, clean colours.'

Also a fan of neon pink, Cara looked for ways to incorporate this colour. 'Originally, I had the

kitchen cupboards painted in this tone, but it was too much. So instead, I chose a neutral palette with injections of shocking pink in lampshades and fabrics, as well as the antlers and flamingos in the bathroom – it was the perfect balance.'

In the kitchen, Cara opted for a marriage of two extremes: modern glossy white with rustic. 'I went for a relaxed look with French shutters which were made into cupboard doors, painted grey and installed above and below the microwave. I also chose extra-deep worktops, as the wide, chunky style is very appealing,' she explains.

After all her hard work, Cara now enjoys sitting back and enjoying what she's achieved. 'An awful lot of emotional input goes into creating a home, but it's worth it,' she reflects. 'It's wonderful being here, appreciating the effort I made to turn this apartment into a real place of my own.' 25



DECORATING TIP 'Pick one item you love for each room and then decorate around it. This gives a focus to the whole process, which otherwise can be quite daunting'



2



3



4

GUEST BEDROOM
The fresh turquoise colour makes this a peaceful and relaxing room.
African Boy print by Matilda Temperley, £50 unframed, £135 in black frame, Lumitrix.
Hand-knotted Tibetan wool and silk rug in Mamounia Sky by Martyn Lawrence-Bullard, £1,535sq m, The Rug Company





ABOVE the shop

The mix of antiques and quirky contemporary furniture in Nicky Colvill's home and business showcases her passion for interior styling

FEATURE AMANDA HARLING
PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL



INSPIRING

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Village house and shop dating from the early 1600s

LOCATION West Sussex

ROOMS Two sitting rooms, two kitchens, shop, café, cloakroom, four bedrooms, one bathroom

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, I lived in a 1960s house in Surrey,' says Nicky.



Everything is for sale,' says shopkeeper Nicky Colvill laughing, 'apart from that sofa!' The 17th-century property in a pretty West Sussex village is the first home Nicky has owned where she actually lives above the shop. 'I'd been looking for a building that combined commercial use and living accommodation,' she explains. 'As soon as I saw this one I knew it would make the perfect home for me, as well as my clothes, accessories and homewares business. So I closed my two shops in Surrey and after four weeks of scrubbing and painting the whole house, I welcomed my first customers here.'

The building dates from around 1600 and Nicky explains that during its lifetime it has been a sweetshop, a café and most recently

a florist. 'And now part of it is a café again,' she says. 'My son Tom is a chef, so it made sense that we also serve freshly made, local food.'

Nicky has updated her home and shop in stages. 'The ceilings are low so the first thing I did was paint all the walls and beams in various shades of white to increase the feeling of light,' she says. 'Then I had the bathroom refitted, while a run of cupboards with a new sink and granite worktop has given the kitchen a more contemporary look. The AGA dates from the 1950s and I love the pillar box red finish.'

The most recent innovation has been the shelf unit in the kitchen that Nicky designed and had custom-made by her very trusty builder Neil Wilson. 'Originally I had a dresser there but it was too bulky. Having sketched the shape I wanted on the wall, Neil came in and



SITTING ROOM

The textures of hide chairs, a jute rug and a deep-buttoned leather bench seat add visual interest to the pale scheme. Jute rug painted in Old White chalk paint, £18.95 for 1 litre, Annie Sloan. For a similar rug try Tarnby, £70, Ikea. Tanjore rattan small table lamp, £245, Oka, is a comparable design.



made it using scaffolding poles. Now I've got shelves for plants, books and the TV, and hanging space for framed photographs and prints.'

Nicky's zest for life has doubtless helped her settle into her new surroundings. 'I love change, and the beamed interior here couldn't be more different from my last home, which was a 1960s property that I did up in a contemporary style,' she says. 'This time, I've indulged my passion for mixing old and new. Antique, vintage, industrial or kitsch – I buy whatever takes my fancy. The apartment is very much a home, but interior design clients can wander upstairs and check out what I've bought recently and see how it fits into a homely setting.'

One item Nicky definitely won't part with is an old leather sofa bought from Kempton Antiques Fair. 'I was told it had belonged to

Ronnie Wood of the Rolling Stones but that's not why I like it so much,' she says. 'Neil had to cut the legs off in order to get it up the stairs and then fix them back on again. Clients are always offering to buy it, but I tell them it's the one thing that's here to stay.'

At Christmas Nicky and her three siblings gather with their mother and nine grandchildren. 'The great-grandchildren are now appearing, so it'll be an even bigger party,' she says. 'We take it in turns to host and if there aren't enough beds, the young curl up in sleeping bags. We don't do presents – it's all about getting together, laughter, good food, a few drinks and playing silly games.' This year there will be a special addition to Nicky's household. 'My daughter Julianne is just about to have her first child,' she explains. 'That's the best present anyone could receive.' 25



LESSONS LEARN'T

'What works in one house or room doesn't automatically work elsewhere.

Each time I move home, I try to start afresh'

KITCHEN

Nicky used the 1950s Aga as a starting point for the red, black and white scheme, and added metal chairs for a retro twist.

For chairs like these try the Xavier Pauchard tolix, £52.99, MDM Furniture.

Simplicity cake stand and dome, £60.50, Divertimenti, is identical



FORMER VILLAGE SHOP | 25BH



GUEST BEDROOM

Muted hues, French-style beds and knitted wool throws create a comfortable and elegant setting. For a similar bed try Paris single, £795; Maison. The Elsham chunky knit blanket, £54, Laura Ashley, is equally cosy

BEDROOM

The grey tones of a tub chair, striped quilt and luxurious fur throw provide a stylish contrast to the white walls.

The Cecilia wood lamp, £45, John Lewis, is like this one. Faux fur Christmas stocking in Snow by Helen Moore, £35, Notonthehighstreet.com, has the same look



BATHROOM

A mix of traditional and classic elements lends this space character.

Woodwork painted in Railings estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Winchester roll-top bath, £559; Camberley 2TH basin and pedestal, £199, both Victoria Plumb



DRESSING AREA

An Edwardian dressing table found at an antiques fair was painted to give it a fresh new look.

Rattan dining chair, £270, The French Furniture Company, is a pretty alternative



A CLASS ABOVE

Peterson Jeffries' retro-style home has had an intriguing past, and he's ensured its future is very bright, too

FEATURE VICTORIA TUNSTALL
PHOTOGRAPHY KATE BERRY

DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Apartment in a Victorian schoolhouse, converted in 1999

LOCATION East London

ROOMS Sitting room/kitchen-diner, library, three bedrooms, two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I rented with friends for a few years around east London, and I've gradually moved further out east,' says Peterson.

**KITCHEN-DINER**

Wooden worktops, furniture and floors lend warmth to this cool, stainless steel scheme. Grevsta stainless steel door cover panel, from £20 for 62 x 80cm; Varde handles, £4 for two, all Ikea. Clock (right), £48, Graham and Green. Glass light bulb hanging vase, £14, Notonthehighstreet.com



When TV and film producer Peterson Jeffries decided to buy his first home, he wanted something a bit different. He had been renting in east London, but needed to look further out to gain more space for his budget. Once Peterson had found a suitable neighbourhood, he spent time in the area, checking out local cafés and cycling around to get a feel for the place. Then one day he saw a former Victorian

schoolhouse. 'I knew it was the spot,' he recalls, 'and it was just a case of biding my time.' A few months later, an apartment in the building came up for sale and Peterson leapt at the chance to buy it.

Dominated by a vast arched sash window, the apartment has plenty of wow factor. 'I loved the light streaming through the window and how all the rooms face into the living area with its double-height ceilings,' enthuses Peterson. The previous owners had used the mezzanine level as

a second sitting room, but Peterson had other ideas and wanted to turn the space into his bedroom. 'The challenge was how to make it a private area without permanently shutting out the light,' he says.

Luckily, an architect friend was on hand to offer advice, and they both agreed that extra-thick curtains hung along the balustrade were the best solution. 'I didn't want solid walls, and glass was costly, so this seemed the only alternative,' says Peterson. 'I was sceptical at first, but

FAVOURITE ROOM *'I enjoy throwing parties here – we set the music system up in the library, turn the Bubble chair into a glitter ball and the sitting room becomes a heaving dance floor'*



DINING AREA
 Low-hanging lights and a bubble chair soak up the vast ceiling height.
 Table, £40, Ningbo Furniture. Pendants, £45 each, Aladdin's Cave. Invisaflex wall lamp, £220, In The Woodshed. Bubble chair, £449, Interior Icons





BATHROOM

This neutral, minimalist design still has bags of character. Saltgrund shower curtain, £15, Ikea, Mirror, £65, Bennett & Brown. Try Etsy for old apothecary bottles, from around £25 each



MASTER BEDROOM

Compact pigeonhole shelving is perfect for storing and displaying knick-knacks. Pigeonhole wall shelf, £150; purple sofa (left), £350, both Paradise Works. Gurli red throw, £5.50; all Ikea. Anglepoise lamp, £220, In The Woodshed

they've proved extremely effective. To close the area off even further and save more space, the L-shaped stairs were replaced with a steep wooden loft staircase, with a hatch door at the top. A carpenter built a raised platform for Peterson's bed and a long desk turned a redundant space into storage. 'I've always wanted a raised bed ever since I travelled on a sleeper train as a child,' reflects Peterson.

Downstairs, the existing kitchen units were retained, and by removing a spiral

staircase, Peterson was able to increase his worktop space. 'I only go up to the library area once or twice a week, so it made sense to replace the stairs with a compact pull-down ladder,' he explains. Finally, the whole flat was given a fresh coat of white paint, providing Peterson with a blank canvas on which to make his mark.

The central living area is not only the apartment's greatest asset, it's an excellent space for parties, too. 'Living here is very enriching,' says Peterson, 'and sharing it

with friends makes it even better.' Inspired by its life as an old schoolhouse, a collection of Mid-Century pieces that Peterson picked up at auctions, markets and junk shops, feature throughout the property.

Peterson's decor also reflects his love of TV and cinema, with studio-style lights, vintage posters and a set of old cinema seats taking centre stage. 'I was surprised just how much I enjoyed decorating my home,' he admits. 'I didn't think I would, but it's been a very creative experience.' 25

BEST BUYS 'I love all the salvaged factory lights. The pendants over the dining table are particularly striking – they fill the overhead space and create a great atmosphere'

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February 2015	£149	£149	£159	£159	£149	£199	£159	£149	£159
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KITCHEN/FAMILY ROOM

'I couldn't resist this Flexform cream sofa – it's so comfy and looks great, it's worth the odd spillage,' says Claire.

Flexform Long Island two-seater sofa in Elisir, £5,962, Interdesign. Moroccan pouffe, £130, Graham & Green. Bespoke wall units, around £4,000, Grove Interiors. Vaughan Designs 12-light Kington cage chandelier, £3,450, is similar

CALM & COLLECTED

CLAIRE AND NEIL FERGUSON ADDED A LIGHT-FILLED EXTENSION AT THE BACK OF THEIR LONDON TERRACE TO CREATE THE IDEAL FAMILY SPACE

FEATURE KAREN JENSEN-JONES | PHOTOGRAPHY NICK SMITH

REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

A Victorian terrace

LOCATION South London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen/family room, cloakroom, five bedrooms, three bathrooms

PURCHASED 2007

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a mews house round the corner,' says Claire.



After several years working as a financial lawyer, Claire Ferguson left it all behind to immerse herself in interior design. Once she completed her studies, she worked at an interiors firm before joining forces with a friend to set up a design practice.

At the same time, Claire decided to renovate her south London home. 'It was rundown when we bought it but I had strong ideas about what I wanted to do,' explains Claire. 'Houses speak for themselves and will lean towards certain styles of decoration, so it's worth taking the time to think about what to do before jumping straight in.'

Claire and husband Neil, a corporate lawyer, decided on renovations, including a large kitchen extension. 'It's given us so much space and light – the doors fold back to open it to the garden,' says Claire. The couple were keen not to move out so they could keep an eye on the work, so the family, including Sophia, seven, and Francesca, two, moved upstairs. 'Useful for me as I could

answer the builders' questions, but not much fun for the rest of the family,' Claire admits.

Claire's love of both contemporary and traditional style is evident in the clean lines of the kitchen, in contrast to the elegant, French-inspired decor of the sitting room. 'I love its calmness and serenity and was keen to retain the period features as a focal point,' says Claire. Simple curtains and the classic lines of the furniture work with textures, including grasscloth wallpaper, which add depth. 'For me, a neutral base is preferable, with punches of colour that I can change if the mood strikes,' muses Claire. 'And although practicality is essential with a young family, it's important to add in beautiful pieces or those that have a story, such as the painting of a horse in the sitting room. Neil gave it to me on our first Valentines Day.'

Claire believes her passion for decorating came from her parents, who renovated several homes during her childhood. 'They've recently bought a home in Portugal and now they're asking me for interiors advice, which is lovely.' 25



SITTING ROOM

With its oak floor and antique pieces, this room draws on Claire's love of French design. Anton&K sells stone lamp bases, £220. Grasscloth wallpaper, from £45.50 per roll, Wallpaper Direct, has a similar feel. Joanna coffee table, £535, Sweetpea & Willow, is a good match



KITCHEN

'Always try and surround yourself with pieces you love,' says Claire. Carl Hansen CH327 dining table in oak, from £3,640, and Carl Hansen Wishbone chair in oak, £744, both The Lollipop Shoppe

TOP TIP 'Underfloor heating makes an enormous difference to the comfort level of a room'



SOPHIA'S ROOM

This little girl's room is suitably pretty. Radcliffe bed, from £225, Next. Vorwerk carpet, from £31.60sq m, Capitol Carpets. Housweety pink canopy, £10.99, Amazon



MASTER BEDROOM

'Our room's so peaceful it makes me feel relaxed,' says Claire. The Kingsize Grange complete bed in Natural cotton, £1,445, Sweetpea & Willow, is a similar design to this one



BATHROOM

Soft tones create a warm ambience. Tundra honed marble tiles, from £55sq m, Mandarin Stone. Vero wash basin, £300, and unit, £500, Duravit

ALL WRAPPED UP

SOPHIE AND GAVIN SMITH'S PARED-DOWN HOME COMES TO LIFE AT CHRISTMAS, ITS LARGE OPEN-PLAN LIVING SPACE THE PERFECT SPOT TO EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY

FEATURE JOANNA SIMMONS
PHOTOGRAPHY LUKE WHITE

DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Semi-detached Victorian house

LOCATION London

ROOMS Sitting/dining/kitchen area, utility room, cloakroom basement, four bedrooms (three en suite), family bathroom

PURCHASED 2002

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'A cramped house!' says Sophie.

SITTING ROOM
Sophie and Gavin wanted a relaxed seating area with no TV. Shelving built into the fire surround displays their treasures.

Chesterfield sofa, from £1,500, John Lewis.
Concrete flooring, price on application, Steyson Concrete Floors. Lighting throughout designed and installed by Mr Resistor, price on application.
For a similar wall colour try Down Pipe estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



DINING ROOM

The curved lines of the table mirror the chandelier above.

Saarinien oval table, £3,732, Skandium. Tulip chairs, £69.50 each, Atlantic Shopping, are comparable. 85 Lamps chandelier, from £2,500, Droog. Bifold doors, Sunfold Systems



KITCHEN

This functional space doubles as the main sitting area, so Sophie was keen to keep the look subtle and minimal.

Bespoke kitchen, price on application, Poggenpohl. Bespoke Floral Red on White rug, price on application, Knots Rugs. Hadley bar stools, £129 each, Dwell, are a good match





BASEMENT

The couple created a subterranean TV room. 'I wanted it to feel like a den,' says Sophie. Walls painted in Brinjal and Dead Salmon estate emulsion, both £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Tom Foolery sofa, from £1,889, Sofa Workshop



When a house has its own dedicated plug socket for the Christmas tree lights, you can guess two things: one, that the owners are very organised, and two, that Christmas is a big deal here. So it is with Sophie and Gavin Smith's London home, where a spacious extension at the back of the house, which usually has a pared-down, modernist feel, gets the full-on festive treatment each December. And where, thanks to meticulous planning, the Christmas tree takes pride of place in the centre of the room.

The position of the Christmas tree might not seem like a pressing issue when renovating a house, but as soon as Sophie and Gavin got to work, a friend advised them to plan ahead. 'We thought about where the tree might go and decided it should be positioned in the middle of the windows,' says Sophie. It was just one of many details the couple considered as they set about turning their property from a dilapidated wreck into a serene, sophisticated home for them and their children Flynn, 10, and Frankie, seven.

The couple bought the house at an auction after a hurried 15-minute viewing and a Ray Mears-style exploration of the overgrown garden. The building's neglected state – it had been untouched for more than 40 years and didn't even have a telephone line – was an invitation to start from scratch, which is exactly what Sophie and Gavin did. 'It was a once-in-a-lifetime chance to plan the home we wanted,' says Gavin.

The pair began by constructing mood boards and pored over every element, from the position of the kitchen units to the correct location for the toaster. Plans were drawn and redrawn, and details, where necessary, argued over. 'We came to agree on everything, but we both had an opinion,' says Sophie, who pushed for a utility room behind the kitchen. 'In the old house there was always laundry airing, with underwear on display, and I didn't want that again.' Gavin, meanwhile, persuaded Sophie that a concrete floor could look homely and not too industrial, as she had feared. 'I took her to see one at

a showroom and she was sold,' he says. The finished design involved increasing the space by digging down into the basement, extending up into the loft and, most strikingly of all, out at the back, creating a huge living, dining and kitchen area with 7.4-metre-wide bifold doors that open out on to the garden.

It's a truly impressive space but, though ultramodern in design and fitted with a cutting-edge kitchen, it's softened with a mix of classic pieces and family treasures. 'We didn't want to buy everything new and have a "2000s" house,' says Sophie. 'Gavin's family has lived all over the world and he's picked up things along the way, so we

wanted to keep that mix of old and new.'

It's also the perfect place for entertaining. 'You can have lots of friends and children round and you don't feel like you are going insane with the noise,' says Sophie.

At Christmas time, the extension is transformed into a festive wonderland. 'We go big on decorations, but we don't have a theme,' says Sophie. 'We just add to our collection each year. Some were picked up on our travels, others are made by the kids.' The tree, bought at the children's school fair, stands in front of the windows while cards are arranged above the door fanlights and hung on garlands.

This year, Sophie's family will visit and together they'll enjoy champagne in the morning, a roast turkey for lunch and home-made mince pies. 'We cooked beef one year and it just felt wrong,' says Sophie. In the afternoon, there will be a blazing fire and family games – 'all the old classics, like Cluedo and Monopoly,' says Gavin – and Sophie's stepfather has even been granted permission to smoke a cigar indoors!

No detail was left unconsidered, and visitors comment not only on the choice of paint colours, but on how well planned it all is. 'Every space has been carefully thought-out,' says Gavin. It means that after all their effort, the only thing that's left to do is enjoy life – and with a space that can accommodate a table tennis table, a Christmas tree and all the usual furniture, and still look stylish, that should prove easy. 25

BEST BUY

'We fitted an intercom that connects all the rooms and the front door. I would recommend it to everyone. No more shouting at each other and running up and down stairs to tell the kids their dinner's ready!'



MASTER BEDROOM

Hidden cupboards and a walk-in wardrobe keep this space clutter-free. 'Our aim was to make it feel calm,' says Sophie. Cold Embers perfect matt emulsion, £39 for 2.5 litres, Designers Guild, matches the wall colour. High Rise headboard, £529, Designers Guild, would work well in this setting. Wooden Indian sculptures, from £145, Opium



FRANKIE'S BEDROOM

Sophie customised a plain net with pink fluffy trimming and fabric butterflies for her daughter. Bryne net, £7.50, Ikea. Daisy day bed, £399, John Lewis, is comparable. Desire wallpaper, £20 per roll, Graham & Brown, has a similar look. Drawer unit, from £495, Opium



MASTER EN SUITE

Black tiles and red accessories create an Oriental feel. Fixtures, price on application, West One Bathrooms. Kartell Componibili cabinet, £95, Heal's

SITTING ROOM

This large space on the first floor, full of beautiful antique furniture, is strictly for grown-ups.

Georgian medium sofa, from £3,260; Georgian fixed-seat chair, £1,947, both George Smith. For similar upholstery fabric try Candy Stripe by Ian Mankin, £24.50m. Black Ribbon lampshade, £29, India Jane



INSPIRING

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Five-storey 19th-century townhouse

LOCATION

Southwest London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, snug, two studies, playroom, sitting room, three bedrooms (one en suite with dressing room), bathroom

PURCHASED 2006

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We moved here from a mews house nearby,' says Jessica.

Elegance REBORN

Jessica and David Platt's Grade II listed home has been restored to its former glory with meticulous care and attention to layout and detail

FEATURE SHARON PARSONS | PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD GADSBY



STUDY

David's work area is an intriguing mix of old law books and curiosities. Wooden Library steps, £293, The Great English Outdoors, has this look



HALL

This chic entrance sets the tone for the rest of the house. Seba console, £695, Lombok, is comparable. Finneal Urn table lamp, £255, Oka

DINING AREA

Bifold doors overlooking the pretty courtyard garden bring the outside into this light and bright space.

Hadley extending dining table, £1,950, India Jane. Camargue wooden dining chairs, £169 each, Oka



FAVOURITE SHOP *'Joanna Wood in Pimlico, London, is great for throws, cushions, lamps*



'To be honest, this house didn't look great when we first saw it,' says Jessica Platt, as she recalls viewing the Grade II listed London townhouse with husband David eight years ago. Built

in the 19th century by the renowned architect Thomas Cubitt, the property retained its elegant facade, but inside was in poor repair.

The house had suffered from years of being leased out as rental accommodation and had a badly converted layout, ancient

wiring and plumbing, plus tired, dated decor. Nevertheless, Jessica was not deterred. 'It had, to use that magical phrase, potential,' she says. 'I knew that putting the house to rights would take a lot of hard work and investment, but I could see beyond all that – I just had to persuade David.'

It took more than a couple of visits before her husband agreed to leave their comfortable mews house nearby for a home that would be a building site for some time. And doubts still remained after they moved in. 'When we were huddled in the freezing kitchen

with just an old hob and a microwave to cook with, I thought, "Why on earth have we done this?"' recalls David.

Despite the discomfort, however, the couple didn't rush into making any major changes. 'We camped out in the house for a couple of years while we worked out exactly what we needed to do,' explains Jessica. Once their plans were complete, they decided to renovate the entire property from top to bottom, and all in one go. 'We had to go right back to basics in terms of plumbing, wiring and heating, so we rented a flat nearby and



KITCHEN

An impressive range cooker, surrounded by classic green-painted cabinetry, provides the focal point in this room.

Roundhouse bespoke kitchens start from £30,000. Units painted in Olive estate eggshell, £51 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



MASTER BEDROOM

Gentle taupe, with dark grey accents, creates a restful retreat.

Walls painted in Archive estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Ceto headboard, £995, Vispring



BATHROOM

Large-format tiles give the space a modern spa feel.

For similar wall tiles try Camden in Dark Brown, £36sq m, Bathstore

and seasonal accessories. I can't resist popping in every few weeks for a browse!'

put our furniture into storage,' says Jessica. 'It was an upheaval, but definitely worth it as the work took a year. When it was finally finished, we walked around the empty house – it was so satisfying to see all our plans come to life.'

In the basement, two rooms had been knocked through to create a large kitchen-diner and a snug area leading to the courtyard. On the ground floor, David's study – linked to Jessica's home office by pocket doors – leads off from the smart hallway. The level above houses the formal sitting room, with a separate area for watching TV. Meanwhile,

the second floor was given over entirely to the couple's own sleeping quarters with a large bedroom leading to a dressing room, and beyond that a stylish en-suite bathroom. Finally, two bedrooms – one of which now belongs to their baby, Harry – and a neat bathroom have been tucked into the eaves.

In terms of decor, there is an undeniable sense of unity. 'We wanted a classic metropolitan look – nothing too fusty and in keeping with the origins of the house,' explains Jessica. 'We also intended the layout to flow, so chose oak flooring for the majority

of the rooms, hall and stairs, and went for subtle colours throughout.'

Once the furniture, a mix of antiques combined with contemporary pieces, was in place, the property finally felt complete – restored to its former glory, while meeting the demands of modern family life. 'The house always feels calm,' says Jessica. 'It's a total contrast to all the hustle and bustle outside. And it's great to think that we've helped revive a house with such architectural heritage – that alone has made all the upheaval worthwhile.' 25

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Stone cottage

LOCATION

West Cork, Ireland

ROOMS

Sitting room/
kitchen-diner, study,
conservatory, three bedrooms
(one en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2006

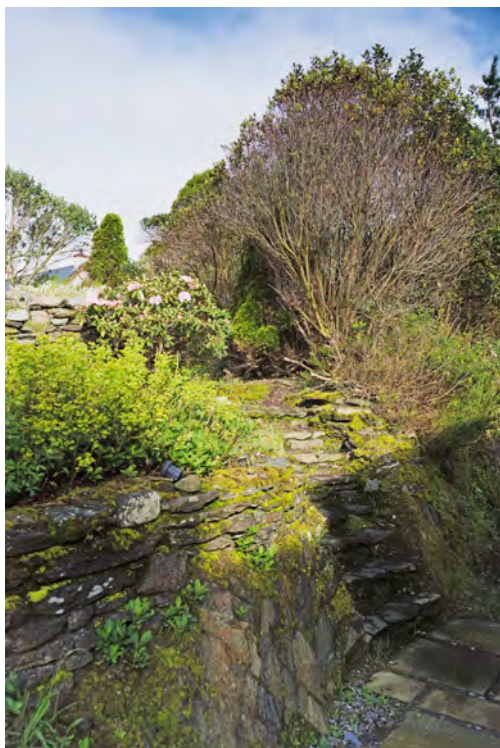
PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'My main residence is a Victorian
terrace in west London,' says Julie.

Force of NATURE

*Julie Fitzgerald Vitelli turned a cottage beaten by the elements
into a restful retreat that makes the most of the coastal views*

FEATURE PENNY CRAWFORD-COLLINS | **PHOTOGRAPHY** PHILIP LAUTERBACH





SITTING ROOM

Check throws add a snug, country-style look. Wool throws, £79.95 each, Bronte by Moon. Ibsen sofa, £3,895, Leather Chairs of Bath, would work well. Rattan basket, £35, Cox & Cox



STUDY

The previous owner left this desk, which suits the room perfectly. Waxed pine desk, £75, and child's beech chair, £25, both Heirloom, are similar

When Julie Fitzgerald Vitelli set eyes on an old stone cottage on the coast of West Cork, it was love at first sight. 'I have always adored the Cork coast and was keen to buy a home in the area,' she says. 'When I first looked around nothing ticked the boxes, but months later I heard about a rundown cottage near Bantry. I hopped over from England to take a look and, though it was in a state of decline, the house had character and the views were spellbinding.'

Formerly owned by a retired American artist, the building had become weather-beaten over the years thanks to its unsheltered position, suffering from poor drainage, a leaky roof, rotten floors

and damp walls in places. 'But when I met the owner, his words of encouragement sealed the deal for me,' says Julie.

Despite the huge task that lay ahead, Julie was excited about turning this quaint cottage into a comfortable home. It needed to be fully renovated, with internal reconfiguration, new flooring, stairs, kitchen and bathrooms, and a replacement roof and windows. 'We had to dig out a lot of earth at the back of the property and install land drains,' says Julie. 'It was a bigger project than I had expected.'

Fortunately, help was at hand. 'My father is a retired architect so I knew he would have some innovative ideas for the layout,' says Julie. 'He drew the plans by hand and helped me make the most of the



SITTING ROOM

This cosy spot is full of charming features.

Try the lion oversized floor lamp, £250, Baileys Home, for a similar look. Lansdown leather chair, £2,495, Leather Chairs of Bath, is comparable



KITCHEN-DINER
Pale wood and a cream palette keep this low-ceilinged space fresh and bright. Bastide countertop and sink unit, from £3,800, Fired Earth. For a similar table try Neptune Suffolk, £650, John Lewis. Bush cream retro radio, £39.99, Homebase

DECORATING TIP 'Get your backdrop sorted and build on that. For me, it was whitewashed and exposed stone walls, grey flagstone flooring and timber beams for warmth'



CONSERVATORY
This sunny space is great for enjoying garden views. Bower lambswool throw, £48, Avoca, has this look. Painted blue chest, £200, Heirloom



GUEST BEDROOM
Pretty bedlinen and soft furnishings add colour and pattern.
 Oliver single iron bed, £449, Feather & Black.
 Original BTC rise and fall pendant light, £155, Heal's



BATHROOM
Julie opted for a slipper bath for extra old-fashioned charm.
 Canterbury slipper bath, £1,800, Fired Earth. Bath rack, £55, Baileys Home

available space. We decided on an open-plan living area on the ground floor, and three bedrooms and two bathrooms upstairs.'

When it came to the interiors, Julie took her inspiration from the traditional buildings in the area with their whitewashed walls, exposed stone, timber beams and flagstone floors. 'I was eager to stay true to the spirit of the cottage,' she says. 'I also wanted the atmosphere inside to be as appealing as the external experience.'

Julie sourced simple chairs, leather sofas and wrought-iron beds, and teamed these with vintage finds. 'It's an eclectic look, but I kept it simple with muted colours and sparse patterns – just a few checks and spots,' she says. 'The result is a comfortable, homely feel.' With

a keen interest in art, Julie also aimed to find unusual art and handmade items that would suit the cottage. 'There are plenty of talented artists here, so I picked up pieces from as many of the local galleries and craft shops as I could,' she says. 'I even have one of the previous owner's paintings, which he asked me to retrieve from an exhibition centre in Cork to keep in the cottage. I feel that art is an important part of the building's history.'

Needless to say, Julie enjoys escaping from London to her wonderful retreat. 'I'm so pleased that I managed to retain the property's integrity despite all the work involved,' she says. 'Now I can enjoy the breathtaking views in complete comfort.' 25



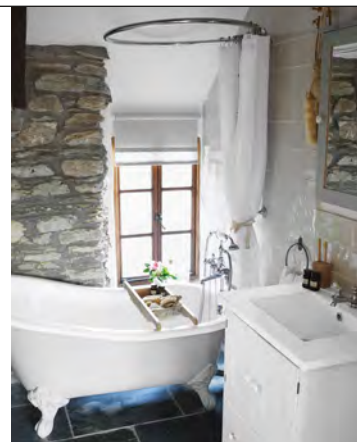
BEDROOM
Keeping some of the stonework exposed adds visual interest.
 Herriot headboard, covered in Adele Natural fabric, from £193, and Lemington Polka Dot throw, £55, both Laura Ashley, are comparable



INSIGHT

Make the most of a compact bathroom

Concerned your bathroom is more compact than chic? Embrace its dimensions, as Julie Fitzgerald Vitelli has done

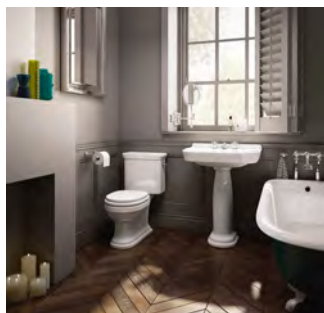


Clever storage options and smart finishes mean that even the smallest of bathrooms can be stylish and chic, as well as practical. Whether you opt for a sleek, streamlined look or traditional detailing, there are plenty of ways to pack a punch.

THINK SMART

Bijou bathrooms used to demand a compromise – often requiring homeowners to choose between a bath or a separate shower. But the latest modern fittings can create a luxurious space with limited square footage. Shower baths remain a popular option in compact areas, and recent innovations have seen luxurious waterfall and rainfall-style showerheads added into the mix. Bespoke glass screens create a more streamlined finish, too, with minimal

brackets and no frames, for a more open feel. And if you crave traditional fittings, roll-top baths are also available in smaller dimensions.



EXPERT EYE



‘Architecturally and visually, keep a small bathroom feeling open by not crowding too many things into it. The space will feel bigger if you use a pedestal sink rather than a bulky vanity, a clear glass door rather than a shower curtain, and reflective surfaces’

BARBARA SALLICK, CO-FOUNDER, WATERWORKS

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE...

- Wet rooms are great for smaller spaces as they make the space look larger by not closing it off with screens. You can, of course, also consider incorporating a generous shower into a large bath.
- Mirrors are an essential part of any cloakroom both practically and aesthetically. They bounce natural light around a room, making it seem instantly larger and brighter. Ornate options look fantastic in guest cloakrooms and are great statement pieces.
- Lighting zones are a key consideration, as getting the lighting right can make all the difference to the ambience in your bathroom. Try installing a dimmer switch so that you can control the intensity of light, depending on your mood.
- Decorative bowls and brassware are becoming increasingly popular in compact spaces. Try statement designs such as the hand-blown lead crystal basin from CP Hart’s Glass Design Bowl Creation.

DAN COOK, DESIGNER, CP HART

ADDRESS BOOK

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020 7242 7583, fmb.org.uk
Find approved carpenters, builders and joiners here.

● **CP HART**
0845 873 1121, cphart.co.uk
This supplier offers bespoke bathroom options, and a design and installation service.

PERFECT FIT

Wall-mounted modular furniture is still the first choice for storage, due to its fuss-free look. Available in a range of sizes, it allows you to create a bespoke look that best suits your space. You’ll find a wide range of colours, from soft hues to strong, brave tones, as well as plenty of different textures. The finish you choose depends on what kind of statement you’d like to make. Gloss has recently become less prominent, with Kerlite, an ultra-thin stoneware porcelain material, taking centre stage. This modern material gives a matt, almost stone-like appearance. Other popular options include linen prints and wood grains, while grey remains a favourite colour choice. When applied well, especially with the help of strategically placed uplighters, a warm grey can create a sense of cocooned comfort in a small space.

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INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

A 1920s timber holiday home
LOCATION New York, US

ROOMS Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, enclosed porch with sitting and dining area, cloakroom, laundry room, five bedrooms, two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2005

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Our main home is a 1930s house in Texas,' says Laura.

EAST COAST STORY

Embracing the refurbishment of their Fire Island beach house, Laura and Taylor Neal created a seaside retreat inspired by their surroundings

FEATURE ALIX O'NEILL | PHOTOGRAPHY TRIA GIOVAN/GAP INTERIORS

PORCH

The family gathers here to play games, read or simply soak up the views across the bay.

Roman Column lamps with Natural shades, £117 each, Oka, are similar.

Vintage Industrial Cage Bulkhead wall light, £79, Industville, is comparable





SITTING ROOM
 'As we spend a lot of time here, darker colours seemed more practical,' says Laura. Try Stool One, £195, Another Country, for a similar look. Emily sofa in Chestnut, £1,600, Sofa.com, is a close match

Most wives settle for the odd bunch of flowers, so imagine Laura Neal's reaction when her husband Taylor surprised her with a house. 'I've been going to Fire Island since I was 17, and there's a village with lovely old bayfront houses, which are passed down through the generations,' says Laura. 'When Taylor got word one might be available, he convinced the owners to sell it to him.'

Off the coast of Long Island in the US, Fire Island has a population of less than 300, but in summer it becomes a refuge for thousands of New Yorkers. Just 31 miles long and half a mile wide, it is only accessible by ferry; cars are off-limits and the village has no restaurants or shops. This remote lifestyle is a welcome change for busy lawyers Laura and Taylor, whose main residence is in Texas.

Structural work is subject to strict regulations on the island, but the couple's house was in need of significant decorative repair before they could move in. 'The ceilings downstairs were simply the bottom of the floorboards in the rooms above, and the original interior walls were just a glorified form of pressed cardboard,' says Laura.

Laura enlisted the help of her good friend Cathy Chapman, an interior designer. 'We told her we wanted a type of English beach cottage, somewhere barefoot-friendly



PORCH
 This is the setting for special family occasions, including Christmas dinner. Large square pendant, from £778, Davey Lighting, is similar. Padang table, £1,395, Lombok, would work well in this setting



KITCHEN
Fresh greens connect the room to the garden. Try Cooking Apple Green estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Sophie Conran for Portmerion tableware, from £7, John Lewis, is similar



DINING ROOM
This console was crafted from an old dining table. Shell artist Linda Fenwick makes bespoke mirrors like this one

FAVOURITE ROOM 'The porch is spectacular. It's only 10ft wide, but it wraps around the house'

and stylish. She did a fantastic job of getting the vibe of the island without having spent much time here.'

Cathy and Laura used a century-old chintz sofa as their starting point for the decor. 'It had the feel of what we wanted and set the tone for the house,' says Laura. They chose a complementary scheme of washed-out florals and faded blues and greens to create the seamless transition between indoors and out. 'To me, the house perfectly reflects what my husband and I wanted in a beach house,' says Laura. 'It's quietly elegant and everything blends together beautifully.'

Occasionally, the couple and their children Joan, 27, Dillon, 25, and Paul, 23, plus Sally the poodle, spend Christmas on the island. 'Services shut down around mid-October, so we take everything we need from the mainland and spend our days bundled up in front of a big fire with books and board games,' says Laura.

Though she relishes the wildness and solitude of her East Coast retreat, Christmas on Fire Island requires a sacrifice. 'Sadly, we have to keep decorations to a minimum, as it's hard to drag a tree out here. But we make up for it with plenty of freshly cut greenery. And a big walk on the beach on Christmas Day is pretty hard to beat.' 25

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 141

GUEST BEDROOM

Cathy chose a calming palette of neutrals and crisp white bedlinen to get the laid-back feel Laura wanted.

Satin Stripe cotton bedlinen, from £12, Soak & Sleep, is similar. French Chateau white single beds, £479 each, The Furniture Market, are good alternatives



25BH JANUARY 2015 | 103

Beaming with pride

RETIRED COUPLE NIGEL AND GILLY CUTTS USED THEIR DESIGN TALENTS TO
CREATE AN IMPRESSIVE HOME THAT FRIENDS AND FAMILY LOVE TO VISIT

FEATURE MANDY NOLAN | PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT SANDERSON



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Grade II listed converted barn

LOCATION West Sussex

ROOMS Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms (all en suite)

PURCHASED 2013

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in another barn conversion in Surrey,' says Gilly.

DINING ROOM

The grey of the furniture emphasises the yellow of the plates and lampshade.

Willis & Gambier oak and painted Worcester extending table, £490, Debenhams, is comparable. Candelabrum, £650; handpainted china plates, £20 each, all I & JL Brown





SITTING ROOM

A fresh neutral colour scheme with an emphasis on summery fabrics has created a living space that is both bright and elegant.

Havana sofas, £1,350 each; chair, £720, all Daniel of Windsor. Knife Edge silk cushion, £25; Sanderson Folia cushion, £40, both John Lewis





FAVOURITE ROOM *'We spend most of our time in the kitchen – not just cooking, but also relaxing with friends or simply looking out into the garden'*



KITCHEN

A new marble top for the island created a breakfast bar and contemporary look. Cabinets painted in Smoked Trout estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Worktops Silestone, Marrón Júpiter, £350sq m, LBS Stone Collection



We weren't looking to move,' recalls Gilly Cutts. 'We had just completed the renovations on our previous home when, out of the blue, my husband Nigel asked me to describe my dream home. I confessed I had always yearned for a thatched cottage, while Nigel revealed he dreamt of living by the sea. I should have realised he would start looking for a property to fit the bill.'

'When we first saw this house, we thought it was absolutely charming,' says Nigel. 'It was refreshing to move into a property that didn't need a total overhaul – the architect responsible for the conversion in 1974 was obviously very talented, and made the best of the building,' says Nigel. What did need updating was the decor. 'There was a surfeit of orange pine, which had to go,' says former stylist Gilly, who lifted the property with a neutral palette of cool stone and caramel.

EXTENDING WELCOME

Visitors are surprised to learn that the vast kitchen used to be a garage. 'The previous owner bought the next door neighbour's garage and incorporated it into the building,' says Nigel. 'This was quite recent, so the cabinets were still in perfect condition. It was simply a case of improving what was already there,' adds Gilly. 'Our only indulgence was to install an all-singing, all-dancing induction hob.'

The next step was to transform the bathrooms. 'We retained what we could, but ripped out the bath, the basin and the 1970s tiles in the master en suite, replacing them with classic golden travertine blocks of stone, and added a rain shower and the biggest roll-top bath we could find,' says Nigel.

When it came to furnishing the house, Nigel and Gilly teamed country-style furniture with contemporary pieces to create an elegant living space. 'We placed a great emphasis on light for a summery feel,' says Gilly.

The sitting room features a wonderful fireplace that can be seen from the hall, offering a warm welcome to their perfect rural retirement haven. 'Our friends and family absolutely love coming to stay with us,' says Gilly. 25



MASTER BEDROOM
Exotic pieces lend personality to the calm, neutral scheme. Pair of side cabinets, £835, Shimu. Bed, £645, Lock Stock and Barrel. Throw, £50; striped cushion, £25, both John Lewis



MASTER EN SUITE
This elegant roll-top bath is deep and roomy. Marazion bath, £1,095, The Cast Iron Bath Company. Basin, from £109, Alexander



GUEST BEDROOM
A large comfy bed is tucked under the eaves in this romantic space. Chandelier, £285, Nest Home & Café. Knit throw, £70, The Interior Co

COAST TO COAST

Returning from Spain to the UK, Katie Hyde was keen to stay by the sea and this pretty home provided the perfect solution

FEATURE SARA SARRE | **PHOTOGRAPHY** ALEXANDER JAMES

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached cottage built in 1793

LOCATION West Sussex

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, conservatory, study, three bedrooms, two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in Spain for two years,' says Katie.



DINING AREA

The elegant fireplace was the starting point for the scheme.

Walls painted in Pier Point super emulsion, £41.50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth. Mustard love seat, £800, Sofa.com. Oak engineered-wood flooring, £43sq m, The Natural Wood Flooring Company



After a sabbatical in Spain, Katie Hyde, her partner, James, and their daughters, Amber and Lilly, returned to the UK with a different perspective on life. 'Living abroad was a valuable experience, as it gave us a clear idea about what we wanted for our future,' says Katie. One thing the family knew was that they wanted to continue living by the sea. And Katie, who grew up in West Sussex, persuaded everyone that the south coast could be just as enticing as the Costa del Sol, if they found the right house.

When the couple viewed their pretty cottage, just five minutes' walk from the seafront, they were initially concerned about its close proximity to the main road. However, as soon as they crossed the threshold all their doubts disappeared. 'The feel of the place, and its amazing potential, sold it to us,' recalls Katie.

Built in 1793 as a fisherman's cottage, the property had been extended twice, with a new kitchen and two bedrooms added. 'But because the house had grown over so

DESIGN TIP 'Achieve the look of a hand-built kitchen by using shop-bought carcasses and adding bespoke fronts'

many years, the rooms were all at different levels and didn't flow,' explains Katie. The existing layout had two sitting rooms but the Hydes transformed them into a large open-plan kitchen-diner, conservatory and study. To get more of a sense of fluidity, the couple opted to install engineered wood boards throughout the space, which meant that the floors had to be levelled out.

Plaster panelling was then removed from the dining room. 'Although it was an interesting detail, it wasn't original and made the room feel too formal,' says Katie. This created the sense of continuity that Katie and James wanted and made the room appear much larger and lighter.

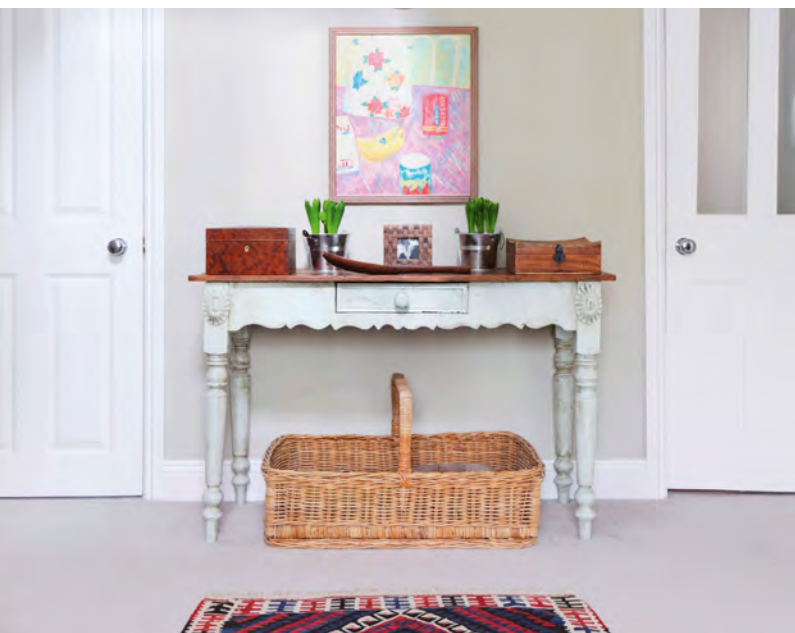
The result of their efforts is a bright and welcoming family home, perfectly designed for modern living. 'Renovating the cottage was hard work,' admits Katie, 'but we now have a beautiful house – and a relaxed and healthy lifestyle by the sea.' 25



1 & 2 SITTING ROOM
The mix of classic furniture and ethnic accessories turns this 18th-century space into a stylish, contemporary living area.

Bluebell sofa, £1,490; scatter cushions, from £20 each, all Sofa.com. Walls painted in Stone Ochre super emulsion, £41.50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth. Mu Yi sells antique Chinese cabinets, from £400

3 & 4 KITCHEN
Katie and James bought inexpensive cabinetry carcasses and a carpenter made the drawer fronts, which were then painted. Units painted in Graphite elements eggshell, £50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth. Metal handles, £3.50, Rockett St George. Oak worktop, £50m, Worktop Express. Enamel sink, £160, Ikea. Smeg fridge, £1,144; Smeg cooker, £899; both Currys



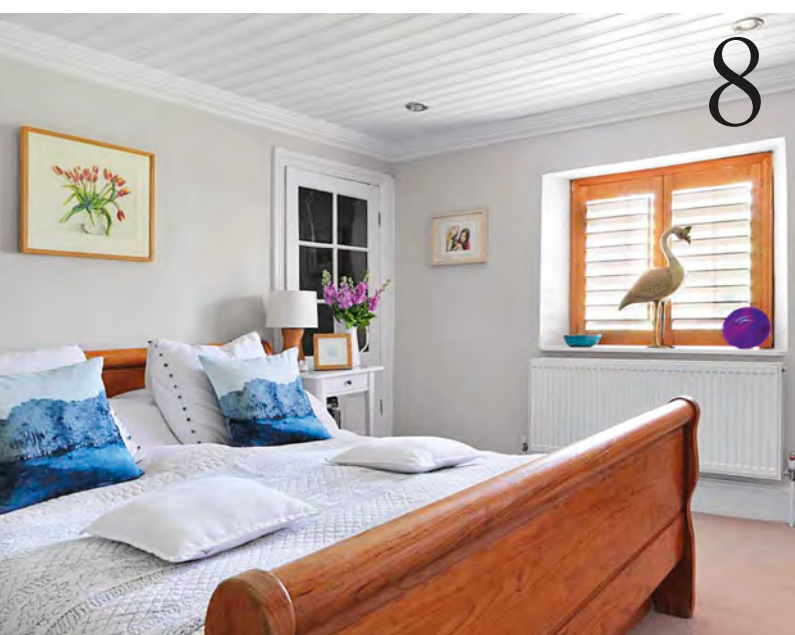
5 LANDING
A library slots perfectly into this spacious area. Muji's Ash magazine rack, £20, is a good match

6 BATHROOM
A Chinese chest adds interest. Tradewinds sells similar black lacquered cabinets, from £245

7 LILLY'S BEDROOM
'She wanted pink!' says Katie. Cushions, from £15, John Lewis

8 GUEST BEDROOM
Wood lifts the neutral scheme. Camargue sleigh bed, £1,010, Revival Beds, is comparable

9 MASTER BEDROOM
Pastel blue is a soothing choice. Selling Antiques has a wide range of chest of drawers, from £475



BIGGER & BETTER

Fenella Nicholas moved to a nearby house, which she extended up, down and sideways to accommodate her growing family

FEATURE PENNY BOTTING | PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT SANDERSON



FAMILY ROOM

'The antique leather chair was a gift to my husband. The dog keeps eating chunks out of it, but I think this adds to its charm!' says Fenella.

Custom-made fireplace, £950,
Chesney's. Rug, £600, Scion



REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Edwardian semi-detached house

LOCATION West London

ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen-diner/family room, games room, four bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a similar, but smaller, house nearby,' says Fenella.

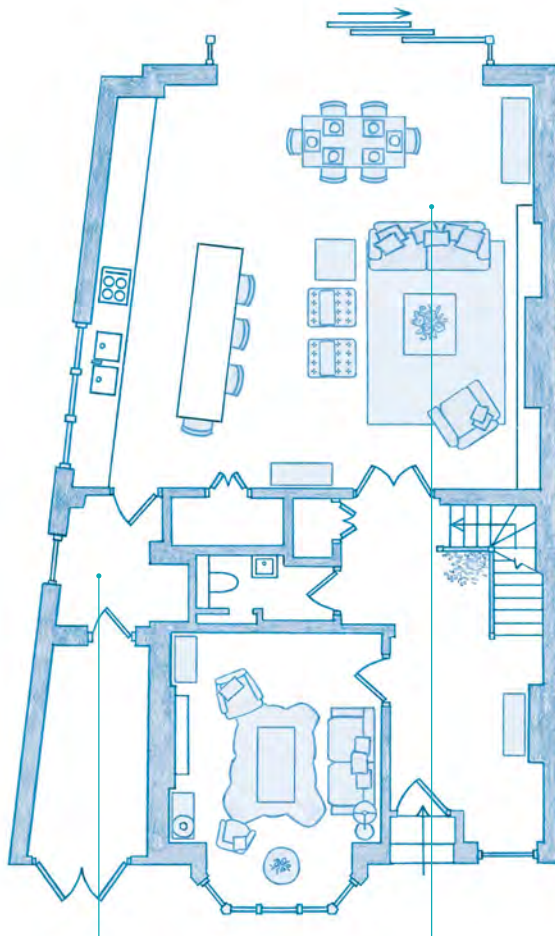


KITCHEN
A breakfast bar doubles as extra workspace. Victo pendants, from £630 each, Skandium. Camelot flooring, £85sq m, Indigo Design



SITTING ROOM
'Grasscloth gives a wonderful smell of fresh hay,' says Fenella. Grasscloth wallcovering, £200 a roll, Turnell & Gigon. Mirrored console, £450, Graham & Green

AFTER

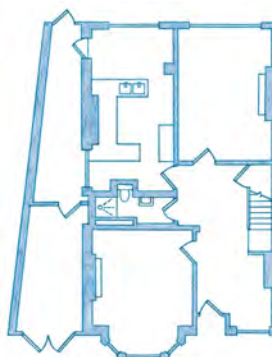


LAYOUT

'We took out as many internal walls as possible for maximum light and space,' says Fenella. 'At one stage, the whole rear side of the house was suspended on just one beam.'



BEFORE



OPEN-PLAN LIVING

Creating this free-flowing, multifunctional space at the back of the house was a huge undertaking. The work included removing the rear part of the building to install a series of glass doors, which flooded the room with daylight.



Tired of tiptoeing through the sea of toys that flooded the kitchen on a daily basis, Fenella Nicholas knew it was time for a move with husband Ben and their two children Mia, 13, and Lucas, 11. 'We needed a bigger space for the kids in a quieter, more residential area.'

The search began for a property in the countryside. 'When we couldn't find anything we liked, Ben had a lightbulb moment and suggested we stay in London, but buy a larger place.' So, they ditched their rural plans and bought a house a mere 10 streets away.

The move was straightforward, but the couple had big ideas for the building. 'We decided to stretch it in every direction possible,' says Fenella. 'We extended into the loft and side return and, importantly, lengthened the building at the back.'

Despite taking just six months to complete, the work was by no means trouble-free. 'We had heard a rumour that there was a brook

DESIGN ADVICE

'My best tip came from my dad: "If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well." His words ring in my ears every day'

underneath, and thankfully our builders found it!' says Fenella. 'It took two pumps working constantly for a fortnight to drain the house.'

Interior designer Fenella went for neutral, earthy colours. 'I wanted to create a feeling of calm, so I used mainly blue-greys and taupes on the walls,' she says. But the games room was where she really showed her creativity. 'I had a woodland mural done and decided real silver birches would add a lovely 3D touch,' she says. 'They were surprisingly hard to find. In the end, I went to a forest in Hampshire to meet a woodcutter, who allowed me to select the ones I wanted.' The acoustics needed attention, too. 'It's a vast, echoey space, so I considered using fabric on the walls,' says Fenella. 'But then we put up a hat collection that belonged to my father and, amazingly, it took the echo away.'

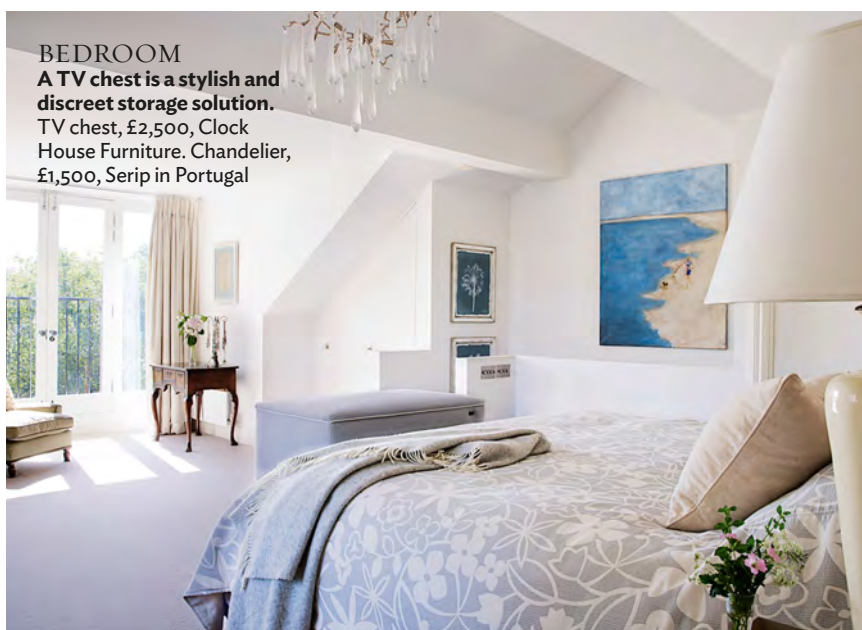
Fenella is delighted with the results. 'It's our dream home,' she says. 'To satisfy our country itch, we also bought a little holiday cottage in Oxfordshire. But we love it here, and we're in no hurry to move again.' 25



HALL
Soft grey makes for an elegant entrance.
Goth Lantern, £235, Jim Lawrence, is similar



GAMES ROOM
This fun space is used by kids and adults alike.
Retro swivel chair, £400, Indigo Design



BEDROOM
A TV chest is a stylish and discreet storage solution.
TV chest, £2,500, Clock House Furniture. Chandelier, £1,500, Serip in Portugal



BATHROOM
Sharp lines create a contemporary feel.
Sink, £1,200, C JEM - Worksurfaces. Bath, £495, CP Hart. Cabinet, £250, The White Company



THE SOURCE

Erica Miller shows how you can achieve the style secrets seen in this issue's homes

DESIGN IDEAS



TEAM STRIPES WITH FLORALS

PAGES 136 – 139

Nothing brings warmth and decoration to a room like pattern does. It can enliven a dull setting, and add definition and depth. The

Twists have mixed stripes and florals with great results in their daughter's bedroom. Limiting the pattern combination to one area of the space, they have achieved a balanced, rather than overpowering, look. Remember to stick to a simple colour palette, too, as this will tone down the busyness of the patterns – for the walls, just choose a plain shade that matches one of the colours from your fabrics. In this case, a soft lilac has been picked out of the floral curtains. Finally, when mixing patterns, avoid designs of the same scale as they can look too intense together.



POLISHED CONCRETE

PAGES 70 – 73

To give her bathroom a modern edge, Cara Connell opted for polished concrete surfaces. With its subtle sheen, polished concrete is a finish

that's the height of cool. It can be applied to either horizontal or vertical surfaces to bring a utilitarian feel to walls, floors and even furniture. It's durable, unlikely to chip and easy to clean. Transforming concrete into a decorative surface means treating it with a densifier – a chemical that's applied over the concrete to fill the pores. Once dry, the concrete is then ground with tools that get it progressively finer to achieve the desired finish.



SET THE TABLE

PAGES 101 – 103

The Neals have dressed their Christmas table with an understated centrepiece that was inspired by the wild landscape found outside their stunning Fire Island beach house. An ornate silver vase,

some delicate white blooms, a pair of chunky silvered candlesticks and other pretty candleholders have been grouped artistically with an abundance of fragrant spruce and other fresh foliage picked up on long winter walks. Designed to suit the chic East Coast look of the dining space, the table centrepiece proves that often the simplest of ideas can lend a festive air to your surroundings.



INSPIRED SHOPPING



SITTING PRETTY

PAGES 57 – 60

Mid-Century-inspired chairs take centre stage in the Stampes' family room. For a similar silhouette try this Inga chair, £2,809, Hamilton Conte at LuxDeco.



LIGHT UP

PAGES 57 – 60

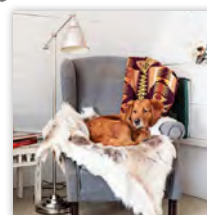
A group of slimline candles has been used to create a dazzling and colourful display in the Stampes' stylish home. Try Long candles, £1 each, Tiger, to get the look.



SCHOOL HOUSE ROCK

PAGES 79 – 82

Pared-back dining chairs in wood and metal work beautifully in Peterson Jeffries' schoolhouse conversion. The Industrial wood and iron chair, £89, Vincent and Barn, is suitably stylish.



UTILITY CHIC

PAGES 44 – 48

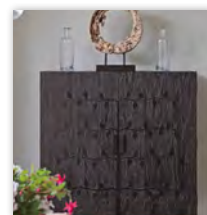
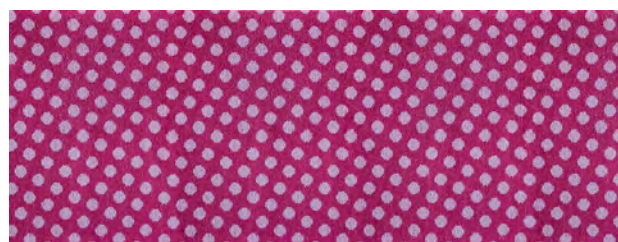
If you love the reading lamp in Marica Låhdö's sitting room, you will appreciate the subtly chic Satin Grey metal floor lamp, £279, Artisanti.



IN THE PINK

PAGES 84 – 85

Vibrant pink carpet sets the tone in the Fergusons' daughter's bedroom. For a daring twist, try this Padstow Raspberry Spot 80% wool/20% nylon carpet, £75sq m, Brintons.



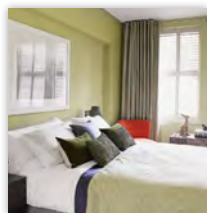
BACK IN BLACK

PAGES 112 – 115

An imposing black cabinet gives the Nicholases' home an air of distinction. The Arkelstorp sideboard, £195, Ikea, is an equally impressive storage solution.



INSPIRED SHOPPING



SOFT SHADES

PAGES 62 – 65

Get May Ping Wong's look with either French Green marble matt emulsion (top), £34.66 for 2.5 litres, Mylands, or Mojito matt emulsion, £19.99 for 2.5 litres, Crown Paints at Homebase.



FANCY FLOURISH

PAGES 101 – 103

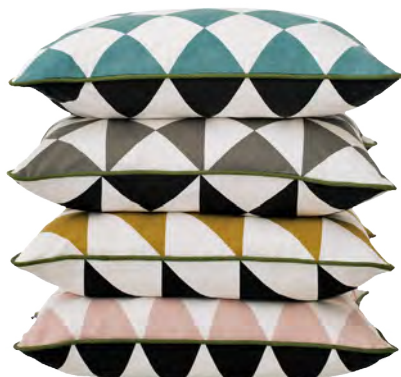
Wall sconces have been used to display sparkling Christmas decorations in the Neals' dining room. Emulate the look with this Minara wooden scone in a natural finish, £145, Oka.



IN SHAPE

PAGES 84 – 85

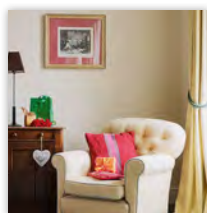
The geometric cushions in the Fergusons' family room have standout style – and so do the Large Geometry cushions in organic cotton, £49 each, Ferm Living at Cloudberry Living.



TALL TASTE

PAGES 26 – 30

Elegant and contemporary, a striking monochrome vase works beautifully on the Beyls' coffee table. The Silk black on white vase, £85, LSA International, stands tall at an impressive 38cm.



ALL IN THE DETAIL

PAGES 51 – 54

A luxuriously plump button-back armchair fits perfectly into Christopher Bielenberg's bedroom. For a similar style try this Anna armchair, from £750 plus fabric, Whitehead Designs.



STEP UP

PAGES 74 – 77

Simple and honest in design, a wooden ladder provides the perfect place to hang towels in Nicky Colvill's charming rustic bathroom. The lacquered elm Chinese workmen's ladder, £149, Orchid Furniture, has even more rungs for your towels.



COMFORT AND JOY

PAGES 104 - 107

Love the graceful painted carver chairs in the Cutts' dining room? Then look no further than the Queen Anne chair, £450, I & JL Brown. It's comfortable and truly gorgeous.



5 OF THE BEST CASSEROLES

A kitchen essential, a large casserole makes it easy to create stews and soups from scratch. Stylish enough to go from oven to table, here's our pick of the best designs around.



Berry cast-iron oval casserole, 4.5 litres, £118, AGA Cookshop



Lightweight cast-aluminium casserole, 2.1 litres, £39.99, Lakeland



Imperial Blue cast-iron shallow round casserole, 3.8 litres, £99, Denby



Coq au vin Cocotte in cast iron, 5.5 litres, £225, Staub at Zwilling



Matte cast-iron oval casserole in Cotton, 4.7 litres, £160, Le Creuset



TOP TABLE

PAGES 20 - 25

A slim and delicate ornate console takes pride of place in Kate Pols' entrance hall. For an equally eye-catching design try the Lantau faux shagreen-and-gold console table, £945, Oka.



CLEAN LIVING

PAGES 38 - 42

An oversized stone basin makes a statement in Robert van der Linde's bathroom. The Kisdon washbasin in Carrara marble, £2,520, designed by Paul Crofts for Frassk, is equally imposing.

BOLD MOVE

Lorna and Noel Bourke made a life-changing decision when they decided to relocate from London to the Irish countryside

FEATURE PENNY CRAWFORD-COLLINS
PHOTOGRAPHY PHILIP LAUTERBACH



NEW-BUILD



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

New-build house

LOCATION

West Cork, Ireland

ROOMS Hall, sitting room/
dining area, kitchen, utility room,
conservatory, five bedrooms
(all en suite), bathroom

BUILT IN 2007

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We used to live in a three-storey
Victorian terraced house in
Kingston, Surrey,' says Lorna.

Living in Surrey and working in London, Lorna Bourke and her husband Noel were becoming increasingly tired of their long commutes into the capital for work. 'We wanted a better quality of life, an escape,' says Lorna. 'Noel's family is from Tipperary and he has happy childhood memories of magical summer holidays in Ireland. In fact, we have both experienced some wonderful times there. So we made the big decision to sell our house and start a new life on the beautiful Sheep's Head peninsula in West Cork, an area that we both love.'

Having committed to the move, they needed to find a way of making a living and

found that this region, with its dramatic scenery, has a thriving tourist trade. After some research, they discovered that what it lacked was a boutique-style B&B. 'I love cooking and Noel is very practical and great at gardening, so we decided that running a guesthouse would suit us as well as generate an income.'

The couple bought a site with an old cottage. But it was damp, cold and drafty, and didn't maximise the views on offer, so they decided to knock it down and rebuild, carefully planning the new layout with a modern kitchen, en-suite bedrooms and a large dining and living area. 'The views of the bay are spectacular so we wanted to



2

1 SITTING ROOM

Vibrant red sofas inject warmth. Ritz sofa, £998, DFS, would suit this setting. For similar coffee table try Sonoma Light, £263, Marks & Spencer. Farrow & Ball's Plummett estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, is a comparable wall colour

2 DINING AREA

Large French windows take advantage of the stunning views. For similar table and chairs try Garrat Chestnut table, £950; Refectory dining chair, £400, both Laura Ashley. Crystal Ball pendant, £990, Holloways of Ludlow, has this look



3

3, 4 & 5 KITCHEN

The island is a welcome addition. Kitchen, price on application, Winchmore Kitchens. Cabinets painted in traditional oil eggshell French Grey Dark, £53, for 2.5 litres, Little Greene. Lacanche dual-fuel range cooker, £4,250, John Lewis.

French Godin stove, price on application, Wells Reclamation

6 HALL

A wall sticker adds a quirky touch. Mortorp grandfather clock stencil, £8, Ikea. For similar cushions try Bluebellgray pom pom, £58, Amara



4



5



6



FAVOURITE FEATURE

'We love the exposed stone walls and the beams that we salvaged from the 200-year-old cottage – they give the house much more character and retain a piece of history'

capitalise on this, too,' says Lorna. 'Plus, we made sure that the house was insulated with underfloor heating and double glazing to make it cosy and economical to run.'

Noel and Lorna lived on site for a year in a mobile home while the house was being constructed, so they had a huge amount of input into the build. And although they demolished the old cottage, they were keen to keep some original features. 'We didn't want the property to look too new, so we recycled the exposed walls and beams from the old cottage. We were inspired by the region's architectural vernacular,' says Lorna.

Once the building work was complete, Lorna could turn her attention to the

interiors. 'I love colour and texture, and wanted the house to be bright with a mixture of old and new pieces,' she says. 'I kept the decor neutral with feature walls in greys and greens, and introduced reds and pinks with accessories. It was also important that the bedrooms all looked striking and comfy.'

Moving to Ireland from a busy city has certainly been a huge upheaval for Noel and Lorna, but it seems to have paid off. 'We're really happy we did it – we have a much better quality of life,' says Lorna. 'We also get to meet some fascinating people and are part of a strong, thriving community. And the best bit is we work from home so there's no commute, we just have to get out of bed,' she smiles. 25

1&3 MASTER BEDROOM

The dark feature wall makes a bold and dramatic statement.

Embroidered bedlinen, from £9.99, Zara Home. For a bed like this one try The Four Poster Bed Company, £2,400

2 GUEST BEDROOM

Accents of pink and brown help enliven this simple, chic space.

For a comparable blind and cushion fabric take a look at Milano, £55m, Harlequin. Antique chest of drawers, price on application, Eclectic Interiors

4 EN-SUITE BATHROOM

A contemporary, minimalist design is ideal for this compact area.

Riva cream porcelain tiles, £88sq m, Stone and Ceramic Warehouse

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January	February	March	April
£389	£389	£459	£579

FIVE-STAR MADEIRA

Seven nights from £329 per person including flights

The popular five-star Pestana Casino Park offers views over Funchal Bay and is five minutes' walk from the old town and marina.

	January	February	March	April
B&B	£329	£339	£359	£369
HB	£459	£469	£489	£529

■ **To book: 01244 525196 quoting BHO0215**
Mon-Fri 9am-9pm, Sat 9am-5pm, Sunday 10am-6pm
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Prices are per person, based on two sharing and subject to finite, fluid availability. Images used in conjunction with and offer operated by and subject to the conditions of Holiday Gems Ltd, Atol 3973 (Global Travel Group Ltd) a company independent of Time Inc. (UK) Ltd. Transfers, checked luggage and in-flight meals excluded. Non-London flights may attract a supplement. Hotel taxes and some activities are extra and payable locally. All-inclusive drinks are locally produced. Hotel ratings are local. Offer may be withdrawn at any time. Restrictions, conditions and credit/debit card surcharges apply – ask at time of booking. Balance payable 14 weeks prior to departure. Prices correct at time of going to press. When you respond, Time Inc. (UK) Ltd and other group companies may contact you with offers/services. Please give your details if you wish to receive such offers. We will not give your details to other companies without your permission; let us know if you are happy for us to do so. Calls cost 5p/min from a BT landline. You may also be charged a connection fee. Mobile and other providers' charges may vary.

It takes TWO

Hugo and Chloe Lindsay-Fynn combined their passion and talent for design to create their dream family home

FEATURE MAGGIE COLVIN
PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT SANDERSON

DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Semi-detached Victorian house

LOCATION

Southwest London

ROOMS Two halls, sitting room, kitchen-diner, family room, cloakroom, three bedrooms (one en suite), nursery, bathroom

PURCHASED 2013

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before we moved here, we lived in a house in Chelsea,' says Chloe.



SITTING ROOM

Hugo's love of geometric shapes is reflected in the choice of rug and panelled mirror above the impressive stone fireplace, which helps redress the slender proportions of the space.

Sash mirror, £255, Oka. Plantation Rug Company's Benni Natural rug, £500, Heal's, is similar. Clandon fireplace surround, from £2,450, Chesney's. Walls painted in Marine Blue Absolute matt emulsion, £35 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene



Vibrant geometric patterns sit happily next to industrial and global influences in Hugo and Chloe Lindsay-Fynn's newly restored London

home. 'It's definitely eclectic,' Agrees Hugo. 'Chloe likes colour and I'm happier with neutrals, but between us we strike a good balance.'

Between any husband and wife interior design team you would expect differences, but this couple share a mutual respect for their individual skills. This, according to Chloe, ensured their first building project together was enormous fun. 'We would spend Saturday mornings lying in bed searching the internet for must-haves, scouring magazines and visiting design shows – the research was almost the best part,' she says.

PROPERTY HUNT

Their only major hurdle was finding the right house. 'We didn't really have any location preferences in London, so we had a large search area,' explains Chloe. 'Our only proviso was that the house had to be in need of a complete overhaul – we didn't want to tear out a newly installed kitchen just because it wasn't to our taste.'

It took the couple a year to find their semi-detached property, which was almost a complete wreck but offered plenty of scope. 'Many houses of this style have a double-size sitting room and the half that is furthest from



the bay window is not properly used, so I stole the space to create a second hall, cloakroom and entrance via a new side door,' says Hugo. 'It meant we could furnish the front hall in a grown-up way with decent furniture, protected from the buggy, which we use the side entrance for.'

CREATING SPACE

To make a large family kitchen, living and dining area, Hugo extended out as far to the side and back as the planners would allow, while clever design touches make it feel even more spacious. 'The horizontal black metal frame of the Japanese-style doors accentuates the width of the room,' he explains.

The Crittall doors also introduce an industrial feel, which complements the exposed brick wall that Chloe loves. 'Natural bricks can make a space feel truly homely, but they need to be a pale shade – not bright red – so it was vital to find the best reclaimed bricks,' she says. Meanwhile, sourcing the right limestone mortar to complement them became Hugo's quest. But then, according to Chloe, he is the master of detail – nothing was installed without a thorough vetting, such as the clear light-switch plates used in the bedrooms to show the wallpaper underneath.

With the arrival of their first baby, Otto, the couple's final project was the nursery, which has a wild-animal theme. The hope is that Hugo junior will share his dad's incredibly tidy nature – and his parents are nothing but optimistic! 25



KITCHEN
'To make this area "less kitcheny" we used floating shelves instead of wall cupboards,' says Hugo.
 Bespoke kitchen, DBYK. Units painted in Stiffkey Blue estate eggshell, £51 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Imo bar stools, £380 each, Pinch. For similar lights try Mallard Industrial pendants, £155 each, Alexander & Pearl



DESIGN ADVICE
'Well-defined symmetry produces a feeling of tranquillity in a room. I like to use pairs of items, such as lights, for that reason'





DINING AREA

A custom-made table ensures the space is fully utilised. Bespoke chairs, £300 each; table, £3,500, all Palladian London. Bricks, £120 for 100, Premier Reclaimed Bricks. Broderie wood flooring in Fumed Shell, £82sq m, Cheville Parquet



MASTER EN SUITE

The stunning freestanding tub is the star of the show.

Apollo bath, £2,856, Albion Bath Company. Bespoke mirrors (above, £1,100, Palladian London. Zebra painting, £850, Catherine Czalet Designs



GUEST BEDROOM

Geometric wallpaper provides wow factor.

Aston Trellis wallpaper, £96 per roll, Thibaut. The Really Linda Barker's cable-knit throw, £60, is similar. St Germain headboard, from £450, Sofa.com



NURSERY

Accessories add colour and fun.

Animal heads, £48 each, Anthropologie. Donna Wilson Fox cushion, £70, John Lewis



GUEST BEDROOM

Fresh apricot accents enliven the scheme.

Quatrefoil wallpaper, £55 per roll, Osborne & Little. Headboard, price on request, The Headboard Workshop

SITTING ROOM

Glass furniture creates a light and open feel.

Calligaris low coffee table, from £700, Stocktons, is similar. Felix two-seater sofa, from £900, John Lewis, has a similar look. Silk cushions, £95 each, Designers Guild

MODERN REVIVAL

Julie and Ian Hunter used light, colour and sumptuous fabrics to bring a neglected period house into the 21st century

FEATURE HEATHER DIXON | PHOTOGRAPHY DAVE BURTON

DINING ROOM

A set of old chairs has been given a glamorous new look.

Chairs reupholstered in crushed velvet, £180 each, Eyecandy Interior Design. Flip Flap mirror, £399, Enid Hutt Gallery



INSPIRING

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Victorian detached house

LOCATION South Yorkshire

ROOMS Hall, drawing room, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, two studies, utility room, five bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We had a 1920s detached house in West Yorkshire,' says Julie.

KITCHEN

Handleless cupboards create the clean lines Julie loves.

Siematic units, £37,000, John Longley Kitchen Design. Stelrad Concord radiator, from £160, Radiators.co.uk, is similar. Bar stools, £119 each, Danetti

Few people want to stay in a house while it is being renovated, but Julie Hunter loves being part of the process. 'I don't mind living in chaos in order to reach my goal,' she says. 'I get really passionate about creating something new from something old, so renovating our house while we were among the dust and rubble felt, to me, like a big adventure.'

But even Julie hit rock bottom when the cellar ceiling was taken out, filling the house with a fine layer of black grime. 'It got everywhere,' she recalls. 'We were still finding it months later and I thought our

home would never be clean again. This was the lowest point of the entire renovation.'

Julie and husband Ian spent nine months modernising their five-bedroom Yorkshire property to include a new kitchen and a basement conversion. Although Julie wanted to keep the period features, she had no intention of recreating the Victorian style. 'If you're not careful you can lose the original character by trying to match it,' she says. 'I wanted to move the house into the present while highlighting the old architecture.'

Oak units in the kitchen made the room seem small and dark, so Julie drew up plans



HALL

The stained-glass windows are an original feature.

Orchid wallpaper, £67 per roll, Cole & Son. Nerino lamp, £312, Simply Lighting



MASTER BEDROOM

Italian furniture from the couple's previous home adds a contemporary touch.

Rajapour wallpaper, £70 per roll, Cole & Son.
Savoy bedding, from £140, The White Company.
Cushions, from £30 each, Eyecandy Interior Design.
Capri walnut bedside table, £199, Dwell, creates a comparable look



for a contemporary design with clean lines and shelves instead of cupboards to keep the long, narrow area feeling as wide and open as possible. 'It's the main room in the house so it had to be right,' says Julie. 'We made do with just the dining room for six weeks while we waited for the units to arrive and be fitted. It was worth the inconvenience, though I never want to see another microwave meal again!'

Julie and Ian brought furniture from their last house, but introduced bold jewel colours via reupholstered dining chairs and vibrant cushions. 'I can keep colours

in my head, so it makes life easy when I go shopping for fabrics, wallpapers and paints,' says Julie. 'I know instinctively which shade or tone to choose. Luckily, Ian lets me get on with it – he doesn't like the chaos of renovating so he's happy to discuss options and then let me make the decisions.'

Although they have similar tastes, when it came to the bold wallpapers, Julie had to have the courage of her convictions to assure Ian they would work. 'I knew they would look fantastic, but not everyone can visualise the result,' she says. 'I also wanted to include lots of glass, not just in the doors

and windows but also in the furniture and accessories,' says Julie. 'I love glass vases and tables – anything that draws light through and keeps the room looking spacious.'

While carrying out work on the house, the couple simultaneously redesigned the overgrown garden, levelling the driveway, building a rockery and removing a retaining wall that partially obscured a characterful sheer rock wall behind the property. 'We've finally got everything how we want it, but I know I will get itchy feet again soon,' says Julie. 'There are plenty more houses out there waiting to be given a new lease of life.' 25

BEDROOM

Julie designed an urban scheme for her son Callum, 18. Celio Wenge wardrobe, £2,000, Stocktons. J by Jasper Conran duvet cover set, £150, Debenhams



BATHROOM

This inviting space features a warm mix of light neutrals and dark wood. Flamingo wallpaper, £70 per roll, Cole & Son





HALL
Encaustic tiles and stained glass point to the property's period origins. Upton weathered-oak console, £955, Oka



INSPIRING

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Terraced house, built in 1912

LOCATION Bristol

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen, snug, four bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2006

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a flat in London's Muswell Hill before we had to relocate for work,' says Nadia.



Journey's END

After an arduous search, Nadia and Stephen Reid snapped up a near-derelict property and turned it into a family home full of character

FEATURE KATHY HURST | **PHOTOGRAPHY** BRETT CHARLES

SITTING ROOM
Nadia's eye for seamlessly mixing old and new is evident throughout. Barcelona chair, £5,232, The Conran Shop. Persian Meshed rug, £3,595, Frith Rugs, is a good match







House hunting can be stressful at the best of times, but add to the mix being heavily pregnant and you have a recipe for a serious challenge. That was the situation Nadia Reid found herself in when she and her partner Stephen were looking for property in 2006. 'We'd spend our weekends driving 120 miles from London to Bristol for viewings, but it was the peak of the property boom, so the houses would be under offer before we even got back home,' recalls Nadia. 'We'd submitted sealed bids on numerous properties in neighbouring streets and, by the time we bid on this house, we realised that we had to be more aggressive in our approach and outline what good buyers we were, which gave us the edge.'

That said, the house, which had previously been occupied by two elderly sisters, was virtually uninhabitable, with no central heating and a single electrical socket serving the whole property. 'All the windows were nailed shut and the timbers were riddled with dry rot and woodworm,' explains Nadia. 'Worse still, there was no kitchen – just a tin sink in one of the rooms – and an outhouse held together by brown packaging tape.'

PAST AND PRESENT

Undeterred by the scale of the work involved, the couple embarked on a six-month renovation project. 'The initial work – rewiring, plumbing and plastering – took three months, then we had to move in surrounded by builders and dust,' says Nadia. In terms of decor, the couple opted for a simple neutral palette, and an elegant mix of old and new furnishings. 'I've grown up surrounded by beautiful objects,' says Nadia. 'My mum was an antiques dealer and my dad is from the Middle East so there were always eclectic rugs, works of art and wonderful furnishings in the house.'

Indeed, many of Nadia's most treasured pieces are family heirlooms – from a Persian rug that belonged to her parents to her grandfather's glass-fronted drinks cabinet, which is now stacked with books. 'I don't try to create a particular look,' says Nadia, who is studying interior design. 'I just put things together that I love and think will work.'

HOME SWEET HOME

The house now abounds with quirky finds and has a comfortable, off-beat feel. But it's the kitchen, painted in a barely there blue shade that has seen the greatest transformation. What was once a dank space with rotting windows is now an elegant room with French windows to the garden, where the family come together to cook, dine and chat. 'There's a nice blend of natural materials,' says Nadia. 'The solid-wood cabinetry was my husband's choice and I fell for the green Welsh slate floor the moment I saw it.'

Eight years on and the Reids have no qualms about leaving London. 'We're lucky to be part of a close-knit community, and Anya, now 10, and Olivia, 8, can cycle along the paths or pop round to their friends who live close by,' says Nadia. 'We love living here – it has been worth the hard work.' 25



STAIRWELL
Round mirrors add a decorative touch. Try Laura Ashley for a range of statement mirrors, from £175. Walls painted in New White estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball





KITCHEN-DINER

The oak cabinetry and table helps warm up the pale-blue walls.

Massello oak dining table, £950, Habitat. Desalto Riga chairs, £126 each, Design Icons. Rise-and-fall pendant light in jade, £187, Holloways of Ludlow. Walls painted in Pale Powder estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



ANYA'S BEDROOM
Mismatched textiles and colourful artwork give the room a fun feel. The Old Cinema sells vintage 1960s desks, from £495. For similar gold letters try Notonthehighstreet.com, priced from around £25 each

DESIGN TIP *'I find it's a good idea to choose paint colours last, as trying to match accessories to your walls can be a little restrictive'*



MASTER BEDROOM
'Some of the fireplaces had been replaced with ugly 1950s versions but this one remained intact,' explains Nadia.

Amsterdam fireplace with Jazz Honey tiles, £585, Cast Fireplaces, is comparable. Mahogany sleigh bed, £540, Anderson Bradshaw



STUDY

Nadia uses this for her interior-design work. Bekväm step stool, £22, Ikea



BATHROOM

'We wanted to create a simple, timeless look,' says Nadia.

Trend beige wall tiles, £33.60sq m, Tile Flair

EASTERN PASSAGE

A stint in Japan inspired Deborah and Peter Twist to integrate Asian influences into their traditional period home

FEATURE KAREN JENSEN-JONES | PHOTOGRAPHY NICK SMITH



HALL

This bright and spacious entrance is filled with unusual and exotic finds. Bespoke glass table by Tom Faulkner. Wooden chair, from £1,200, Uma Interiors. Bianco Floe white marble floor, from £150sq m, Stonell

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached Victorian villa

LOCATION Cambridge

ROOMS Hall, drawing room, sitting room, kitchen-diner, study, utility room, boot room, gym, yoga studio, four bedrooms (two en suite), dressing room, bathroom

PURCHASED 2007

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving to this house, we lived in a contemporary apartment in Tokyo,' says Deborah.



SITTING ROOM
Dark furniture and splashes of red
create an Asian-inspired theme.

Cabinet, price on application, Fornasetti. Chinese Aubusson rug, from £22.50sq ft, Oriental Rug Experts. Crystal chandelier, £3,240, World Class Lighting, is comparable. Artwork (above fireplace, below), price on application, Apricot Gallery



As a child, Deborah Twist was fascinated by the secret house with the secret garden that she drove past daily on her way to school, and remembers telling herself that one day she'd like to live there. 'I could never quite see over the high wall, but could tell it was a gem,' she says.

Many years later, and after a long spell living in Japan, Deborah couldn't believe her luck when she discovered that the very same house was for sale, just as she was looking for a property back in her hometown of Cambridge. 'My husband Peter and I first viewed it when the wisteria vine in the courtyard was blooming and it was so beautiful,' recalls Deborah, 'and that's what really sold it.'

The Victorian villa was originally a small miller's cottage dating back to the 17th century, and although it was in good repair when the couple bought it, Deborah was keen to make decorative changes. 'I'm inspired by Asia but I also have a passion for period properties, so our home is a mixture of East and West,' she explains. 'We spent a long time living in Tokyo, where I began collecting hand-crafted Chinese furniture, Japanese rugs and furnishings that now fill the house. Eventually, I set up Uma Interiors when friends and family kept asking me where they could buy similar pieces.

I regularly return to Asia to source unique treasures, and I think people are surprised by how harmoniously the furniture and accessories can blend within their own aesthetic.'

The villa is certainly testament to Deborah's passion, with every room featuring an easy mix of influences. In the grand hall, marble





YOGA ROOM
Deborah has created an oasis of calm. Chinese chest, from £500, Uma Interiors. Tatami floor mat, £775sq m, Japan Garden

FAVOURITE SHOP 'The selection of design and home accessories in Tokyo is unbeatable, from high-end to basic. But closer to home, I like Nord in Cambridge'

tiled floors and a crystal chandelier are paired with hand-crafted Chinese furniture and pottery. Meanwhile, in the kitchen, glossy black cabinetry is lifted by bright orange soft furnishings and accessories. 'We also had orange glazing fitted over the doorway to my yoga studio,' says Deborah. 'It's a great shot of colour that filters the light into the hallway to create a very dramatic effect.'

Her design philosophy was to begin with an existing piece that could be worked around. 'Start with some furniture or artwork and build your scheme from there,' she suggests. 'The Fornasetti cabinet in the sitting room is a beautiful piece in its own right and everything else in the room complements it.' It's a formula that has worked well for the couple and their daughter, Inès, 11, allowing eclectic pieces to be seamlessly integrated into their home.

'The house is full of history and it's the perfect foil for our treasures,' reflects Deborah. 'I'd never have guessed, having driven past it for so many years, that one day it would become ours.' 25



KITCHEN-DINER
A statement island takes centre stage in this sleek, contemporary scheme. Units, price on application, Kitchensmiths. Franklite Modern White Globe ceiling pendants, £125 each, Castlegate Lights, are identical to these ones



MASTER BEDROOM

The couple wanted an uncluttered, streamlined look, with finishing touches adding subtle colour. McKenzie bed, £409, Taurus Beds, is similar. Artwork, price on request, Japanese Prints-London



HALL

A blue panel beneath the dado rail complements the geometric wallpaper. Tessella BP wallpaper, £80 per roll, Farrow & Ball. Pair of ginger jars with stands, £650. Uma Interiors



GUEST BATHROOM

Timber accents add texture to this chic and spacious monochrome design. Danxia floor tiles, £27.75sq m, Topps Tiles



GUEST BEDROOM

Blue velvet curtains and a baby chandelier lend a touch of luxe. Zoffany Orissa Velvet in Azure, £110m, Fabrics & Papers, is a similar curtain fabric. Walls painted in London Stone estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



INÈS'S BEDROOM

Bold pattern gives a very simple space focal points. Walls painted in White Elephant super emulsion, £41.50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth. Sarasota - Schiaparelli blind fabric, £37m, Designers Guild, is a close match



WHERE TO BUY

January's list of contact numbers and web addresses

A **AGA Cookshop** 0345 345 2823, agacookshop.co.uk
Aladdin's Cave 020 8320 2553
Albion Bath Company 01255 831605, albionbathco.com
Alexander 01903 522555, alexanderworththing.co.uk
Alexander & Pearl 020 8508 0411, alexanderandpearl.co.uk
Amara 0800 587 7645, amara.com
Amazon amazon.co.uk
Anderson Bradshaw 01420 562645, andersonbradshaw.co.uk
Annie Sloan 01865 803168, anniesloan.co.uk
Another Country 020 7486 3251, anothercountry.com
Anthropologie 00800 0026 8476, anthropologie.eu
Anton&K 07875 911776, antonandk.co.uk
Apricot Gallery apricotgallery.com.vn
Artisanti 0345 259 1410, artisanti.com
Aspace 0845 872 2400, aspace.co.uk
Aston Matthews 020 7226 7220, astonmatthews.co.uk
Atlantic Shopping 01212 301644, atlanticshopping.co.uk
Avoca 00 353 1 274 6900, avoca.ie

B **Baileys Home** 01989 561931, baileyshome.com
Bathroom Hunter bathroomhunter.co.uk
Bathstore 0800 023 2323, bathstore.com
Bennett & Brown 01474 892187, bennettandbrown.com
Bernard De Clerck bernarddeclerck.be
Bespoke Fireplace Designs 0845 615 6518, bespokefireplacedesigns.co.uk
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Bloomingville bloomingville.com
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Castlegate Lights 01642 714444, castlegatelights.co.uk
Catherine Cazalet Designs 07932 750637, catherinecazaletdesigns.co.uk
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Chesney's 020 7627 1410, chesneys.co.uk
Cheville Parquet 020 7183 6352, cheville.co.uk

Chic Shack 020 8785 7777, chicshack.net
Christian Silvain silvain.be
City Cows 020 7099 6616, citycows.co.uk
C.JEM Worksurfaces 0117 958 5501, cjemworksurfaces.com
Clock House Furniture 01620 842870, clockhouse-furniture.co.uk
Cloudberry Living 07780 693034, cloudberryliving.co.uk
Cole & Son 020 7376 4628, cole-and-son.com
Cox & Cox 0844 858 0744, coxandcox.co.uk
CP Hart 0845 873 1121, cphart.co.uk
Currys 0344 561 0000, currys.co.uk

D **Danetti** 020 3588 1380, danetti.com
Daniel of Windsor 01753 801000, danielstores.co.uk
Davey Lighting 01993 882251, davey-lighting.co.uk
DBYK 020 7123 4507, dbyk.com
Debenhams 0844 800 8877, debenhams.com
Decara Home 020 7622 3388, decara-home.co.uk
De Jong Interiors dejonginterieur.com
Denby 01773 740899, denby.co.uk
Designer Bathrooms and Kitchens 0845 652 2279, designerbathroomsuk.com
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Design Icons 0845 241 3500, designicons.co.uk
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Dulux 0333 222 7171, dulux.co.uk
Duravit duravit.co.uk
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E **Eastburn Country Furniture** 01535 656297, eastburncountryfurniture.co.uk
Eclectic Interiors 020 8673 0572, eclecticinteriors.co.uk
Enid Hutt Gallery 01592 643227, enidhuttgallery.com
Etsy etsy.com
Eyecandy Interior Design 01484 462226, eyecandy-interiordesign.co.uk

F **Fabrics & Papers** 01273 495500, fabricsandpapers.com
Farrow & Ball 01202 876141, farrow-ball.com
Feather & Black 01243 380600, featherandblack.com
Fired Earth 0845 293 8798, firedearth.com
Fornasetti fornasetti.com
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Frith Rugs 0845 490 0600, frithrugs.co.uk
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Furniture123 0871 984 1924, furniture123.co.uk
Furniture Village 0800 804 8879, furniturevillage.co.uk

G **George Smith** 020 7384 1004, georgesmith.co.uk
Graham & Brown 0800 328 8452, grahambrown.com
Graham and Green 020 8987 3700, grahamandgreen.co.uk
Graham Sanderson Interiors 01423 568628, grahamsandersoninteriors.com
Grove Interiors 07919 417973, groveinteriors.net

H **Habitat** 0344 499 1111, habitat.co.uk
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Harlequin 0845 123 6815, harlequin.uk.com
Heal's 020 7896 7451, heals.co.uk
Heirloom 020 8943 2258, heirloom-online.co.uk
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Holland Pianos 00 353 59 913 1177, hollandpianos.ie
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Homebase 0345 077 8888, homebase.co.uk
Home Cook Online 01270 841171, homecookonline.com
House of Fraser 0345 602 1073, houseoffraser.co.uk
Hungerford Garden Centre 01488 682916, thegardencentregroup.co.uk

I & JL Brown 020 7736 4141, brownantiques.com
Ian Mankin 020 7722 0997, ianmankin.co.uk
Ikea 020 3645 0000, ikea.com
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iRugs.co.uk 0808 189 0459
Island Furniture Co 0800 056 7820, islandfurnitureco.com

J **J'adore Decor** 028 9146 0169, jadoredecor.co.uk
Japanese Prints-London 020 7729 0943, japaneseprints-london.com
Japan Garden 01531 630091, japangarden.co.uk
Jim Lawrence 01473 826685, jim-lawrence.co.uk
John Lewis 0345 604 9049, johnlewis.com
John Longley Kitchen Design 01226 248766, jslongley.co.uk
John Wray Country Stoves 01748 811030, johnwraycountrystoves.co.uk
Jonathan Adler 020 7589 9563, uk.jonathanadler.com
Josephine Home 020 7751 0100, josephinehome.co.uk

K **Kate Pols Garden Design** 07789 718048
Kitchensmiths 01223 236456, kitchensmiths.co.uk
Knots Rugs 020 7471 4707, knotsrugs.co.uk
Korla 020 7792 5855, korlahome.com

L **Lakeland** 015394 88100, lakeland.co.uk
Laura Ashley 0333 200 8009, lauraashley.com
LBS Stone Collection 01903 742550, lbsstonecollection.co.uk
Leather Chairs of Bath 020 7731 1198, leatherchairs.co.uk
Le Creuset 0800 373792, lecreuset.co.uk
Liberty 020 7734 1234, liberty.co.uk
Linda Fenwick 01653 648470, lindafenwickshelldesign.com
LinenMe 020 8133 3853, linenme.com
Little Greene 0845 880 5855, littlegreene.com
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ROOM ENVY

Each month we bring you a scheme that intrigues, delights or dazzles us

Now is the time of year when we pull out all the stops for entertaining, and the 25BH team has chosen this dining room as the perfect setting for a memorable meal. In sophisticated, moody monochrome, it's a striking festive scheme, and the pared-back palette offers a soothing antidote to the party season's usual bright colours and spangles. A pale floor and

classic carved white chairs help balance the grey walls and dark fireplace, while pretty tealights and a gingham tablecloth ensure the mood is laid-back rather than formal. Fluted and scalloped tableware is laden with shimmering baubles for just the right amount of seasonal sparkle. With an abundance of greenery arranged on the mantelpiece and tied to the backs of the chairs, the scene is set for a festive feast. 25

Get more inspiration at housetohome.co.uk/25beautifulhomes



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