The
ENGLISH HOME

TOWN & CITY LIVING

Celebrating the essence of English style

November 2022 | Issue 213 | £6.99 | UK Edition

INVITING INTERIORS
Rich autumn colours & comforting textures

Heritage Revival
Restoring architectural features

Townhouse elegance
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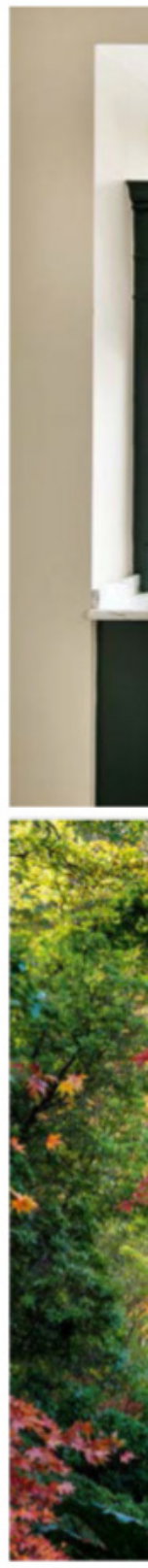

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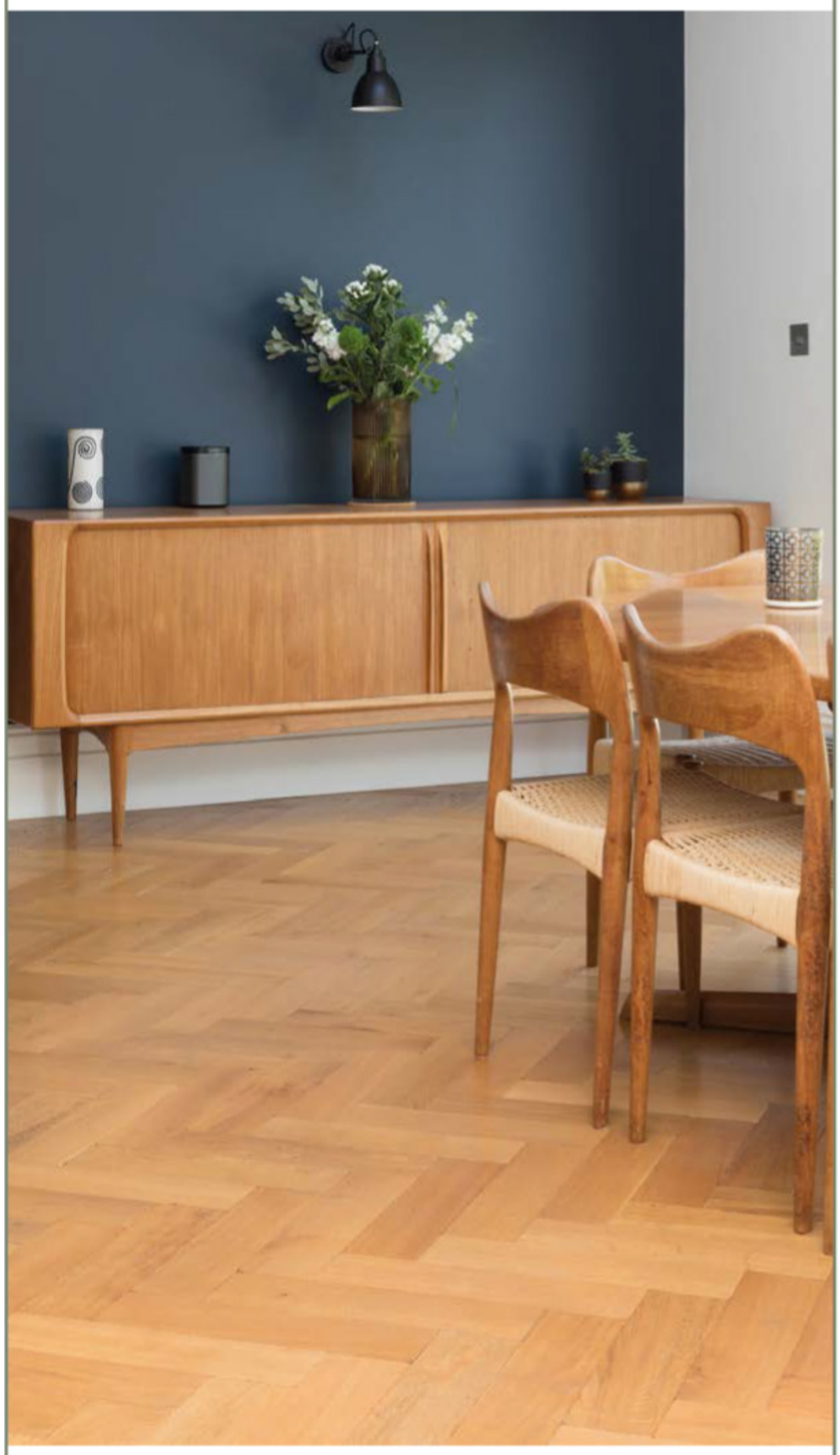

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A newly built home with warmth, character and contemporary charm. Discover more on page 122.

A letter from home

The classic townhouse is among the most ubiquitous styles of English homes. From the elegant sweep and symmetry of a Regency terrace to more humble rows of Victorian two-up two-downs, they vary hugely in scale, original decoration and scope depending on their location and when they were built. In this issue, our focus is on celebrating and making the most of all city and townhouse homes. From reinstating or restoring original period features and details (p81) to designing sleek bathrooms (p109) and highly desirable utility rooms (p129), our aim is to provide advice and inspiration to create interiors that are both practical and beautiful.

I've sometimes found there to be a dismissal of newer townhouse homes among traditionalists – a sense that they are lacking when compared with their 18th and 19th-century counterparts. While it's true that by their nature they can't possess the period features and charm of older housing stock, they undoubtedly have advantages. New builds can still be elegantly designed with quality (and perhaps sustainable) materials and imbued with a character that reflects their surroundings and modern lifestyles. We were therefore keen to explore how best to elegantly and comfortably decorate and furnish new build homes with advice from key designers and architects in our feature on p122.

With an eye on the future as well as celebrating the past, this issue is full of ideas wherever your home may be and whatever its unique story.

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor

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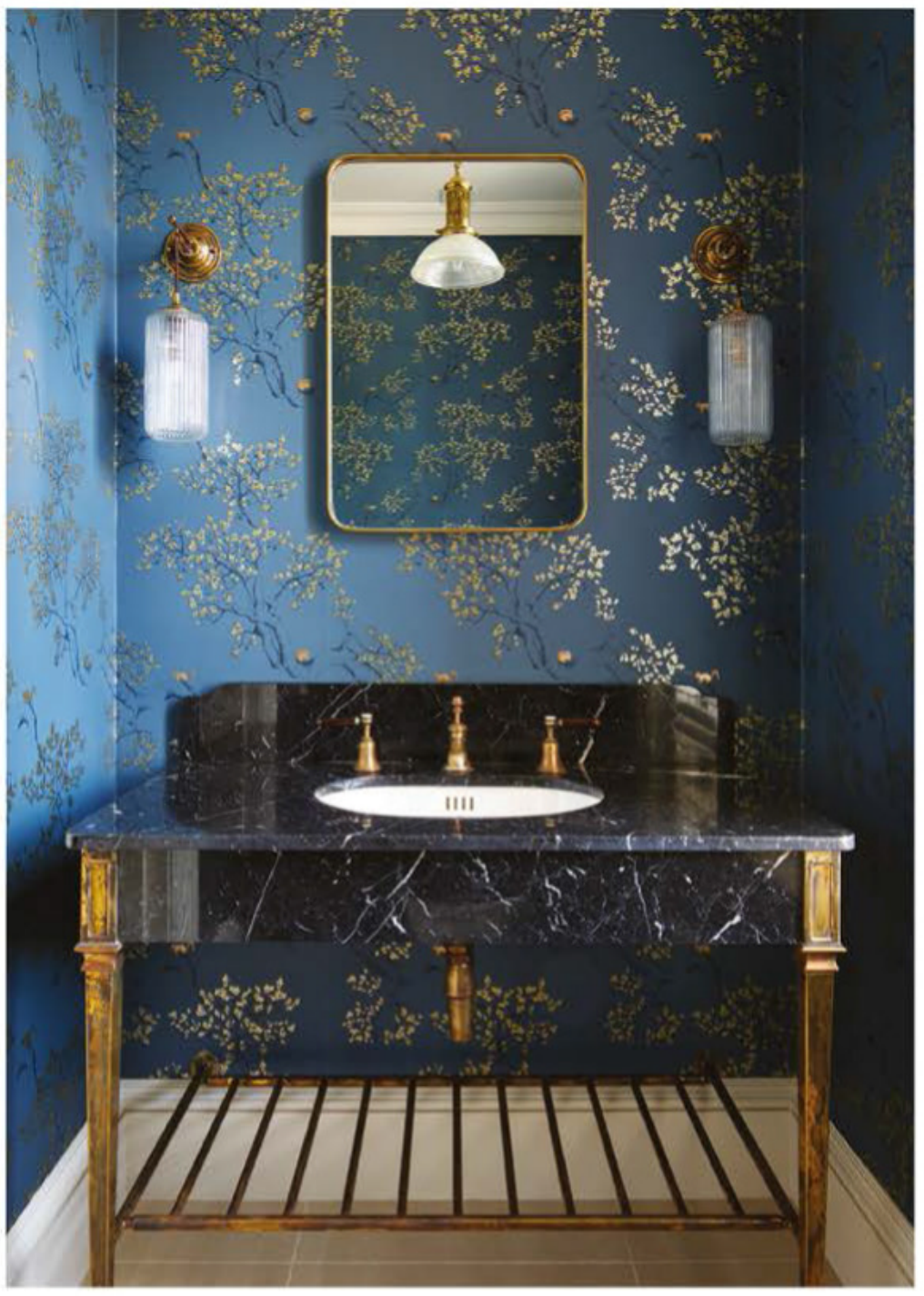

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CONTACT US

Editorial 020 7349 3700
The English Home, Jubilee House,
2 Jubilee Place, London SW3 3TQ
Email theenglishhome@chelseamagazines.com
Website theenglishhome.co.uk
Advertising/Publishing 020 7349 3700
The Chelsea Magazine Company Ltd
Email info@chelseamagazines.com

EDITORIAL

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ADVERTISING

Group Sales Director Catherine Chapman
020 7349 3709; *catherine.chapman@chelseamagazines.com*
Head of Sales Operations Jodie Green
Advertisement Manager William Bernard
020 7349 3749; *william.bernard@chelseamagazines.com*
Senior Sales Executive Laurna Barry
020 7349 3712; *laurna.barry@chelseamagazines.com*
Advertising Production 01202 472781; *allpointsmedia.co.uk*

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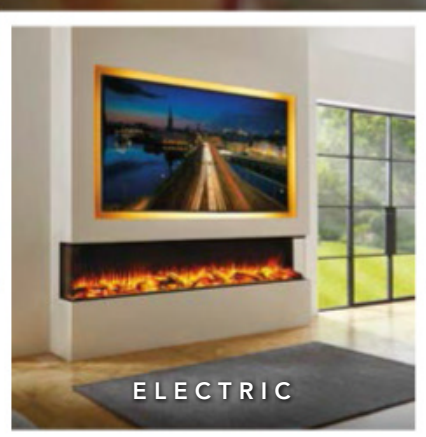

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NOTEBOOK

Our monthly edit of news, shopping inspiration and inside information

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Thank You, Ma'am

As we bid a fond farewell to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, our sense of loss is balanced by our immense gratitude for her incredible life of devoted service. She was our anchor, a constant in an ever-changing world, a lighthouse amid the storm, and set the tone, guiding us through seven decades.

She was also the most photographed woman in the world, and here we share one of our favourites, taken on her 43rd birthday on 21 April 1969 in the opulent White Drawing Room at Buckingham Palace. She is wearing a tiara inherited from her grandmother Queen Mary and Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee necklace.

She will be remembered for her strength and stoicism. Those who knew her speak of her sense of humour and readiness to laugh. There will never be another quite like her, but thank goodness there was one. Thank you, Ma'am. For everything.

Frivolity Meets Function

Matilda Goad and Anthropologie

Reinventing traditional objects in unexpected ways, elevating the everyday by fusing personality with purpose, brings joy to Matilda Goad and her dedicated clientele. Her new collection with Anthropologie playfully spans barware, lighting and soft furnishings, all imbued with a modern take on nostalgia as well as Matilda's signature style. "This collaboration feels like sharing my collection of treasures with the world," she says. "Each individual piece is inspired by the interior icons of my own home: the antique swan gifted by my mother, the heart chair I found at a flea market on the outskirts of Paris, the 1950s ice bucket that I bought for my very first home."

Established in 2017, Matilda Goad & Co brings an edge to the English countryside aesthetic, revitalising utility. *matildagoad.com; anthropologie.com*

For Homes With Soul

Kalinko founder Sophie Garnier

On a whim and seeking adventure, when Sophie Garnier moved from England to Burma with her husband in 2015, their intended year-or-two stay lasted seven years. "It got under our skin," she says.

Exploring remote and rural areas, they bought artisans' creations handmade using techniques passed down through generations. On hearing that cheap factory imports meant the makers struggled to find buyers, Sophie says: "I wanted to create a way to give them access to international markets, enabling the rest of the world to buy their beautiful, intricately crafted products." She founded online interiors brand Kalinko which sells items by 250 of Burma's most talented artisans. *kalinko.com*

Rebels With A Cause

House of Hackney's first tile collection

Proudly non-conformist and determined to blaze a vibrant trail through magnolia interiors, design rebel House of Hackney chose to create its first tile collection with a heritage brand founded in 1872. Craven Dunnill Jackfield shares a deep appreciation of craftsmanship, history and age-old techniques with House of Hackney, founded in 2011 by Frieda Gormley and Javvy M Royle.

The ceramic tile collection reimagines House of Hackney's Artemis print and features its Rose and Hibiscus motifs, with Jacobean-inspired unfurling blooms idolised by the Victorians, traditionally glazed in colours from greens to pinks and creams.

"They understood our vision and this collection brings to life our Artemis print in a totally new and elevated way," says Frieda. *houseofhackney.com*

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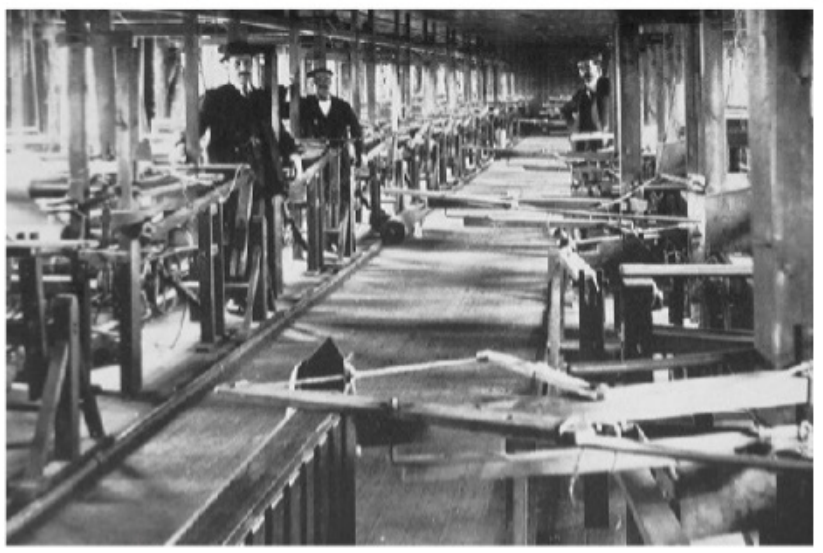
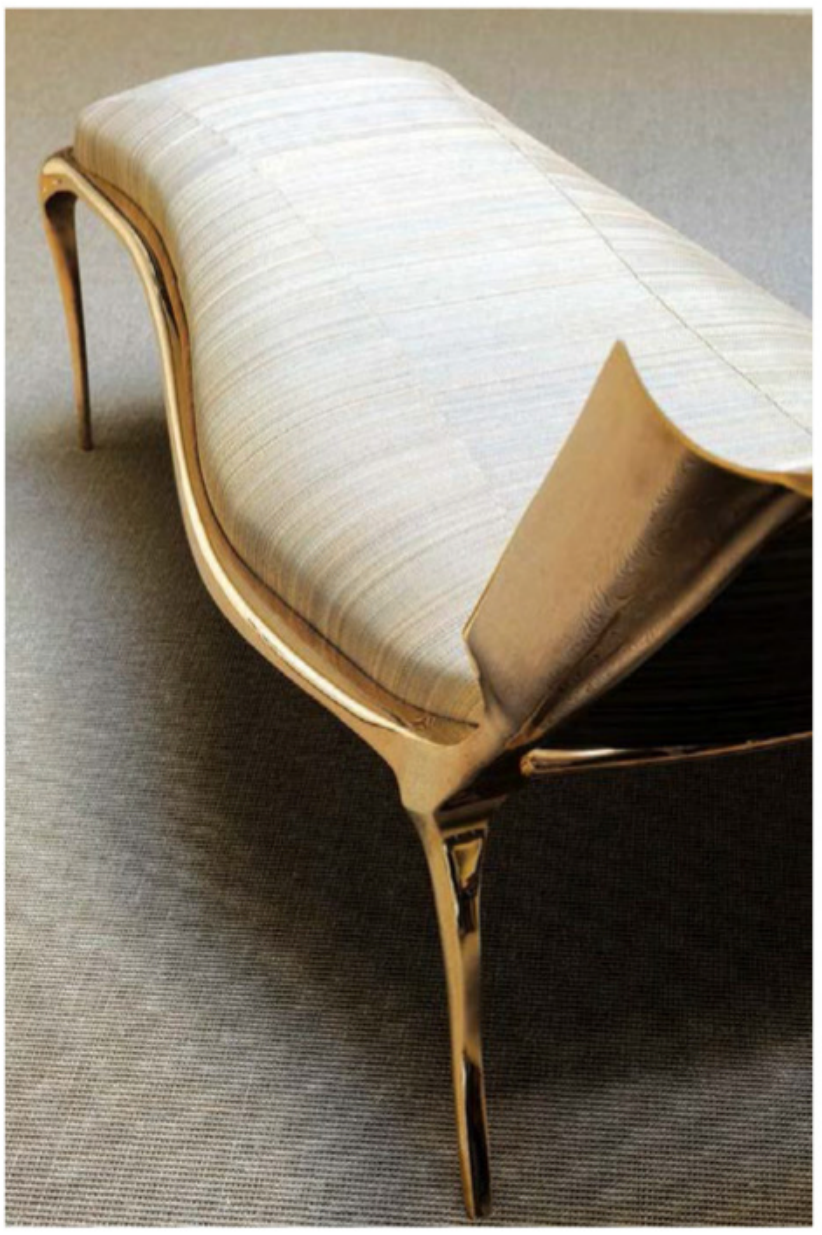
Carpet featured: Pembroke in the colour River Mist

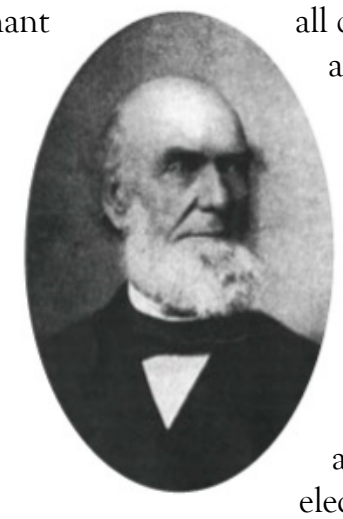




Luminary of the Loom: John Boyd Textiles

One of the world's last remaining horsehair weavers celebrates 185 years

When travelling textile merchant John Boyd spotted the potential to expand the nascent horsehair fabric-weaving cottage industry in Castle Cary, Somerset, starting his business there in 1837, he could not have dared to dream what would happen 185 years later.



Today, not only does John Boyd Textiles still weave horsehair cloth in the same town, on the original Victorian looms, but it is the last weaver of its kind in Britain and one of only two in the world. It exports its sought-after fabric worldwide for use in upholstery, wall coverings and fashion due to its unique qualities, durability and lustre.

Castle Cary's textile history dates back to 1327, with the production of coarse linen fabric and rope. By 1800, cottage workers were weaving horsehair cloth using tail hair from local working horses that was cleaned in a pond.

Boyd started weaving horsehair cloth in his cottage and was soon employing others to increase his output. High demand prompted a move to a specially built factory in 1851, and his company became limited in 1883. At the turn of the last century, his fabric was so popular he became one of the town's main employers, with over 200 workers, for whom he built cottages.

The fabrics were initially woven by hand, with a weaver standing at a loom all day, being passed horsehair by a child sitting in the loom.

After The Education Act of 1870 ensured all children went to school, Boyd developed mechanical looms, patented in 1872. The original Victorian belt-driven looms – once powered by a water wheel and steam engine, now by electric motors – are 150 years old, and John Boyd staff make their own spare parts for them when needed.

The hands of skilled workers are as crucial to the process as ever, using horsehair sourced from overseas after the invention of the car and mechanical farm machinery resulted in fewer working horses in England. Three types of horsehair are used: mixed grey, white (which can be dyed different colours to order), and black, which is dyed for consistent colour. The hair is 'hackled' (dragged through a bed of steel pins) and combed by hand so it runs smoothly through the loom. In one inch of John Boyd fabric, there are 90 hairs, and each loom weaves two to three metres a day, with the length of the hair determining the width of the fabric, which is pressed in a mechanical press to give it a sheen.

Many new designs and colours have been added to the range in recent years and today's designers appreciate the unique qualities of horsehair fabrics.

johnboydtextiles.co.uk

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The Scent of Summer

Highgrove Bouquet from Penhaligon's

Just before he became King, the then Prince of Wales collaborated with English heritage perfumier Penhaligon's on Highgrove Bouquet, a new scent capturing the magnificently fragrant summers in the gardens surrounding his Cotswolds home.

The Prince's Foundation charity will receive 10 per cent of proceeds from sales of this eau de parfum to help fund its training and education programmes, including heritage crafts, traditional arts, textiles, fashion, horticulture, sustainable food and farming.

In summer at Highgrove in Gloucestershire, the air is filled with the uplifting floral scent of the blossoming weeping silver lime, which forms the head notes of this warm and elegant perfume, along with a heart of mimosa and a cedar base, plus notes of tuberose, lavender and geranium.

Penhaligon's was established in London in 1870 by Cornish barber William Penhaligon. The 9th Duke of Marlborough commissioned Penhaligon's to create the scent Blenheim Bouquet in 1902, and the following year Queen Alexandra awarded the brand its first Royal Warrant.

penhaligons.com

Designs on Retail Details

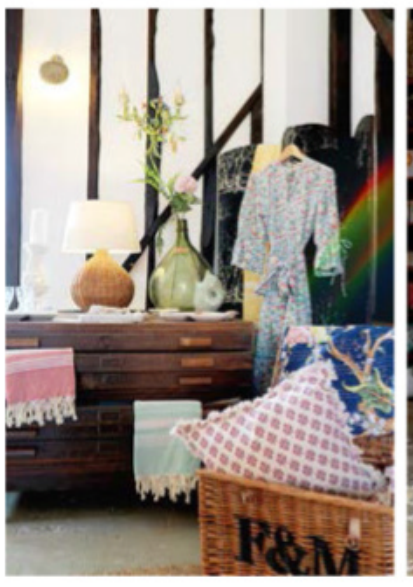
New lifestyle emporium opens in Rye

Francesca Rowan-Plowden and Amy Eastall have opened lifestyle emporium and event space Ferry Road Store inside a Grade II listed building in the ancient seaside town of Rye, East Sussex. As well as incorporating interior designer Francesca's studio, the store stocks homeware, lifestyle goods, antiques, fashion, jewellery and books. Brands include Fenwick & Tilbrook, Pearl Lowe, Made by Lottie Day, Rowan Plowden Design bespoke pieces, Verden, Scribble & Daub, Zoe Glencross, Hadeda and Nordic textiles label Projektityyny, plus a curated selection of antiques and vintage finds hand-picked by Francesca and Amy on buying trips around Europe.

Amy started her own antiques business in London and was previously a private PA for The White Company founder Chrissie Rucker and Clarence House for the then Princes William and Harry, the now Prince of Wales and Duke of Sussex.

The store will host expert talks, workshops and pop-up brands each month. The ethos is elegant, beautifully curated design for everyday living, sustainable craftsmanship paired with an enjoyable customer experience. Francesca says: "'I've dreamt of owning a shop since I was a little girl, and with a family background in fashion, and running my own interior design studio for over decade, I wanted to create a space which incorporated these two passions. A little emporium of beautiful things, where customers can be inspired and feel a sense of escapism ... a mini Liberty's as it were. A candy shop for the eyes and a place to find the prettiest of things, be that a candle holder, a floaty floral dress or the perfect old armchair."

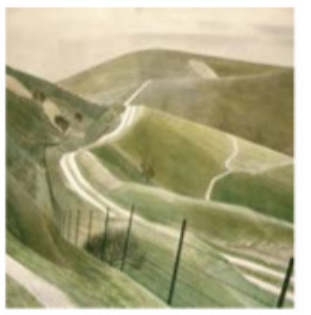
ferryroadstore.com



Diary

Learn the age-old craft of hand-block-printing from Speronella Marsh of Hare's Tail Printing in workshops held on 15 and 16 November at Master The Art in Shropshire.

harestail.co.uk



With 100 works by 50 artists, *Sussex Landscape: Chalk, Wood & Water* looks at how Sussex has inspired artists. From 12 November to 23 April 2023 at Pallant House Gallery, Chichester.

pallant.org.uk

Chelsea Antiques & Fine Art Fair, held from 2–6 November, is the longest established event of its kind, run since 1951 at Chelsea Old Town Hall.

chelseaantiques fair.co.uk

FEATURE SARAH FEELEY **PHOTOGRAPHS** P15 © KEYSTONE PRESS/ALAMY. P16 (TOP LEFT) © KASIA BOBULA, (TOP RIGHT) © ANTHROPOLOGIE, (MIDDLE LEFT) © ROBERT SANDERSON. P18 (PORTRAIT) © JOHN BOYD & CO LTD, (PANELLED WALL) © TODHUNTER EARLE INTERIORS, (TEAL SOFA) © VIRGINIA WHITE INTERIOR DESIGN, (BRONZE CHAISE) © BILL BATTEN. P20 (HIGHGROVE) TOP © GAP PHOTOS/HIGHGROVE - ROBERT SMITH, MIDDLE © PA IMAGES/ALAMY; (FERRY ROAD STORE) © MICHAEL JAMES PARKER; DIARY (TOP) © RACHAEL SMITH, (MIDDLE) ERIC RAVILIOUS, CHALK PATHS, 1935, WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER, PRIVATE COLLECTION © BRIDGEMAN IMAGES, (BOTTOM) WICK ANTIQUES CHINESE CHIPPENDALE FRETWORK DISPLAY CABINET BY MORANT

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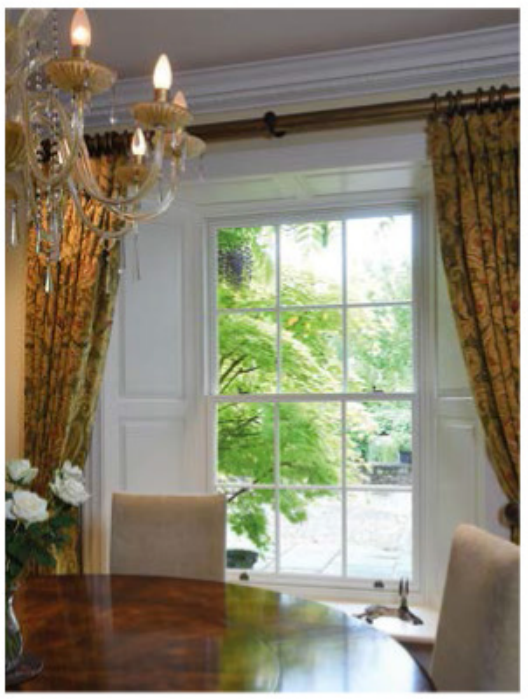

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DESIGN DISCOVERIES

Natural materials, lively patterns and engaging details inspire us to add layers of interest to our homes for uplifting mornings and cosy evenings

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For high-traffic areas, such as stairways, flooring needs to be suitable for constant usage. Sisal is a hardwearing natural material that requires little maintenance, other than vacuuming. If seeking a more elegant rustic aesthetic, opt for a runner with a smart trim – as seen here.

Runner in Aztec Alabaster sisal, £145 a square metre, Crucial Trading

COMPLETELY HOOKED

These multipurpose hooks are made from sustainably sourced FSC ash wood. To add to the functionality, each one includes a loop of robust tan, brown or black leather secured by a wooden peg tipped in brushed brass, meaning items can be hung, draped or threaded.

Laris wall hook, £25, Tom Raffield

CABINET POSITION

A skilful sideboard design can combine storage with a stylish sense of purpose. Made from mango wood and embellished with brass-plated legs and handles, this ornate cabinet's decorative finish ensures it has an elevated feel when used as a drinks area. Inside, two large shelves provide ample room for storing large and small items out of sight.

Jumeirah sideboard, £649, Atkin and Thyme

SLENDER SOFA

Investing in a smart sofa need not mean grand proportions. A slimline design such as this one can neatly fit into narrow sitting rooms. This model comes in two sizes, which can seat either two or three people, and is made bespoke in any Neptune fabric.

George sofa in Linara Moss, from £2,495, Neptune

AUTUMN LAYERS

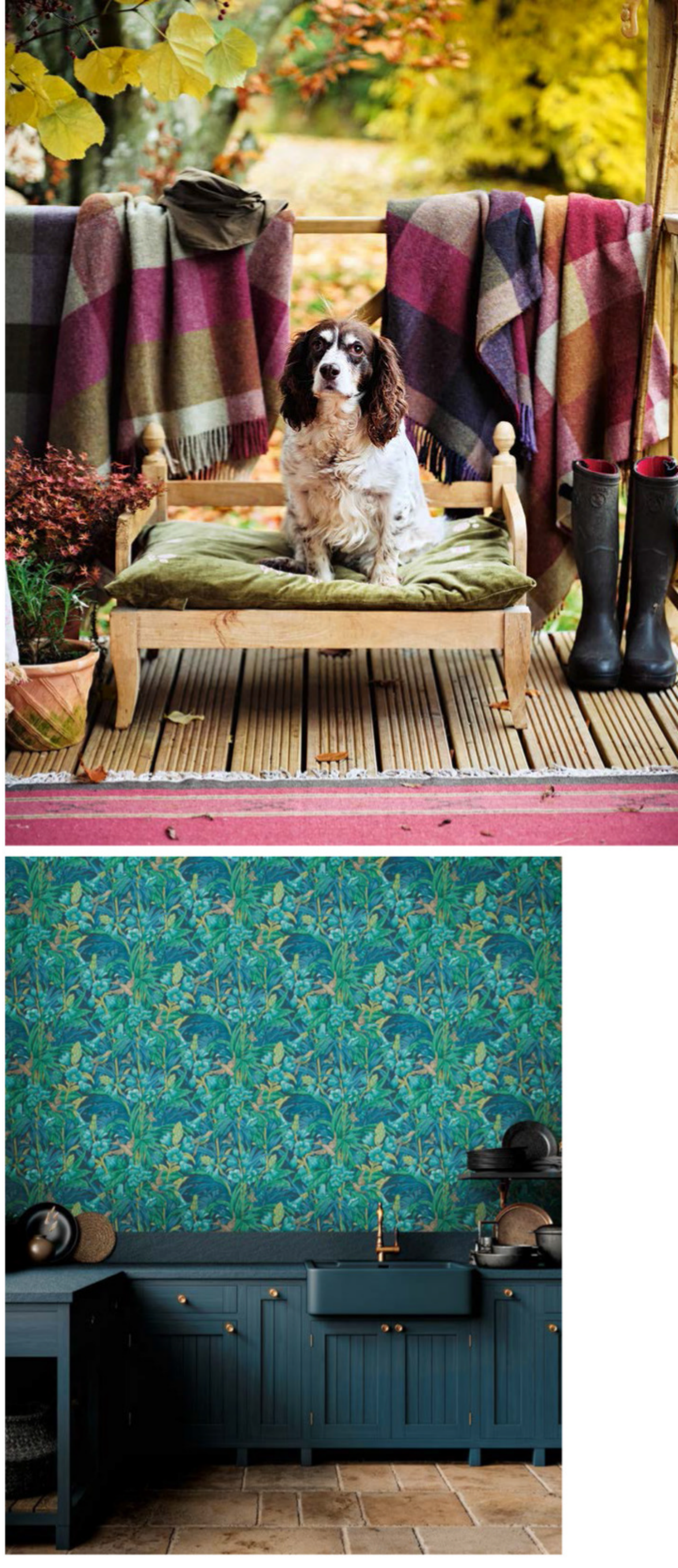
These Shetland wool throws can be used in the garden or on weekend strolls. Post-walk, a velvet mattress offers a soft and cosy dog bed.
Wooden dog bed, two sizes, from £260; Velvet dog bed mattress, can be personalised, from £78; Shetland wool throws, from £94, Susie Watson

TEXTILE COLLABORATION

Renowned architect and designer Ben Pentreath has launched a capsule fabric range with Johnstons of Elgin. The textiles and throws capture Pentreath's bold heritage style.
Check, Stripe and Houndstooth 100 per cent lambswool fabrics, £98 a metre; Limited Edition throws (not shown), from £245, Ben Pentreath and Johnstons of Elgin

FEATURE WALLS

Paying homage to the end of the Arts and Crafts era when exoticism and bold designs were emerging, this lively wallpaper print is taken from GP & J Baker's archive collection. Updated in a contemporary colourway, the classic design captivates attention.
Trumpet Flowers, Indigo/Teal, £155 a roll, GP & J Baker



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ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL

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TIMELESSLY DRESSED

Decorative wardrobe doors can enhance bedrooms and walk-in wardrobes with a sense of elegance while providing the opportunity to tie in colours seen elsewhere in the room. Made by hand, these lacquered, hinged doors are available in 13 standard colours or a colour of choice. The mirror inserts come in bronze, grey, silver and antique finishes.

Castille Laces wardrobe, from £2,700 a linear metre, surcharge for bespoke colours, Neatsmith

STRIKING EMBROIDERY

Make a feature of a single window, perhaps in a hallway or on a staircase or landing, by opting for a vivid window dressing. To draw the eye, look for interesting tones and textures, such as this embroidered linen with its rich colourway and multicoloured cord work.

Baptista linen, £189 a metre, Colefax & Fowler

ALTERNATIVE TILES

For those fond of Delft tiles but seeking a subtler tone than the signature blue and white, this soft charcoal collection is an understated option. The classic tiles include snowdrop, blossom and dragonfly motifs, all handmade and hand-decorated in England.

English Delft charcoal wall tiles, £23.94 each, corner decor tiles, £6.36 each, Fired Earth ■

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE **PHOTOGRAPHS** P22 (SUSIE WATSON) ADAM CARTER; (BEN PENTREATH/JOHNSTONS OF ELGIN) JAMES MERRELL; P24 (NEATSMITH) BLACKMORE PHOTOGRAPHY; (FIRED EARTH) JONATHAN WARNER

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Betsy Tana Lawn Cotton king duvet cover set with two standard pillowcases, £295. Also available in Capel Blossom as shown on the canopy and page border, all Liberty London

Victoria cushion with fringe, Crystal, £222, de Le Cuona

Sabel cushion, Seagrass, £55, MM Linen

Vetiver and Lavender candle,£30, Plum & Ashby

Blue Bouquet dressing gown, £118, Mrs Alice

Pump Street 85% Ecuador drinking chocolate, £13.65, Selfridges

Cashmere socks, £36, The White Company

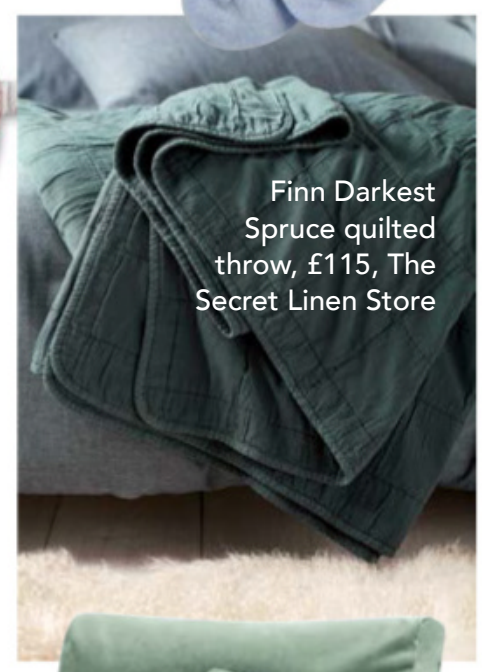
BEDTIME STORY

Get the bedroom ready for winter nights with cosy additions to make snuggling down a treat, including soft bedlinen, comforting quilts and indulgent cashmere socks

Midnight Stripe linen pyjama trouser set, £99, Piglet in Bed

Mini hot water bottle in Seafoam Velvet, £22.45, Green and Heath

Rattan Pink silk eye mask, £43, Gingerlily x Madeaux



Finn Darkest Spruce quilted throw, £115, The Secret Linen Store

Siam three-drawer chest, £2,800, Jonathan Adler

Bloomingville Esme rug, £515, Sweetpea & Willow

Rattan breakfast tray, £170, CharlesTed

Cumulo armchair, £945, Cuckooland

FEATURE KATY MCCLEAN

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St Louis wall light, £2,928, Christopher Hyde

Positano table lamp, £838; 17-inch Pembroke knife-pleat shade in cream silk, £274, Vaughan

Nine-arm Stem chandelier, £6,880, Tigermoth

Tutti Stem pendant light, £1,375, Curiousa & Curiousa

Plato brass table lamp, £1,620 (excluding shade), Jamb

BURN BRIGHT

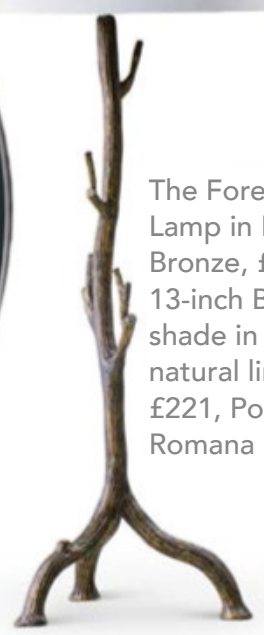
Illuminate autumn nights with chic new lamps, pendants, chandeliers and sconces that add texture, colour, and sculptural detail

Ova sconce, £831, Arteriors

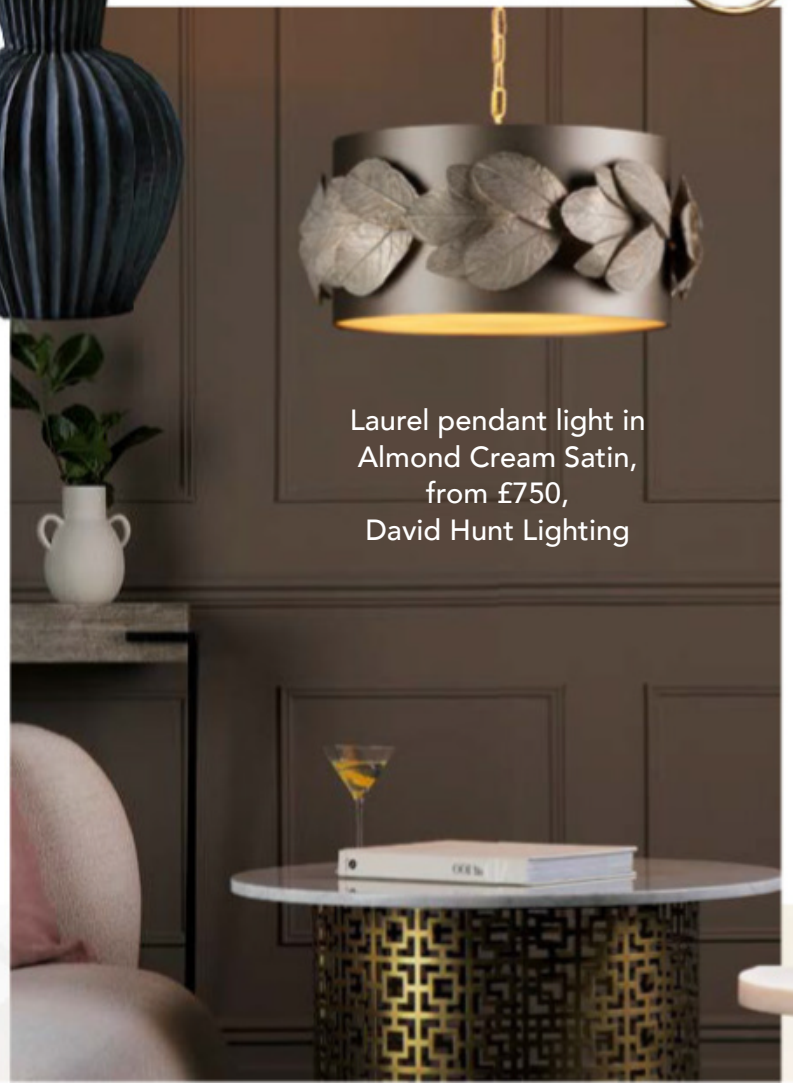
The Constance Lamp Small in Bronzed, £978; 10-inch Bongo shade in natural linen, £183, Porta Romana

Tribus standing lamp, £295; Archive by Sanderson Design 35cm shades in Golden Lily, Galactic Ink, £87, Pooky

Caspian Fluted Oval Emerald Green pendant light, £360, Soho Lighting Company



The Forest Lamp in Relic Bronze, £949; 13-inch Bongo shade in natural linen, £221, Porta Romana



Laurel pendant light in Almond Cream Satin, from £750, David Hunt Lighting

Bimini sconce double, £890, Paolo Moschino

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN
BACKGROUND PREECHA JUNTAPIN/SHUTTERSTOCK

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THE EDIT

Editor-at-Large Kate Freud shares the new products and brand discoveries that have caught her eye this month

DESIGN FOCUS

Textiles company Titley and Marr has been producing beautiful fabrics and furnishings for commercial and residential interiors for more than 35 years. It was founded in 1984 by Kate Marr and her husband Ken Titley whose initial inspiration came from European textiles created in the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, the company's collections are inspired by its archive of historical documents and include everything from paisley and herringbone to ticking stripes, traditional florals, tribal textiles, African embroidery and even leopard print. All its designs are ethically produced and made in UK mills where possible.

For the new season, Titley and Marr will be releasing two new prints – Amberley, a floral botanical design, and Steyning, a take on a traditional ticking stripe, both of which were inspired by the early 20th-century Arts and Crafts movement.

titleyandmarr.co.uk

FIXTURES & FITTINGS

Connoisseurs of design will be pleased to know they can now find many of their most admired kitchen and bath fixtures from around the world under one roof at House of Rohl. This portfolio of luxury decorative plumbing brands includes Riobel, Perrin & Rowe, Shaws, Victoria + Albert and Rohl, each boasting high-quality design and innovation – including touch-free taps – so there really is something for everyone here. From cutting-edge sleek designs to traditional looks, basins, baths, showers and kitchen sinks can also be found here, allowing the ability to mix and match or stick to just one style.

houseofrohl.com

SWITCHED ON...

In an exciting new collaboration, lighting specialist Pooky has teamed up with Archive – renowned brand Sanderson's reimagined collection of fabric, wallpaper and accessories – to launch a selection of printed lampshades and quirky lamp bases. This collection of vintage-inspired shades and characterful lamps is guaranteed to bring a touch of joy to an interior scheme. Pooky has cherry-picked six cheerful Archive by Sanderson designs to work as lampshades, including its first-ever fringed shade, available in two shapes. With two cotton and four linen styles to choose from, there are sizes to work with wall fittings, accent lamps, pendants and floor lighting or one of three striking, lacquered wood bases inspired by art deco styles in cobalt blue, flamingo pink and lime green.

pooky.com

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LOOK OUT FOR

Some things are worth doing the old-fashioned way, like the beautiful beds from The Cornish Bed Company, still made by hand in the UK's last remaining hand-cast metal bed-making foundry. Each bed is created using traditional Victorian methods where the knuckle joints and moulds are all hand poured. With an exceptionally talented team who have between them spent over a century honing these traditional bed-making skills, it comes as no surprise that these beds are a thing of beauty. Each one is individual – even if made from the same moulds, the craftsmen fettle the intricate details by hand – bespoke and made to order. Once complete, a unique number is chiselled onto the knuckle joint, and every bed is delivered with a signed certificate of authenticity. Mattresses, toppers and bedding are also available for the ultimate night's rest. *cornishbeds.co.uk*

STYLE NOTES

Blacksmith Richard McLane launched his company Bisca (an acronym of Brass, Iron, Steel, Copper & Aluminium) 25 years ago, specialising in the design and manufacture of bespoke staircases, balustrades and other architectural features in timber, stone, metalwork, and glass. Since then, the company, based in Helmsley, North Yorkshire, has gone from strength to strength. Proudly British to the core, Bisca sources all materials and components for individual projects in the UK, with a focus on environmental sustainability. The company likes to experiment with new materials and manufacturing techniques, recently making a staircase using Corian, a material more commonly associated with kitchen worktops. Another project has seen the creation of a cantilevered staircase made using reclaimed Greenheart timber from Hartlepool docks and, at the bottom of the staircase, a stone tread made from what was once part an arch at the now-demolished Baltic Chambers in Hartlepool. *bisca.co.uk*

6 OF THE BEST STOVES

1. Esse Warmheart 'S' Wood Burning Cook Stove, £1,820, *stovesareus.co.uk*

2. Charnwood Arc Wood Burning / Multifuel Ecodesign Logstore Stove, £2,952, *directstoves.com*

3. Stovax Vogue Midi, £1,556.10, *simplystovesuk.com*

4. Morsø 04 Wood Burning / Multifuel Ecodesign Stove, £1,550, *directstoves.com*

5. Gazco Vision Midi Balanced Flue Gas Stove, £2,539, *directstoves.com*

6. Purevision PVR Cylinder Multifuel Freestanding Stove, from £2,679 *charltonandjenrick.co.uk*

PHOTOGRAPHS (CORNISH BED COMPANY) © JON DAY; (BISCA) © CHRIS SNOOK

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ILLUSTRATION ELENA MEDVEDEVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

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In the drawing room, a sofa upholstered in a woven floral, Clarendon by Colony, is combined with an ottoman in a patterned velvet, Marigny in Tomate by Pierre Frey. Above the fireplace hangs a portrait by Michael Dahl (1659–1743). The rug is a bespoke design by Stark and the windows are dressed with a silk taffeta by Maison Henry Bertrand.

Scholarly LIVING

A painstaking three-year restoration project by interior designer Joanna Wood and her team has seen this historic lodge within a prestigious Cambridge college restored to its former grandeur

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

'We were always thinking about layering pattern, colour and texture. This creates ambience and is the secret of good design'

ABOVE A second seating area has been created in the drawing room using a pair of caned carver chairs and a Georgian settee upholstered in a Regency moiré stripe, Misa by Marvic Textiles, above which hangs portrait from the studio of Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723). The table lamps are from Dreweatts.

Steeped in history, this residence is the Master's Lodge of one of Cambridge's oldest university colleges. The college dates to the mid-14th century, although the lodge itself was built much later, in 1827, in a neo-Gothic style that is sympathetic to the vernacular of the original building.

Since its construction the fabric of the lodge had remained largely untouched and it was in desperate need of repair when the current Master and his wife, Sarah Donne, a philanthropist, generously opted to undertake an extensive renovation of the building. They tasked interior designer Joanna Wood, in collaboration with architect Freeland Rees Roberts, with the works. "Joanna had renovated our previous home, an 18th-century country house, and we had built up a really good relationship with her and her excellent team," says Sarah, adding, "I travel a lot for work, but I knew that the project was always in good hands and I was confident of her historical knowledge."

The building is Grade I listed, and as well as working with the listed building authorities, Joanna had to collaborate with a panel of historians from the college itself: "Everything needed to be approved, right down to the paint colours," Joanna recalls. "For example, we were given the brief that the Chapel Room – where the Master conducts a lot of the business of the college – had to be painted red to complement the room's very beautiful stained-glass window."

In fact, almost every space is used for public engagements, so Joanna was designing not only for the couple and their family but also to suit the myriad

The dining room walls are painted in Farrow & Ball's London Stone. "It's a very good evening colour as it is great by candlelight," notes Joanna. The upholstery on the Pugin Gothic chairs is a bespoke stripe woven by Claremont. The Baccarat chandelier was extensively restored by Phillips & Wood.

Tribal in Kalahari Sand by Lewis & Wood dresses the library's huge bay window and tones with the walls in Hound Lemon by Farrow & Ball. Next to the Acres Farm club fender, is an antique wing chair from Lorfords Antiques.

The walls in the Chapel Room are painted in Very Well Read by Paint & Paper Library to enhance the room's magnificent stained-glass window.

social events that take place in the lodge. "We definitely had to wear two hats: one for my clients and one for the college," affirms Joanna, who has mixed pieces she had purchased for the couple's previous home with a substantial collection belonging to the college, as well as new items commissioned for the project. "My role was to fit this jigsaw together so that it all looked coherent and considered," she explains.

The three-year project was done in phases, with the first year involving a complete overhaul of the services. "For nearly 200 years, people had done a bit here and there, and they had essentially put sticking plasters over the cracks rather than examining the problems," explains Joanna, whose 30 years' experience in restoration, largely of Victorian and Georgian houses, really came into its own: "I've accumulated a lot of knowledge with regards to detailing such as plasterwork and flooring," she says, adding, "In some places we couldn't rescue the original features such as the drawing room floor, which we replaced with new oak boards that are sympathetic to the era."

Usually in a home of this grandeur, Joanna would include wallcoverings in some of the spaces, but one

ABOVE LEFT The bespoke rug in the Chapel Room, inspired by the room's magnificent stained glass window (*right*), was woven by Wilton Carpets.

LEFT Both the Regency desk and the leather chesterfield sofa in the Library came from the couple's previous home, while the antique chandelier was sourced from Marshall Phillips.

‘We had to be imaginative. A lot of time and thought went into the coherence of the colours moving through the lodge’

ABOVE Painted in Pigeon by Farrow & Ball, the entrance hall showcases portraits of past Masters. The Gothic lantern was sourced from Christopher Butterworth while the North West Persian Heriz carpet, circa 1890, came from Dominic Everest.

RIGHT An 1827 addition designed in the neo-Gothic style, the lodge was created by the architect who went on to build The National Gallery.

of the college's requirements was that she could only use paint: "As a result, we had to be very imaginative: a lot of time and thought went into the coherence of the colours moving through the lodge," she comments. For the suite of rooms at the front of the house, which includes the library, the drawing room and the dining room, she opted for tonal colours spanning ivory, parchment and buttermilk: "They create a lovely flow and they are sympathetic to a number of genres when it comes to the art collections," Joanna points out.

The palest of this trio of spaces is the drawing room, where ivory-hued walls showcase some of the college's fine 17th-century artworks, including a Restoration portrait from the studio of Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), which is flanked with panels of antique chinoiserie wallpaper replicating designs from the same era. "The panels are some of my favourite pieces from my own collection; we had them repaired, restored and reframed," says Sarah. Beneath them is a Georgian settee belonging to the college, which has been carefully renovated and reupholstered in a moiré stripe that picks out the blues and golds of the art. "When we were putting together these schemes, we were always thinking about layering pattern, colour and texture. This is what creates an ambience and is the secret of good design," explains Joanna of a mix that sees a sofa upholstered in an intricately woven matelassé fabric juxtaposed with a fringed velvet ottoman, and formal silk taffeta curtains contrasted with a cut-and-loop-pile wool rug.

For every piece of lighting in the lodge, Sarah stipulated that it had to be an antique: "We either sourced old lights or we converted antiques such as vases or urns into lamps; Sarah felt this would add more character and indeed it does," says Joanna, who over the years has garnered a trusted network of antiques dealers. "We also buy quite a lot from salerooms. When we were working on this project, Bonhams had a number of early and mid-19th century sales that were particularly fitting for this residence," she adds. One of the most spectacular pieces is the dining room's crystal Baccarat chandelier,

ABOVE Used by visiting guests, the Duke's Room features a half tester bed from the couple's former home, and Joanna added a pretty sofa by Lawson Wood. The fabric on the cushions and chair is Oakham by Colefax and Fowler; the rug is a Brussels Weave from Stark. To see more of Joanna's work, visit *joannawood.com*

'My bedroom is my favourite space and a place for me to retreat to'

which required considerable restoration when the couple purchased it. Today, it hangs resplendent above a Pugin Gothic dining table, while above the mantelpiece is a glorious Dutch 18th-century still life after Jan Davidsz. de Heem.

The principal bedroom is one of the few spaces in the lodge that is completely closed off from the public spaces and it features a four-poster bed and drapes in a beautiful recoloured linen print. "This is very much a room that came with them – we carefully dismantled and cleaned the four-poster and then reassembled it here," Joanna explains, adding, "We felt that it would help them to feel at home." Sarah agrees: "It is my favourite space and a place for me to retreat to."

She continues, "For me, the success of the project is how Joanna and her team have made a home with a real family feel within a building that has so much history behind it. The lodge plays both roles beautifully and it is an honour to live in it." ■

ABOVE The bed from Beaudesert came from the couple's previous home and features drapes in Palampore by Bennison Fabrics in a bespoke colourway. The bolster cushions and Chinese Chippendale carver chairs are in a Silk Faille Jasper Gold from Claremont and the walls are painted in Ammonite by Farrow & Ball.

Elegant touches in this bathroom adjoining the Duke's Room include a washstand from Fired Earth and wall lights from Elstead.

Model shown: Bowmore midi sofa in Bracken Herringbone.

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Character BUILDING

Blending classic English and European design elements, Italian born Martina Romieri has seamlessly updated her home to create a fresh interior that enhances the character of her townhouse

FEATURE & STYLING KERRYN HARPER-CUSS
PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER

ABOVE Born in Milan and raised in Venice, Martina's taste has undoubtedly been influenced by her Italian upbringing, and – as a self-confessed magpie - she has sourced beautiful objet from her travels.

RIGHT The drawing room has an air of understated glamour. Interior designer Eleanor Olver has deftly combined beautiful but unexpected combinations of patterns including the upholstery on the armchairs – Indus Weave in Corsican Blue from Guy Goodfellow – and the curtaining in Tamerlan Creme by Le Manach at Pierre Frey. The Green velvet sofa is from Arlo & Jacob and the scalloped edge rug is from Salvesen Graham.

VEERE GRENNEY

RIGHT Martina has kept the original kitchen cabinetry but has had it repainted in Avocado from Eicó paints, upgraded the door and drawer handles with ranges from Touch Ironmongery and added a new worktop in Bianco Carrara marble. The pendant lights are from John Lewis.

'Because all the rooms have such a lovely flow, even when we are in different spaces, we all feel that we are together'

ABOVE The dining table was made bespoke in stained oak by Alfred Newall. The dining chairs from Julian Chichester are upholstered in Provence Stripe in Hedge/White from Bernard Thorp. The Twig console table is from Porta Romana. Eleanor sourced the elegant vintage mirror from Italy.

Situated on a smart street in leafy west London, the exterior of Martina Romieri's Victorian townhouse reveals nothing of the colour, pattern and subtle glamour awaiting inside. Behind the glossy black door, the interiors are far removed from the regulation chic of latte and greige that reigns in many a city home. Instead, they echo the union of the English and Italian aesthetics of the owners, as well as offering an inviting welcome to a lively family household.

Born in Milan and raised in Venice, Martina worked in fashion before her children – now six and eight – were born. Her love of layering colours and her appreciation for fine details is immediately evident in every room, but it is hard to believe that the young family moved in only two years ago.

It took Martina and her husband several years to find the right house in the right location. "With two small children, we needed more space and loved this area, but we had seen so many houses that weren't quite right," Martina explains. "This house attracted me because of the staircase which runs up through the middle of the house. That's quite unusual in a London townhouse and the benefit is that all of the rooms become squarer and more in proportion around it."

The seven-bedroom house is beautifully laid out over five floors, with the drawing room and kitchen/dining room on the ground floor and stairs leading down to a suite of rooms in the basement, including a guest room, playroom and laundry room.

"I loved the bones of the house, and it had been a happy family home, which gave it a lovely feel, but it

LEFT The exterior of the five-storey Victorian townhouse in London features beautiful original decorative mouldings.

FAR LEFT Existing storage on the first-floor landing was given a fresh look with new doors, paint and inset wallpaper – Madam Elisabeth in Garance, Le Manach from Pierre Frey. Martina commissioned the delicate glass butterfly chandelier from Venetian artisan Pier Lorenzo Salvoni.

LEFT The bespoke headboard in the principal bedroom is covered in Janna Coromandel from Namay Samay through Tissus d'Hélène. The throw is from Sarah K and the wall sconces are by Maison Baguès.

BELOW LEFT Martina was keen to have fern prints in the bathroom, found these and asked Eleanor's opinion for the best combination of individual plant images and frame colour. The walls are painted in Pink Ground from Farrow & Ball.

BELOW RIGHT Eleanor suggested the terrazzo floor tiles, which remind Martina of her upbringing in Venice. The vanity unit was made to Eleanor's design and is painted in Inchyra Blue from Farrow& Ball. It is teamed with a mirror from Vaughan.

'I like objects and paintings and pieces that have a story and I manage to buy something on every holiday I go on'

was rather beige, and I love colour," Martina says. "My style is relatively classic with hints of my Italian upbringing, and I'm a collector and a magpie. When I worked in fashion, every collection would have a story and a purpose, and I wanted to take the same approach towards our home; for every room to have its own identity."

Martina freely admits that while she is confident in her taste, she felt it could be a challenge to balance individuality in each room and ensure coherence throughout. So she sought the help of interior designer Eleanor Olver whose work she admired. "There was a house we tried to buy a few years before, which for one reason and another didn't happen. I kept getting drawn back to it and realised it wasn't the house playing on my mind but the way it was decorated: the curtains, the sofas, the atmospheric lighting. Then I found out Eleanor had worked on it."

The pair met and the chemistry was immediate. After contracts had been exchanged on the house, Martina appointed Eleanor and they visited the property together several times to discuss its potential and form an action plan. Eleanor was able to present a full series of schemes which Martina and her husband loved and decided upon in the month before completion of sale.

Sweeping structural work was unnecessary, although Eleanor advised turning a bedroom into a bathroom and a bathroom into a dressing room to create the sense of a principal suite on the first floor. She also implemented many smaller but astute upgrades to fixtures and fittings, which significantly enhanced practicality, character and flow: from changing door styles and heights in some rooms to having panelling added to the drawing room to creating a comprehensive new lighting plan. The rooms were originally lit only with spotlights and introducing wall lights, pendants and dimmer circuits transformed the atmosphere and versatility of mood in every room.

ABOVE Eleanor Olver cleverly designed the master bedroom around an existing chimney breast, hiding it behind a beautiful bed canopy and thereby keeping the architectural integrity and avoiding unnecessary structural work. The bedroom curtains and outer fabric of the bed canopy are in Bruges Oyster from Prêt à Vivre, and the canopy lining is an Indian block print from The Cloth Shop.

‘I wanted to create a look that I hadn’t seen over and over again and that would work for our family’

ABOVE The armchair in the guest bedroom is a vintage find from Ann May, London, covered in Dahlia from Penny Morrison and the floor lamp is from The Conran Shop.
ABOVE RIGHT The guest bedroom is a haven of calm with walls in Mizzle by Farrow & Ball. The headboard, designed by Eleanor, is covered in Palm Drop from Beata Heuman and the scalloped bedlinen is from Cologne & Cotton.

Eleanor also re-evaluated the extensive built-in storage throughout the house to improve its look and function. “I like to reuse and recycle well-made joinery where possible,” she says. “You can breathe new life into cabinetry by changing doors and handles, inserting cane panels, repainting or adding wallpaper as I did to the storage on the landing, or even removing a small part of a run, as we did in the kitchen, to make it all feel more balanced.”

When it came to redecoration, Martina had many lovely pieces to work around, including antique mirrors, paintings, bronzes and wall sconces collected over the years. She and Eleanor spent several days buying additional pieces of antique furniture, including visits to Alfie’s Market and Pimlico Road, and sourced the glorious Venini glass chandeliers from Italy, which arrived safely and – somewhat miraculously – on time during the first phase of the pandemic.

The layered colour schemes complement Martina’s blend of contemporary English pieces and European antiques and offer precisely the unexpected and joyful blend of patterns and details that Martina wished for. The principal bedroom is her particular favourite. “It feels fresh and grown-up all at once,” she says. “I love the combination of traditional dark floors and the cherry wood chaise longue, mixed with the subtle ‘leopard-print’ wallpaper and the more feminine floral cushions. Eleanor helped us to create looks and use patterns I hadn’t seen, over and over again. Our home works so well for our family: every room is used and each has its own identity, but they all have such a wonderful flow. I love the fact that although the house as a project is finished, we can continue to layer and tweak (with Eleanor’s help!) as the children grow and our needs change. I think this is the key to being happy in your surroundings for a long time – keep building on the story.” ■

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Falling INTO PLACE

10 years after falling for a Tudor farmhouse on a country walk, Rob Cork could finally make it his own with a mix of bold art, colour and unique treasures.

FEATURE AMANDA HARLING PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL

Nestled into the hillside, the house is made of two parts. The tallest dates from around 1580 while the two adjoining former farm workers' cottages were added during the 18th century.

'Along with the garden and glorious surroundings, the historic aspect of the building is undoubtedly what appealed to us'

ABOVE A pair of Laura Ashley sofas in the sitting room have been teamed with side tables from India Jane and a coffee table from Trading Boundaries. An oriental rug and luxurious velvet cushions from Nushka add vibrant colour. The lamps are from Home Bird, Oxted and the rug is from The Rug Shop of Tunbridge Wells.

Rob Cork and his partner James Hunt first saw the house that is now their home while on a country walk nearly 20 years ago. "We used to live on the other side of the hill, and on one of our rambles, we found ourselves in front of what was obviously a very old, very lovely house, and we fell in love with it on the spot," Rob says. "After that, we'd walk past it regularly and make a point of peeking through the hedge and imagining what it would be like to live here."

Tucked away down a single-track lane leading to fewer than a dozen properties, the 16th-century house in the Surrey countryside had originally been three properties. The taller section, which dates from around 1580, is the oldest and, with its high ceilings, was clearly built to impress. "We were told that it had formed part of a larger farm and was where the farm manager would have lived," Rob explains. "The later addition, dating from the 18th century, was built as two cottages for farmworkers and their families; records state that 19 people lived here during the 1800s. It must have been quite cramped."

Around 10 years ago, the house came on the market, but the fact that it was being sold on a leasehold basis by the National Trust put off many buyers. The property was gifted to the National Trust since the 1920s by the Misses Lansdale, two keen plant-hunting sisters whose alpine finds are still to be seen growing in the garden. "It was beyond our price range, so I put it out of my mind, but in due course, when we put our own house on the market, the local estate agent came round to discuss the details," says Rob. "She asked where we were moving to, so I told her we loved the house over the hill, but it was way too expensive. To cut a long story short, she suggested we drive over and take a look. By then, the house had been empty for three years, and it could have been a location for *Cold Comfort Farm*; what had been a beautifully kept, plantswomen's garden was now overgrown and full of brambles, and the inside was just as depressing,

ABOVE Farrow & Ball's Red Earth on the walls establishes a rustic warmth in the dining room. A portrait of James's beloved horse, Flash, by Ami Robertson hangs alongside a dresser displaying ostrich eggs from India Jane and Chinese figures from Courtyard Antiques, Brasted. The lamps are from John Lewis.

LEFT The Aga was existing but Rob added a splash-back of matching green tiles and replaced the work surface with one made of beech. For similar tiles try Equipe Artesano in Moss Green from Tiles Direct.

TEH UK NOV 22 HOUSE Cork_V2.indd 57 21/09/2022 15:48

The upstairs television room is furnished for comfort with a cane sofa from Holloways Country Living and cushions from Nushka. Lamps from Laura Ashley and curtains from John Lewis contrast with Farrow & Ball's Stone Blue on the walls. The ceramic elephant is from Four Elms Nursery.

'Strong colours do seem to work well in old houses and those deep tones make an excellent backdrop for art, as can be seen in most major galleries'

painted a nasty shade of yellow, with the odd bare light bulb hanging from the ceiling. As we walked out, James turned and said, 'We have to buy it. It feels as if it's been waiting for us'."

Negotiations began forthwith. "As both house and garden were by then in dire need of care and attention, it was a matter of agreeing a realistic price for a very run-down property. I remember my mother visiting for the first time just before we moved in, and she was aghast at what we'd taken on. She's changed her mind now," laughs Rob.

Rob is the managing director of Trowbridge Gallery, a specialist publisher of art prints, and striking images in a wide range of subjects are displayed on the walls of the house. "Some are from the Trowbridge archive, but the majority are junk shop finds I've come across while travelling around the country," says Rob, whose approach to furnishing the 16th-century property is equally free-range. The house is decorated using a mix of periods, styles and colours. "When we moved in, the kitchen walls were painted in a similar shade of brick red to the one you see now. We hung a few pictures that first day and by the time we sat down for supper, it felt like home, so they've stayed that colour ever since, and we chose the same colour for the dining room," Rob says. "Strong colours do seem to work well in old houses and those deep tones make an excellent backdrop for art, as can be seen in most major art galleries. For the drawing room, I chose a paler colour to create contrast and emphasise the luminous quality of the light from the dual-aspect south- and west-facing windows." Grass cloth wallcoverings elsewhere in the house add texture and disguise the uneven nature of old plastered walls.

"Along with the garden and the glorious surroundings, the historic aspect of the building is undoubtedly what appealed to us, but we don't stick to any particular look. The leaded light windows date from the 1920s, so perhaps they were installed by the Misses Landale," muses Rob.

The previous owners had done a lot of work, such as installing a kitchen, commissioning new oak doors

ABOVE LEFT Rob Cork relaxing in the much-loved garden. ABOVE RIGHT A wall of built-in storage for shoes and clothes keeps the dressing room in order. A desk from Dorking Antiques and an 18th-century oak chair from Courtyard Antiques provide a useful spot to catch up on paperwork. Grass cloth on the walls and a seagrass rug add rustic texture to the look.

In the guest bedroom, Bancha by Farrow & Ball creates a vibrant backdrop for *La Demoiselle de Numidie* print by Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, from Trowbridge Gallery's Folio Collection. Lamp bases from Otford Antiques are paired with lampshades from John Lewis.

and laying a brick floor using antique bricks. "Everything must be at least 50 years old, but the oak tongue-and-groove cupboard doors were so well-made they can stay put for another 50 years," Rob laughs.

The hatch through to the dining room is a nod to the past, but the National Trust lease stipulates that no structural alterations be made to the properties. "Hatches can be useful, which is why people put them in, and this one is no different," Rob says. "It makes entertaining in the dining room a lot easier."

The shelves of the pine storage unit in the dining room, left in the house by the previous owners, are filled with examples of contemporary ceramics, along with a trio of Wedgwood plates in the classic Napoleon Ivy pattern. A life-size photographic portrait of James's horse Flash hangs alongside. "Sadly, Flash died last year – she was a fine animal and is much missed."

Animals play an important part in life and art; whenever the couple walk Ed, their terrier, down the lane, there are always cows and sheep grazing in the fields on either side. "In common with the Misses Lansdale and the previous owners, any free time I have is spent looking after the garden, where wildlife is very much in evidence – most of it welcome! Having images of animals around the house seems the next best thing to observing the real thing," Rob says. ■

ABOVE Grass cloth from Phillip Jeffries creates a restrained backdrop in the principal bedroom. The trio of tulip photographs is from Trowbridge Gallery. The bedside chests came from Dorking Antiques.

LEFT On the landing, a Buddha head from The Cotswold Reclamation Company, and an ornate mirror from Cliffe Antiques are centred around a vintage chest from Lewes Antique Centre. The lamp is from Oka.

THIS PAGE In the kitchen, lanterns from Jamb hang above the practical island, while Nkuku Loko bar stools from Homefront Interiors add to the utilitarian feel. The Haybrook vase is from Neptune.

OPPOSITE The antique faux-bamboo dining chairs in a Brighton Pavilion style were originally made for the owner of Sezincote House 200 years ago. The antique cupboard from a French chateau sale sits adjacent to a vintage Coca-Cola fridge from Maison des Lices in Saint Tropez.

Future PROOFED

With a fearless approach and a clear vision, Lydia Fay has brought a vast Georgian townhouse back to life so it can be enjoyed for generations to come

FEATURE & STYLING CLAIR WAYMAN PHOTOGRAPHY HUNTLEY HEDWORTH

ABOVE Set on a hill, Lydia's Grade I listed Georgian house has magnificent views over Bath.

ABOVE RIGHT Lydia has kept the decor simple in the entrance hall to let the original stone floor take centre stage. The inner door has been painted in Pitch Black by Farrow & Ball for a dramatic effect. The antique Welsh pew was picked up at an antique fair.

Having long admired the graceful Georgian crescent on a hill overlooking Bath, it was an exciting moment for Lydia Fay when she finally got keys to her house in this historic enclave. The location is idyllic, with sheep grazing in a field across the street and breathtaking views of the Somerset countryside, yet the house is just a short stroll from the bustling streets of Bath. "I've always been captivated by this crescent," she says. "Being slightly out of town with this beautiful pastoral view, everything about it is just lovely."

Lydia has restored many period properties over the years and so was undeterred by the dilapidated state of the house. "I like a challenge and had a clear vision of what I wanted to do, so I couldn't wait to get my hands on the house and bring it back to how it should look," she says. Despite the house having suffered considerable damage over the years, Lydia fell in love with its vast proportions, including a spacious Victorian extension, complete with a whimsical ceiling lantern, added by an eccentric astronomer who lived there at the time.

The property had been joined to a neighbouring townhouse and lived in as one huge dwelling since Victorian times. One of the most significant changes happened in 1919 when the property was converted into a hospital during the First World War, following which it was turned into a care home. The stairs were taken out and replaced by a lift, which undoubtedly caused the most damage to the house. Then in the 1950s, the house was turned into lateral flats before becoming the home of the pioneering American educational and environmental activist Karl Jaeger. "The house definitely has a strong personality, which is probably what attracted these interesting characters,' reflects Lydia.

‘I like a challenge so couldn’t wait to get my hands on the house and bring it back to how it should look’

Karl Jaeger’s children sold the house once he passed away, and it reverted to two dwellings again. The property that Lydia acquired was without stairs and had a lift that no longer worked, so scaffolding was built to access all five floors. As is typical of these old properties, asbestos was everywhere, so for three weeks at the start of the project, the house was off limits, covered in plastic sheeting while all traces of the material were removed.

Built in 1789 by architect John Palmer, the magnificent Grade I listed house had been stripped of many original features, but with an in-depth knowledge of listed Georgian houses, Lydia was keen to reinstate everything from fireplaces to architectural mouldings and floorboards. “I’m not at all hands-on, but I know what I want, which is to restore a house to its original proportions and build back the quality after often years of neglect.”

Starting just before the first lockdown, Lydia’s trusted team of builders took the house back to its bare bones, leaving nothing untouched. The most challenging part of the renovation was removing the lift and rebuilding the staircase over five floors, using the proportions of the neighbouring houses as a guide. Concrete floors were replaced with antique wooden floorboards, including wide planks Lydia sourced

ABOVE One of Lydia’s favourite places to sit and relax is in the vintage, luxurious velvet Maison Jansen armchairs in the front sitting room on the first floor. The mid-century Ed Butcher coffee table adds a sleek, timeless feel to the space.

'I wanted to inject whimsicality into the spaces but as well as being decorative, everything has to work. I'm a romantic pragmatist'

ABOVE A vintage Gino Mazzuccato Murano glass chandelier in the Rezzonico style acts as a striking focal point in the first floor sitting room. Forest green velvet sofas from Rossiters of Bath and luxurious bronze silk curtain fabric from Maison Henry Bertrand complete the look.

from a cheese factory in Holland that had been originally used as shelving.

When Lydia first bought the house, it was painted in a mix of garish colours and what is now the principal bedroom had been a featureless badminton court, with walls hand-painted in a zebra-print design. Complete with a spiral staircase this room was open to the eaves, so Lydia's team built a ceiling and reinstated the fifth floor, complete with attic bedrooms, true to how it would have looked originally. "Local artisans restored and remade everything in the house, including doors, windows and shutters," Lydia explains. "They dug out the shutters and removed layers of paint, so now they all work again. Original cornices and other architectural mouldings were reproduced by Artistic Plastercraft, an ornamental plasterwork company based in Bath, which also repaired what little was left, taking moulds to extend cornicing, ensuring sympathetic blending throughout."

Once the house's internal structure started to take shape, Lydia could turn her attention to decorating the interiors. "First and foremost, the bones of the rooms had to be true to the house, then I could start to have fun with things like furniture, wallpaper and lighting," she explains. Her main aim was to create rooms that are both functional and beautiful, allowing the original architecture to sing. "I wanted to inject humour and whimsicality into the spaces, but as well as being decorative, everything has to work properly. I'm a romantic pragmatist."

In each project, Lydia always starts with the kitchen as she believes it is the heart of the home. She decided to position the new kitchen at the back of the house, in the large Victorian extension with its soaring

ABOVE Seraphina wallpaper by Designers Guild brings subtle glamour to the dining room and adjoining sitting room (left). A Venetian mirror from Ongaro e Fuga in Italy hangs above a fire surround from English Fireplaces. The Molina armchairs are from Soho Home.

LEFT A rustic finish on the antique French cupboard from Tallulah Fox contrasts with an opulent Sunburst rug by Wendy Morrison.

'It's still got all the personality and history, but I feel that the house has been reborn and is ready for the future'

ABOVE A bespoke bath in gold leaf brings an opulent feel to this bathroom and has been paired with an ornate table from Muir Antiques in Tetbury. The walls are painted in Travertina Crema from Fired Earth.

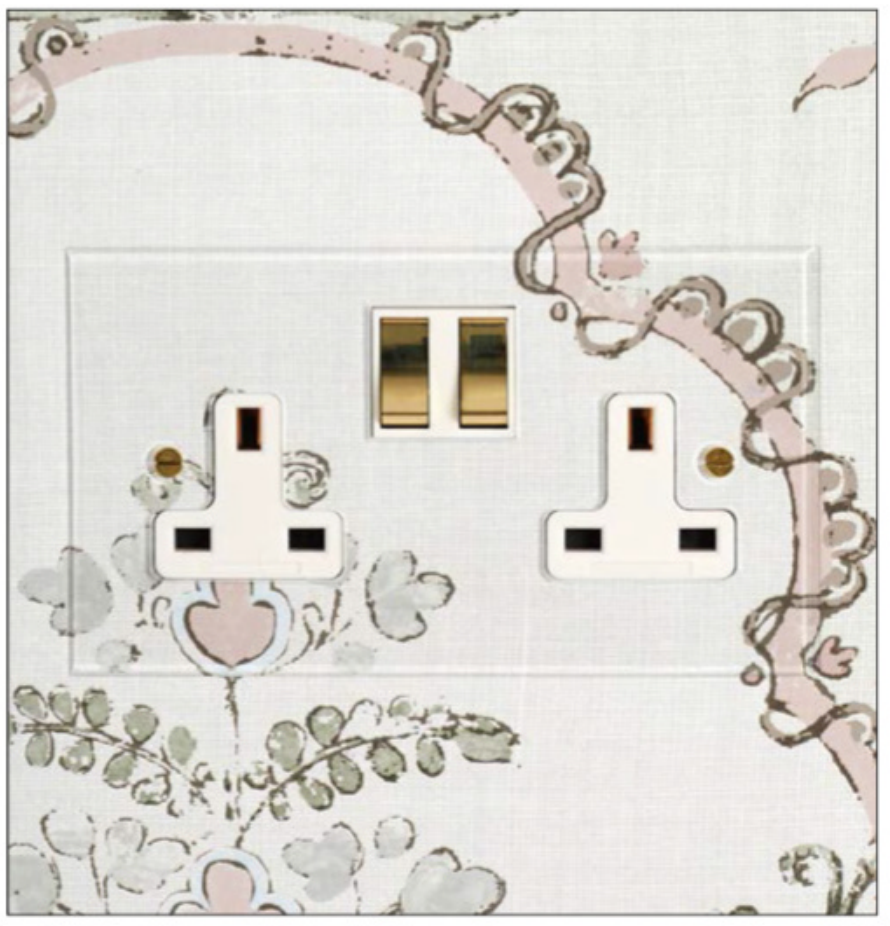
RIGHT In this bedroom, a vintage wall light from Ark Angel Tetbury with shades from Antique Textiles and Lighting of Bath, hangs above a Normandy bed from the French Bedroom Company.

ceilings. "I think everything should lead off the kitchen – it's where we congregate, cook good food and nurture ourselves," she says. Inspired by the utilitarian, practical feel of Georgian kitchens, Lydia enlisted the help of a local carpenter to bring her vision to life, creating a freestanding look and incorporating a sizeable antique cupboard from a French chateau. "If you go into very old kitchens, everything has a purpose, and it's all individual, rather than matching, which is what I love," she adds.

The sitting room flowing off the kitchen proved the trickiest space to design. Originally it would have been at the back of the house looking out onto the garden, but now this space acts as a walkway between the kitchen and dining room, so it needed to have minimal furniture. At first, Lydia painted the walls to link with the kitchen, but she soon realised it was a much better idea to carry through the bold floral wallpaper from the dining room to create a warm, cosy feel. This room was the most challenging to decorate yet is now one of Lydia's favourite spaces to sit. In the rare moments Lydia gets to relax, she enjoys the views and sights of the local wildlife. "I look out of the window at night and there's often one big fox sitting in the road. It's very quiet here at night and he stares right back at me. He's not scared at all. It's lovely to be able to feel connected to nature while still being in the heart of things."

Lydia and her team worked through lockdown and faced many setbacks, including a shortage of materials, but this huge project was miraculously finished in 15 short months. "It was quite nice to finish, even though we weren't celebrating because we were all so exhausted," she laughs. When asked what she is most proud of, she says, "That we've brought the house back to life and it's whole again. It's still got all the personality and history, but I feel that the house has been reborn and is ready for the future." ■

FORBES & LOMAX



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STYLE INSPIRATION

Our special section dedicated to interior design and decorating begins here

A FINE VINTAGE

There is something about the change in the light as the seasons transform that gives deep, rich shades a comforting allure. We explore this need for warmth and cocooning colour in our decorating feature on page 72. Browns are making quite the comeback, offering seasonal soothing comfort in tones of chocolate and mushroom. This particular shade, Vintage Wine, adds a smoky plum hue to the tawny brown depths, and is thus enlivened by red tones as a contrast – whether pumpkin orange or berry red.

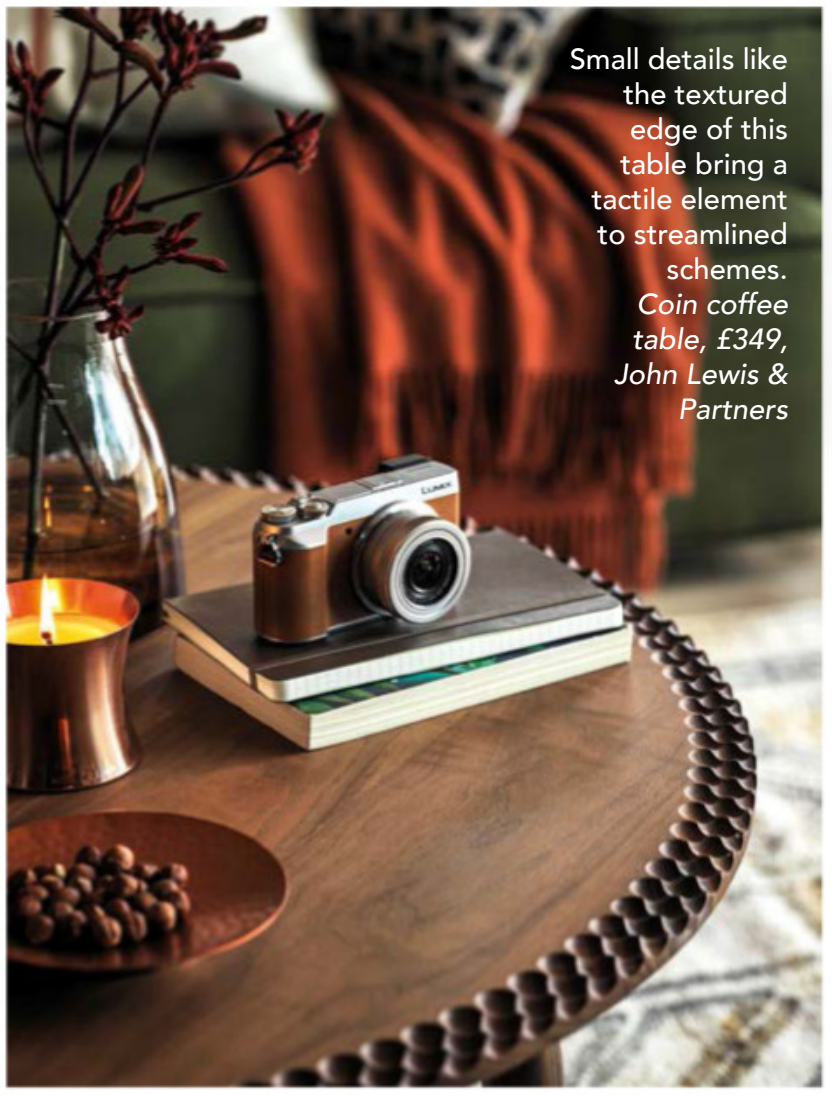
Wall in Vintage Wine; stool in Ravishing Red, both from £27 for 0.94l, Benjamin Moore

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN

DEEPLY COMFORTING

Create cocooning, indulgent interiors to enjoy in the darker months of the year with enveloping colours and layers of rich, tactile details

Calm and relatively neutral, rich tones of brown layered with touches of rust orange produce a smart ensemble. Note the assortment of textures, from smooth, indulgent velvet upholstery to the rustic natural fibres of the rug and cool stone table, *Callanish Dining Table, £3,595; Abbey Velvet dining chairs in Dirty Orange, £350 each, and all accessories, Oka*



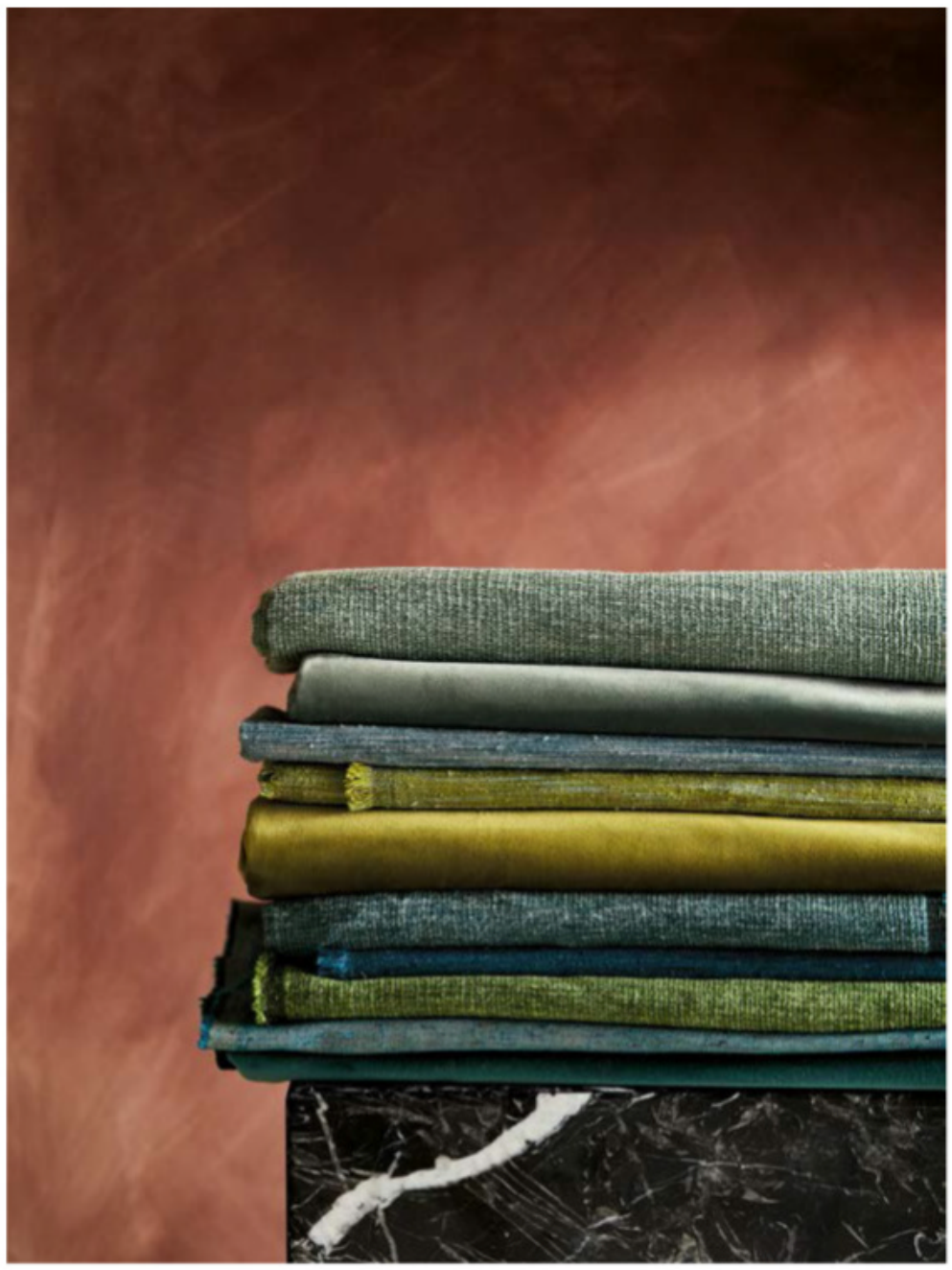
Small details like the textured edge of this table bring a tactile element to streamlined schemes. *Coin coffee table, £349, John Lewis & Partners*

As the nights draw in and a cooler air pervades, we seek comfort and warmth in the sanctuaries of our homes. The way a room is decorated can help magnify a feeling of cosiness – from rich, deep colours to soft, sumptuous textures. Embracing the darker side of the spectrum need not be daunting – the confident use of block colour, even seamlessly across woodwork, creates an indulgent and enveloping effect.

Soft chalky matt paints keep the look feeling gentle and help create dark shadowy textures and areas of light throughout the day and play with pools of artificial light and candlelight come nightfall. The new palette of colours from brands such as Farrow & Ball, Paint & Paper Library, Atelier Ellis and Benjamin Moore are heavily weighted to these moodier tones of inky navy, deepest green, dusky plum, chocolate brown and charcoal black, which can be enlivened with touches of russet orange, mustard yellow or shimmering teal for a stylish, rich and surprising palette. Neutrals can also be worked in through textures such as natural flooring, wood and textiles. Avoid bold patterns and let the strong colour choice do the talking. Instead, look to fabrics with interesting weaves in semi-plains for cushion covers and heavy interlined curtains.

Throws and blankets, often a necessity in the winter months, offer further opportunity for a splash of intense colour contrast. Light candles, sink into an armchair by the fire and be enveloped by rich colour for the ultimate cosy night in.

Soft plum hues offer a prettier feel than browns for a gentle approach to deep colours. *Walls, Country Farmhouse, £18 for 2.5l Wall and Ceiling Emulsion, Crown Paints*



ABOVE Using deep teal across panelling, skirting, and even the radiator, creates a seamless finish, setting the scene for a long, relaxing bath. *Walls, Mockingbird, £59.50 for 2.5l Architects' Matt; bath, Kasbah, £82 for 2.5l Architects' Satinwood, Paint & Paper Library*

ABOVE RIGHT Layer jewel tones via plains and semi-plains in opulent textures. *Velvesuede, £58 a metre; Jamawar, £68.50 a metre; Tussora, £47.50 a metre, all Capsule collection, Zinc Textiles*

RIGHT A simple yet beautiful glass lamp base offers subtle textural detail without jarring with the soothing palette. *Medium Bubble lamp with Natural Hessian shade, £105, Loaf*

STYLE NOTES:

- Using the same colour across woodwork, radiators and walls creates a seamless soothing effect.
- Add layers of colour through textiles, introducing brighter jewel-like tones to shine against the darker hues.

CHARLOTTE GAISFORD

British Boutique Fabric and Wallpaper Designer

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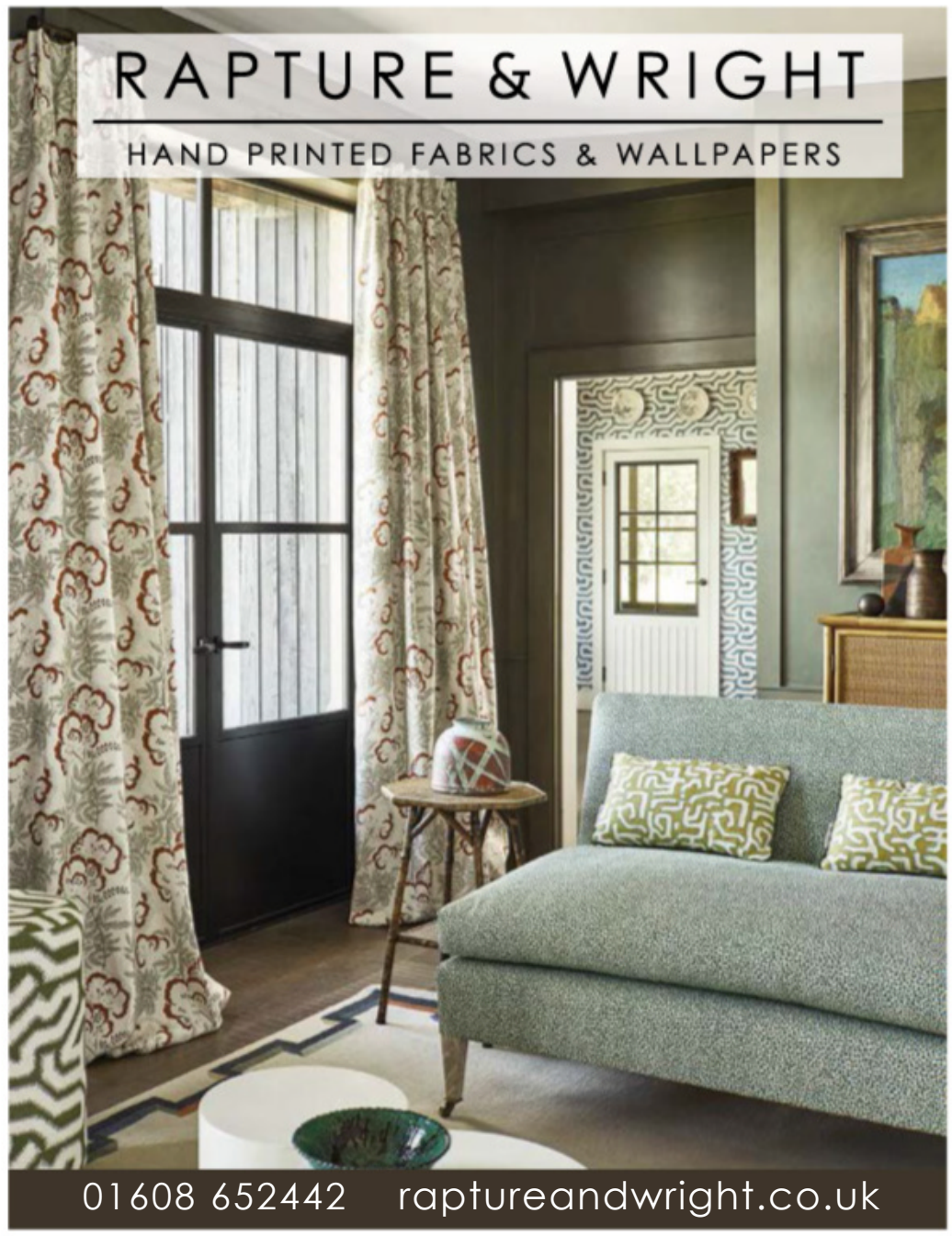

Russet oranges are ideal on a statement piece of furniture for a warm yet brighter note to sing out against deeper colours. *Suave armchair in Umber Rust velvet, £950, Rockett St George*

STYLE NOTE:

- Use a brighter colour on furniture in darker schemes to create a highlight.

ABOVE Bedrooms should exude comfort. Combine velvet upholstery with dark bed linen to sink into at the end of the day. *Luna Linen, Navy, £115 for a double fitted sheet, Soho Home*

ABOVE RIGHT Natural flooring adds a refined rustic note that sits well with neutral tones. *Arushi jute rug, £586, Rowen & Wren*

LEFT If the dark spectrum is a touch too deep, look to lighter yet subdued browns, oranges and terracottas with warm undertones to keep the mood rich and inviting. *Freckle, £50.50 for 2.5l Claypaint, Earthborn Paints* ■

STYLE NOTES:

- Natural fibres on floors and in textiles set a soothing, calming mood as well as adding a layer of comfort.
- For a less intense yet still enveloping look, opt for lighter brown or terracotta hues with warm undertones.
- Introduce indulgent yet less lustrous velvets for a subtle touch of opulence.

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN **PHOTOGRAPH** P77 BEE HOLMES PHOTOGRAPHY

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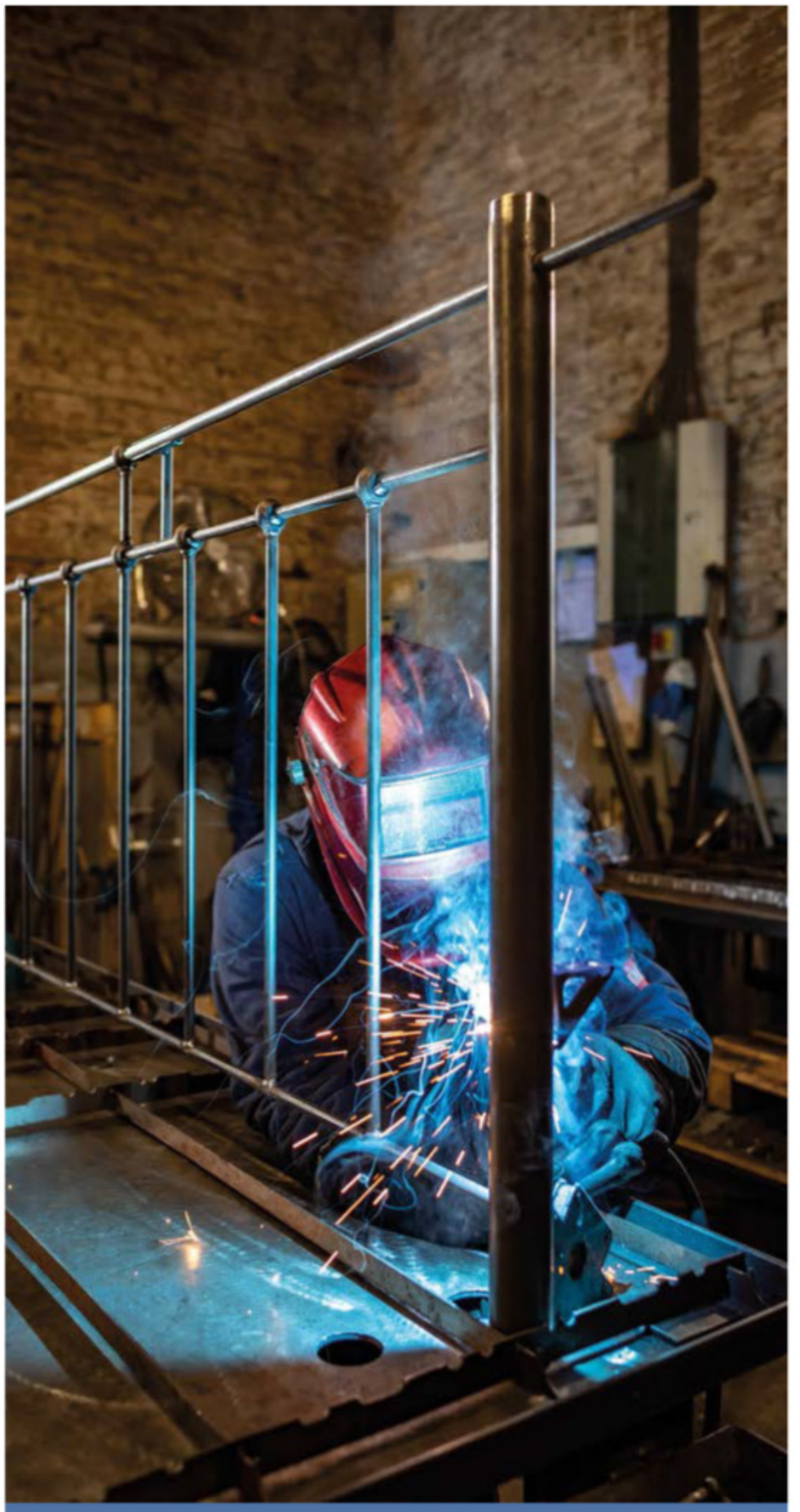

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Heritage REVIVAL

Restoring or replicating the period features of a town or city home will go a long way towards reinstating its elegant, urban good looks

ABOVE This fireplace is an elegant version of one of the most popular designs of the Victorian period. *The Buckingham fireplace, £4,709, Chesneys*

The rhythm and repetition of a townhouse's original features – whether Georgian, Victorian or Edwardian – brings a delightful sense of both structure and character. Not all homes, however, are fortunate enough to have retained their floors, fireplaces, panelling and plasterwork. Take the time to ensure that repairs and replacements are authentic in quality and looks, and also appropriate for modern life.

Walls & Ceilings

Ornate plasterwork and decorative panelling are often what distinguishes period walls and ceilings from their much plainer modern equivalents and, whether it is a case of renovating an entire plaster ceiling or adding a historically accurate skirting or dado rail, the overall improvement will be immense.

"When choosing mouldings, be guided by the dimensions and styles already present in your house," says Emma Page, founder and director of The Victorian Emporium. "Note which wooden mouldings appear where. You may need to look at similar housing – try your neighbours – if they have been removed. Many houses did not have ceiling roses or dado rails in the bedrooms, for example, and it would not be true to the period of your home if you were to introduce them where they would never have been present."

The repair process for plasterwork is dependent on the type of damage, whether water ingress, cracks caused by building work, missing sections of moulding or built-up of layers of paint causing a loss of definition. "Cracking and small areas of damage or missing enrichments can usually be repaired in situ," says Emily Cragg of Stevensons of Norwich. "If whole sections are missing or damaged then we would take impressions of the existing mouldings and manufacture silicone moulds in our workshops, from which we can cast replacement sections." This process enables authentic new copies to be made – since it is virtually impossible to reclaim and re-use original plasterwork. "Where existing mouldings are not available, our artists and modellers can design appropriate profiles from reference photographs or drawings. Alternatively, you can select period-accurate designs and profiles," Emily adds. "Mouldings manufactured using traditional methods and materials will be of the best quality and most suitable for period homes. Fibrous plaster, for example, is hand made using plaster reinforced with timber and hessian, and can easily replicate historical designs and motifs."

OPPOSITE, ABOVE
Anaglypta's Seymour pattern, below the dado rail, was introduced in 1909. *Seymour, £20.20 a roll, Wallpaper Direct*

OPPOSITE BELOW
Decorative plaster ceiling roses became popular from the Georgian era. *Ribbon-and-leaf plaster ceiling rose, £258, Stevensons of Norwich*

ABOVE When working on this Georgian townhouse, ND Studios were keen to retain as much heritage as possible, in particular the ornate cornices.

RIGHT Typical of the Georgian era, the classic wall panelling in this room by VSP Interiors extends from floor to ceiling.

WALLS & CEILINGS STYLE GUIDE

GEORGIAN: Many homes had plain ceilings with simple egg-and-dart or dentil (a series of blocks) cornicing. Adam-style plasterwork ceilings were divided into segments arranged around a centrepiece; halls and stairwells of grander houses were vaulted and embellished with classical details. Walls were often panelled, either to full height (earlier) or just below the dado rail (later). When less expensive woods were used, the panelling was painted.

VICTORIAN: Torus-shaped skirtings were very common, while ceilings were sometimes made from elaborately patterned, pre-cast moulded panels of fibrous plaster – patented in 1856. Decorative relief wallpapers such as Lincrusta and Anaglypta became hugely popular from the later 19th century.

EDWARDIAN: Edwardian ceilings tended to be lower and plainer than in the Victorian period, and cornices were no longer deemed essential. Walls, on the other hand, might be in Georgian, Regency or French classical style.

Knobs, handles and other interior ironmongery

GEORGIAN

"Symmetry is a key feature of Georgian design, particularly in architecture but also in hardware such as drawer handles. Fittings are of elegant proportions, often tapering and with a slender neck and, while ornate details are often present, they are minimal and understated."

Sarah Willshaw, founding director, Willow & Stone

1 *Pair of Georgian door handles on plate in polished brass, £30.69, Heritage Brass*

2 *Georgian plain rim lock, from £294, The Period Ironmonger*

3 *Regency drawer pull in aged brass, £34.50, Willow & Stone*

VICTORIAN

"The Victorian taste was eclectic, but in general tended towards the ornate, and often replicated styles from India and the Orient. Intricate, floral designs were translated to ironmongery and, with details becoming more patterned, brass was the material of choice."

Narendra Karnani, managing director, Heritage Brass

4 *Acanthus cupboard pull handle in nickel pewter, from £7.37, The Victorian Emporium*

5 *Merrick knob in satin brass, £18.84, Armac Martin*

6 *Pair of Claverley door handles on square rose in black iron, £28.50, Heritage Brass*

EDWARDIAN

"The Edwardian period spans a number of years where there were a variety of different style movements, but in general it was known for less fussy ornamentation than the Victorian, making for an architecturally handsome look."

Jayne Elsby, director, The Period Ironmonger

7 *Pair of antique Edwardian brass pull door handles, £90, Architectural Decor*

8 *Pair of Edwardian Oaken lever handles on a square rose in polished brass, from £125, The Period Ironmonger*

9 *Pair of solid ebony and brass Beehive door knobs with brass rose, £69, Willow & Stone*

Fireplaces & Radiators

A beautiful period fireplace is usually the focal point of a room, but damage can include chipped edges, heat cracks or sometimes discolouration from smoke, explains Paul Chesney of Chesneys. "For chips and cracks, I would suggest finding a local mason who can use special, colour-matched mastics which will disguise the repair," he says.

Smoke damage can be remedied – again, by a specialist – with the application of a bleach poultice which draws out the staining. When replacing or reinstating an entire fireplace, some reclaimed pieces are still available, but in limited numbers and likely to be more costly than buying a new replica.

Plenty of new copies of period fireplaces are available – but Chesney suggests that only a few companies (Chesneys, Jamb and Thornhill Galleries) go to the lengths required for them to be truly authentic. "It is a very specialist field," he says. "You need to do your research and understand the visual reference points, or go to a specialist architect or designer for help. Of course, if you live in a terrace it is a good idea to approach neighbours, who may still have an original, to help you understand what you're looking for."

The radiator was invented in St Petersburg in the 1850s, and it was not long before wealthy Victorians began to install them in their homes, so although radiators did not become more common until the early 20th century, fitting Victorian/Edwardian-style radiators is a good way to add authentic decorative interest to a central heating system. Buying new is generally better than reclaimed, advises Emma Page, founder and director of The Victorian Emporium. "It is possible to renovate Victorian cast-iron radiators, but it may cost more than buying reproduction. Renovated radiators tend not to be very heat-efficient, and you may have issues connecting them to modern plumbing," she points out. "It is more sensible to purchase new, reproduction cast iron radiators for your main source of heating, which should be built to modern heat-efficiency standards. Adding traditional radiator valves will enhance the aesthetics of your room along with your radiator, and save energy, too."

FIREPLACES & RADIATORS STYLE GUIDE

GEORGIAN: The best fireplaces were made from white statuary marble with inlays. Coade (artificial) stone was cheaper, while painted plaster or pine was the most affordable, and therefore the most common. Reeding with bull's eye roundels was an often-seen design in this period.

VICTORIAN: Fireplaces were an essential in almost every Victorian room, with surrounds generally in marble or slate (and, later, cast iron), or wood in secondary rooms. Most townhouse fireplaces had a cast-iron register grate, often with patterned tiles either side in the later period. In the latter part of the 19th century, wealthy Victorians started turning to radiators, some of which were in highly ornamental designs.

EDWARDIAN: Simpler than Victorian versions, Edwardian fireplaces often featured pine surrounds painted in gloss white or matt green, while metallic-glazed tiles in plain colours were also popular.

ABOVE Fireplace fenders stop wood and ash falling beyond the hearth. *Upholstered leather fenders, from £1,195, Acres Farm Fenders*

RIGHT Ornate casting adds decorative flair. *Bodleian radiator, from £380.40, Feature Radiators*

ABOVE RIGHT A restrained design in line with early Georgian aesthetics. *Montford fireplace, £5,400, Jamb*

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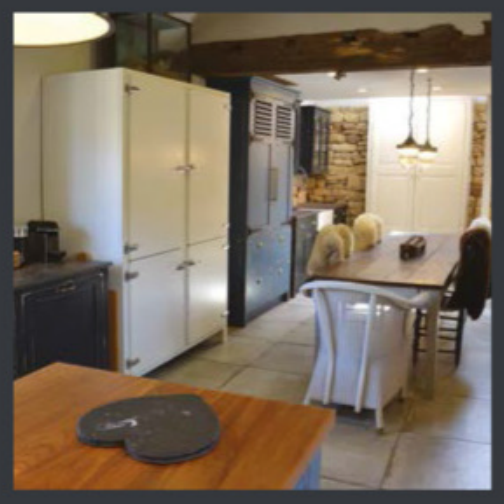

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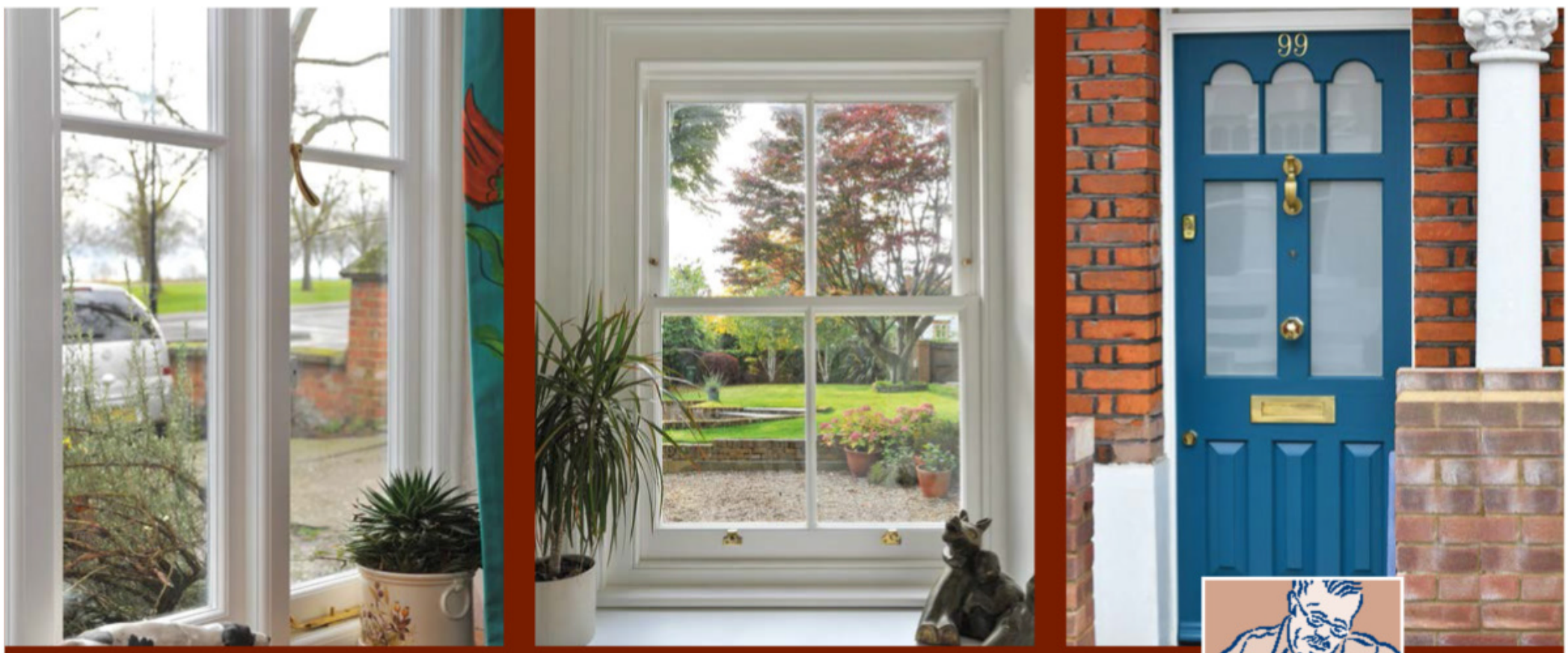

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Flooring

The right flooring in a period home adds considerable impact and richness. Floorboards can suffer damage from warping and gaps, beetle attack, stiletto heels, staining and the effects of being lifted for building work, but in some cases can be repaired fairly easily (albeit very carefully). The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings has an excellent technical advice note on patching old floorboards.

Buying reclaimed timber floorboards to match the period and style of a particular property is likely to be costly – but they will have an aged patina that cannot be replicated. Ask where the boards came from and how they have been stored since they were reclaimed. Timber

These ceramic tiles are in a pattern inspired by Victorian-era designs. *Abbey Fountains tiles, £94.50 a square metre, Fired Earth*

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that has stood outside for any length of time may be unusable.

It is also possible to buy new 'aged' wood flooring, sometimes unfinished so it can be coloured to match existing floors or joinery. "To check for quality, look closely at a sample to see that it is well made, with tight-fitting joints," says Peter Keane, director of The Natural Wood Floor Company. "Does it emit strong odours, is it fairly colour-consistent, is it made of low-grade materials? Ask where it is made, and whether it has been sustainably sourced. You could also ask for a portfolio of the company's previous work."

Encaustic clay tiles laid in a multi-coloured, mosaic pattern were hugely popular in Victorian and Edwardian hallways, and many still exist today. A build-up of wax and dirt can be cleaned with a specially formulated product such as HG Extra Cleaner and a lot of elbow grease (no wire brushes or scouring), while small holes from carpet grippers can be disguised with a filler coloured with appropriately

ABOVE LEFT A border frames a striking pattern, creating a stylish entrance to a period home. *Victorian floor tiles in a bespoke pattern, see Original Style for stockists*

ABOVE RIGHT Timber flooring provides a gentle, warm ambience. Aged parquet with *an oiled finish, from £70 a square metre, The Natural Wood Floor Company*

FLOORING STYLE GUIDE

GEORGIAN: In ground-floor hallways Portland or pale stone was often used, with small diamonds of dark grey slate or marble. Elsewhere, oak, elm and Baltic fir or pine were widespread. Wooden floors were often limewashed; never varnished.

VICTORIAN: Pine floorboards, stained and polished, were the most common Victorian hard flooring, with hall floors laid in a pattern of coloured encaustic tiles, and kitchens with stone flags or quarry tiles.

EDWARDIAN: Pine floorboards still predominated, with oak or teak in grander houses, and perhaps parquet – which was sometimes used as a border around a carpet, too.

mixed acrylic paint. Carefully re-lay any loose tiles and, if necessary, replace small areas of cracked or missing tiles – usually best done with plain, unglazed tiles cut to fit. It is possible to source reclaimed encaustic tiles and, as always with salvaged pieces, check their provenance and condition carefully. The alternative is to buy new tiles, made in as close a way as possible to the originals. "New tiles will have a cleaner, more modern look, and there will be a more ready supply of all the colours and shapes, pre-made for a floor design," says Phillip Gale, area sales manager of Original Style. "We always recommend using a professional tiler when installing Victorian floor tiles in order to achieve the best possible finish." ■

ABOVE Choose tiles in hues and patterns sympathetic to the period of the home. *Victorian floor tiles in Warwick pattern, see Original Style for stockists*

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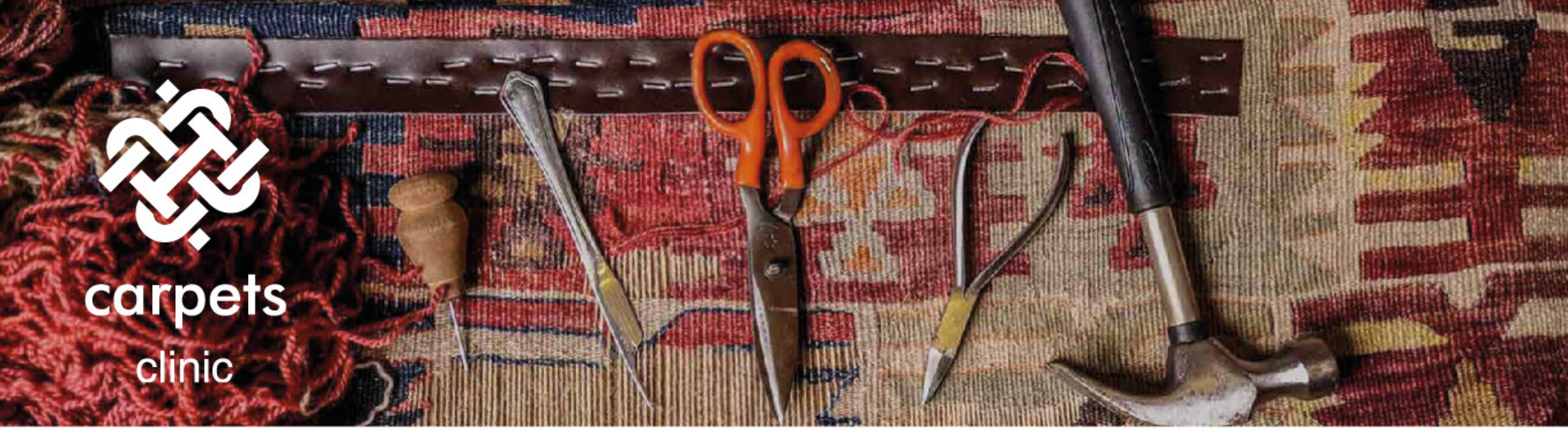

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THE *New Build* HOME

In this edition of our series on familiar British housing styles, we explore the many options among 'newer' housing, from post-war builds to contemporary homes, each with their own take on modern living

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE

ABOVE A 1970s-build has been updated with a front door painted in a modern neutral.
BELOW A trio of townhouses by Squire & Partners echoes the symmetry and scale found in surrounding Victorian properties.

Encompassing a wide variety of architectural styles, new builds range from post-war homes, which were among the first to eschew decorative detailing, through to 1970s townhouses featuring traditional hanging tiles and weatherboarding, symmetrical 1990s properties, and the minimalist structures of the early 21st century.

The best examples of each of these types of property tend to use honest materials that stand the test of time while avoiding pastiche or clinging to familiar building styles. "There is sometimes a tendency to shirk modern architecture because classic homes including Georgian, Edwardian and Victorian are often considered more popular," reflects interior designer Henry Prideaux. "However, bear in mind that those buildings were also new at one stage. Any build that respects correct proportion and is inspired by fine architecture of the past without being a slave to it wins my vote, alongside innovative buildings that champion unusual materials and inventive architectural ideas."

THE FUTURE IS NOW

While some new builds may be more architecturally appealing than others, all of them will benefit from a pared-back approach, whether they are built from scratch or are being re-worked retrospectively. "If a new build – be it in the city or in a rural location – uses local materials, responds to the site, context or landscape, addresses local architectural style without being pastiche, and has a strong narrative, then integrity and character will naturally ensue," says architect Henry Squire of Squire & Partners. "All architectural styles can provide aesthetically pleasing buildings as long as they are honest and executed with rigour and joy."

The advantage of more modern architecture is that it is built for contemporary life. Unlike the original configurations of many period properties, there is no sense of division or an 'upstairs-downstairs' lifestyle; instead, largely open rooms and zones bring cooking, dining, relaxing and socialising into one space. "Newer buildings are better suited to the way we live now because they easily cater to our everyday requirements," says Kelling Designs' Emma Deterding. "From an architectural perspective, they can also create a sense of scale, light and drama. If you are building from scratch, then timber, glass, metal and stone will always be timeless. Now, more than ever, we are looking to bring natural materials into our homes and this is something that will forever be in style as we try to reconnect with the great outdoors."

Sustainability and a reduced carbon footprint remain key areas of concern, so we can perhaps also expect to see a return to a combination of

ABOVE In this sitting room scheme by Sims Hilditch, a contemporary credenza and a pair of symmetrically placed sofas create a natural focal point to counteract minimal architectural features.

BELOW A new-build renovation by Kelling Designs uses navy and mustard accents to add gravitas to an otherwise neutral scheme in this dining room.

Architectural detailing, such as carved timber doors, are echoed in the graphic furniture shapes in this build by Squire & Partners.

traditional, resilient materials as well as new, low-carbon options. “The key is cohesion,” says Squire. “For me, there isn’t a division between architecture and interiors. A good building is conceived without separating external and internal. Therefore, one should aim to approach a new-build as an entire project.”

FORM & FUNCTION

Newer buildings, especially post-war architecture, tend to be less generous in scale, with fewer internal decorative details. Builds like these have often been tampered with over time, and it is common to find elements like fire surrounds, cornicing or coving as later additions, which can confuse the vernacular of the original design. One approach is to strip back and remove extraneous detailing, reconnecting with the simplicity of the building. “I like to revert to the language of the architecture,” says interior designer Sidika Owen. “I tend to remove inauthentic ‘period’ detailing, before remodelling the layout in order to make the space feel airier. Underfloor heating keeps the walls as undisturbed as possible, while investing in bespoke joinery maximises storage. Mirrored doors also give the illusion of space, while bringing in light.”

Combating a lack of internal features is key with some newer builds and there are plenty of clever ways to do this. “Often, the main drawback is low ceilings,” says interior designer Roby Baldan. “Considered use of multi-layered lighting is therefore important to manipulate the perception of the space, as is opting for simple window treatments. But having a blank canvas can also be a great springboard. Most new builds are of solid construction – floors and walls are levelled, often made of solid concrete, allowing for the use of heavier floor coverings, such as marble. Simple architecture means that decorative schemes can be richer and bolder.”

Brand new homes offer the opportunity to design freely for modern living, incorporating rooms such as pantries, utilities, cloakrooms and additional storage

TOP LEFT Parquet flooring and a chimney breast riff on period detailing in this contemporary expression of a classic townhouse sitting room by Squire & Partners.

LEFT This 1990s property has been given a classic treatment by Otta Design, via antique furniture and timeless accessories.

ABOVE LEFT In this new-build extension in a Georgian property, VSP Interiors has echoed the original architecture with a lantern roof, complemented by a marble-topped baker's table-style island

LEFT A kitchen scheme by Sims Hilditch complements graphic architectural lines with simple, sleek cabinetry and bold silhouettes.

ABOVE RIGHT In this 1970s build, renovated by Sidika Owen, original wood flooring is reframed with the addition of natural elements such as rattan, linen and indoor foliage.

RIGHT Handleless kitchen cabinetry and a lipped island are softened by decorative accents in this contemporary renovation by Kelling Designs.

Retro elements, including a mid-century coffee table and accent armchairs, hint at the roots of this 1970s build, renovated by Sidika Owen. Linen curtains and a graphic rug contemporise the look.

ABOVE In this renovation by Fentiman Design, the period elements of a mid-century property have been painstakingly reflected in a new-build wing.

RIGHT A Cotswolds property, built in the 1990s, has been given timeless country appeal courtesy of Ciara Ephson at Fentiman Design.

that can be harder to extract from period properties. "Personally, I love new builds whose form instantly tells you something about their function," says architect Michael Schienke. "Glass, open space and efficient use of materials all contribute to this effect. A well-considered new build will use internal space intuitively but also consider a site's inherent logic: the views, orientation, natural topography and how the entrance should appear from a distance – whether contrasting with the landscape or melting into it."

FRESH APPROACH

Builds from the post-war years onwards and brand new homes are some of the most flexible interiors when it comes to decoration. A good approach is to nod to the building's origins while developing an individual, cohesive style. For example, in the recent renovation of a 1970s townhouse, interior designer Sidika Owen retained its original finger parquet flooring, complementing it with rattan pendants, raw linen window treatments, terrazzo bathrooms and mid-century shapes for softly retro appeal. Marbled paper and bold red tapware add a contemporary touch.

Mixing furniture styles and creating a focal point in every room is a good way to add personality to a new build. "It's important not to shy away from colour and pattern," advises Emma Deterding, whose recent motifs include vibrant wall murals and statement headboards to add playfulness to otherwise feature-free spaces. "There's also no reason a modern building can't house antiques. The key is to avoid dressing schemes in one period style, opting instead for interesting 'pause points' here and there."

Introducing texture and pattern is a good way to soften the 'newness' of a modern building. "I like to add unexpected design features such as wall panelling made from grosgrain ribbon, highlighting architectural detail with passementerie, or using interesting paint effects to add some originality," says

TOP RIGHT Aqua elements, including a pair of upholstered headboards, help anchor an otherwise feature-free space in this scheme by Otta Design.

RIGHT Rich walnut flooring and finishes enhance an otherwise simple spacewith floor-to-ceiling windows in this new townhouse by Squire & Partners.

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Prideaux. “A bold, patterned wallpaper is another great way to add interest to a space.”

Even buildings traditionally considered ugly ducklings contain their own unique appeal. “I have started to love the ‘unlovables’, such as ex-local authority buildings, which offer juxtaposition and elements of surprise,” says Baldan. “I enjoy the challenge of bringing out their hidden beauty. My first project was a complete refurbishment of a former local authority, three-bedroom London apartment. It lacked architectural detailing, but it presented no constraints when it came to creative reinvention. I used the simplicity of its structure as a canvas for a curated selection of furniture and decorative pieces. Where applicable, replacing window frames, repainting an exterior and opening up outdated closed porches also has a transformative effect.”

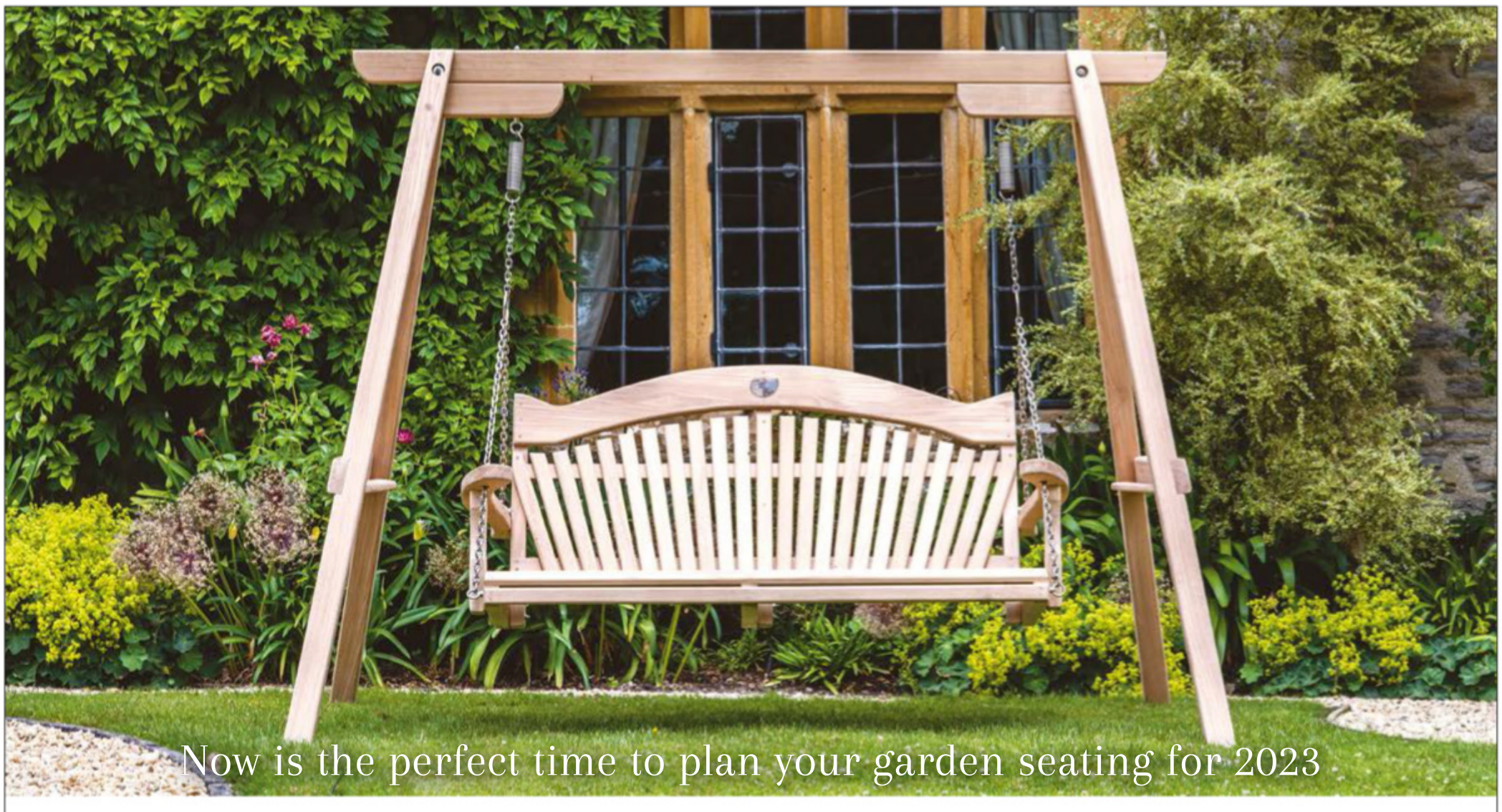
NEW STYLE

Brand new homes are sometimes polarising because their contemporary nature can feel stark or even overly imposing. But a well-built new home that speaks to its landscape can rival the beauty of many older homes. “I think it’s important that we challenge tradition, allowing for exciting and well-designed homes that open up debate,” reflects Otta Designs’ Alex Keith. “However, context is vital. For example, I enjoy the beach and fishing huts in Walberswick in Suffolk. Their black facades contrast with their surroundings, whether it be green vegetation or a sandy seascape. Currently, I’m drawn to a combination

ABOVE In this 1990s Cotswolds property by Fentiman Design, the eaves ceilings have been wallpapered to add depth and interest.

ABOVE LEFT In this new-build scheme by Sims Hilditch, graphic lines, including six framed maps and metal-framed furniture, lend structure.

RIGHT Built-in joinery fronted in marbleised paper adds a whimsical touch to this 1970s-built home, reworked by Sidika Owen.



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of black cladding and plenty of glass, with the introduction of brick or flint either internally or externally."

Bear in mind that new homes can be deeply adaptable because they welcome contrasting approaches. "There is no reason why a classic country style can't work in an urban environment for example, so we might incorporate elements of rural style into a new-build in the city," says designer Emma Sims-Hilditch. "This might include a woodburner or a farmhouse-style kitchen. Likewise, a stone or wooden floor looks very smart and will weather well as the years go by. Incorporating a rough timber boarding on walls and ceilings also adds interest."

Ultimately, the key to any newer home is that it should be functional and pleasurable to live in, an atmosphere achieved with an unhurried approach. "New-build schemes do not want to look as though they have tried too hard," suggests VSP Interior's Henriette von Stockhausen. "The most successful are often those that are simply elegant while helping those that live there feel relaxed and comfortable." ■

ABOVE A cohesive colour treatment on walls and ceiling, colourful fabrics and raw wood elements inject cosy appeal into this 1990s Cotswolds property by Fentiman Design.

LEFT Terracotta-peach tones on walls and joinery and a bright blue console introduce a classic-contemporary feel to this 1990s renovation by Otta Design.

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NEW BUILD *Decorating* UPDATES

A discerning curation of colourful backdrops, confident prints and characterful pieces allows modern homes to tell an inviting, personal story

1 Barcelona Orange, £23.95 for 1l Chalk Paint, Annie Sloan **2** Ocean D radiator, from £757.68, The Radiator Centre **3** Signature sofa with standard arms and fixed base, shown here in Tweed Linen Cocoa, from £7,891 excluding fabric, George Smith **4** Block-print cushion in Gita Paisley Orange/Mauve, £72, The Mews **5** Oxidise fabric (on chair), £58 a metre, Arley House **6** Cirque striped planters, Green, £100 for a set of two, Sophie Conran **7** Candover wall light in brass, £897, shown with Lily linen lampshade, £71 each, Vaughan Designs **8** Ochre cast-aluminium casserole dish, £49.50; Oak chopping board, £29.50; Floral vase, £29.50; Vintage cutlery set, £25 for a 16-piece set, all Marks & Spencer **9** Teddy chaise in Mossymere Norfolk cotton, £2,090, Sofa.com **10** Darya wool rug, available in two sizes, medium £1,500, large, £2,500, Birdie Fortescue **11** Lily mirror, from £1,560, Tom Faulkner **12** Shaker kitchen in Hicks' Blue and Pall Mall by Little Greene, from £10,000, Olive & Barr **13** Bumble stools, £460 a pair, Loaf **14** Petroleum Optical Stripes wallpaper by Mineheart, £120 a roll, Lime Lace **15** Heath cocktail table, £2,202, Arteriors

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BEST OF BRITISH

How the Modern British Masters capture the essence of our magnificent country, like those who painted before them

As the celebrated artist JMW Turner once said, "My job is to paint what I see, not what I know," and how fortunate British artists have always been to find so much to inspire as subject matter across the United Kingdom. As Daniel Callaghan of the prestigious gallery Callaghans of Shrewsbury says, "These days, taking in works from the likes of Lowry, Braaq, Hankey and McIntyre is like taking the viewer on a whistle-stop tour of the British Isles. From McIntyre's rugged, sweeping Scottish landscapes, across to the Northern scenes rendered by Braaq and Lowry to the bustling Cornish coastal scenes favoured by Hankey." The life and landscapes are indeed placed at the centre of each work to celebrate and capture all that is great about our magnificent country.

Daniel and his wife Stella know a thing or two about British painters, having garnered an international reputation over their 35 years at Callaghans of Shrewsbury. Their extensive knowledge of European art and artists stretches from the 19th to the 21st century, covering watercolours, oils, drawing and sculpture.

One of the couple's favourite artists is LS Lowry (1887–1976), probably the best known of the Modern British Masters, for his innovative and original depictions of Northern industrial life. Lowry developed his distinctive 'matchstick' signature style by painting in the candle-lit hours between caring for his ailing mother and studying in suburban Manchester. His artistic genius lay in his ability to transform the everyday into the memorable, taking typical industrial scenes and using a distinct lack of detail to capture British life with a sense of comforting naivety.

Often hastily sketched on the back of tickets and postcards with a pen and pencil, Lowry's works hold a sense of honest simplicity. They frequently lack shadows and shade, which does not undermine or detract from their artistic quality, but, if anything, adds to their originality. This can be seen in his work

ABOVE *Boats*, LS Lowry RA (1887–1976), 11cm x 15cm, pencil on paper, signed.
OPPOSITE ABOVE Flying Kites, Braaq (also known as Brian Shields) (1951–1997), 28cm x 39cm, oil on panel, signed.
OPPOSITE BELOW *Harbour*, William Lee Hankey (1896–1952) , 56cm x 74cm, oil on canvas, signed,

Boats, which concisely captures the scudding landscape of the Northern coastline with just a few simple pencil lines. Despite not depicting his signature matchstick men, the work is still recognisable as a Lowry with its defining characteristic atmosphere, brevity and lack of idealisation.

In a similar vein, one of Lowry's contemporaries Braaq (whose real name was Brian Shields, 1951–1997), also depicted the realities of life in the north of England. The vibrant industrial city and docklands of Liverpool were the backdrop to his childhood and his main inspiration. With large factories, everyday people and sweeping skies, *Flying Kites* is a perfect example of his work. Matchstick-thin figures are captured bustling between an industrial backdrop and a faintly pastoral foreground (clearly a comment on the modernisation of Britain during the middle of the 20th century). The muted tones convey the difficulty of life during this period while also illustrating the simplicity of Braaq's depictions. Focusing on the everyday, he captures a broad spectrum of human existence, the hardship as well as the joy of life in industrial Britain.

In contrast, William Lee Hankey (1869–1952) used an impressionistic style when approaching his work, as demonstrated in *Harbour*, which illustrates the bustling nautical life of Cornwall. The clatter of boats and boxes among the salty sea air and hubbub of voices is encapsulated within the work, evoking the senses alongside the viewer's imagination, inviting them to insert themselves within the scene. The softness of the clouds and the scenery clearly show the movement's influence over Hankey, encouraging him to paint with rose-tinted spectacles, admiring the world for its beauty and wonder.

TOP *Western Seas*, Donald McIntyre (1923–2009), 50cm x 61cm, acrylic on paper, signed.
ABOVE *Bridge at St Ouen*, Edward Brian Seago (1910–1974), 53cm x 63cm, oil on canvas, signed.

In contrast, the broad, wild brushstrokes of Donald McIntyre (1923–2009) in his painting *Western Seas* show a less considered, more erratic approach to capturing the beauty of life. To the viewer, the windswept scene feels brisk and rugged. The sea almost audibly lashes on the shore and the rugged rocks. Meanwhile, the characteristic earthy tones of McIntyre's palette appear naturalistic, rendering the scene with a sense of the artist's deep appreciation of what he sees. He loved to paint in Scotland and Wales, where he spent most of his life, and his desire to capture the breathtaking beauty of his surroundings brilliantly showed off his artistic abilities.

But not everyone found their inspiration in the British Isles, with some Modern British artists like Edward Seago (1910-1974) preferring to capture life on the continent instead. Seago's time in France during his career produced works such as *Bridge at St Ouen*, an impressionistic view of a French landscape. The striking dappled light of the water and fleeting rays of sunlight hiding between the featherweight clouds add a sense of urgency and movement, as if the scene is only moments from a downpour of rain. Seago received critical acclaim for not only his work but also the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, who appreciated Seago's work to such an extent that she bought a painting twice a year during his career. In fact, much of Seago's best work can still be found in The Royal Collection. Through his work as one of the foremost Modern British Masters, Seago's place in British art history was cemented.

All of these pieces demonstrate that the Modern British Masters was a movement where artistic freedom was embraced and encouraged, in whatever form that may take. "What makes the Modern British art scene so exciting is the variety," Stella explains. "The range of styles and mediums encompassed within the movement is staggering." So, it is no surprise these paintings have maintained such an enduring appeal over the years.

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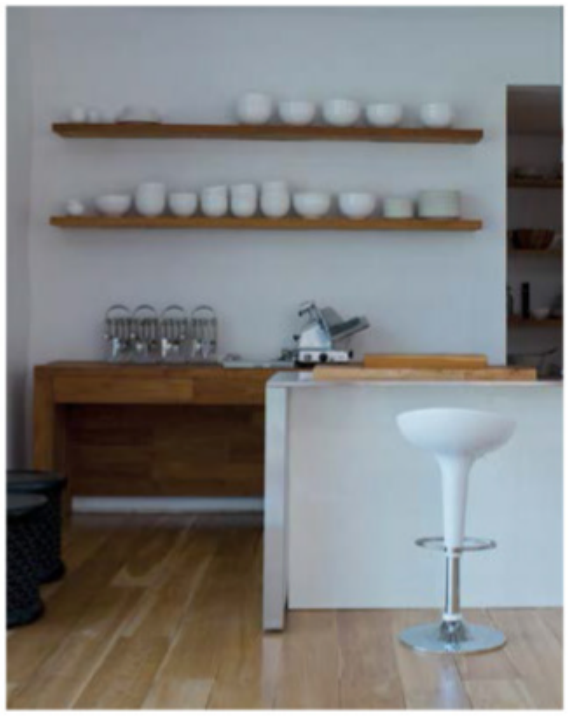

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CREATING THE *Ultimate* TOWNHOUSE BATHROOM

Whether located in a luxury apartment in the city or within a smart terrace in town, a luxurious bathroom that looks and feels delightful is highly desirable. We consider the key elements that contribute to creating the perfect design

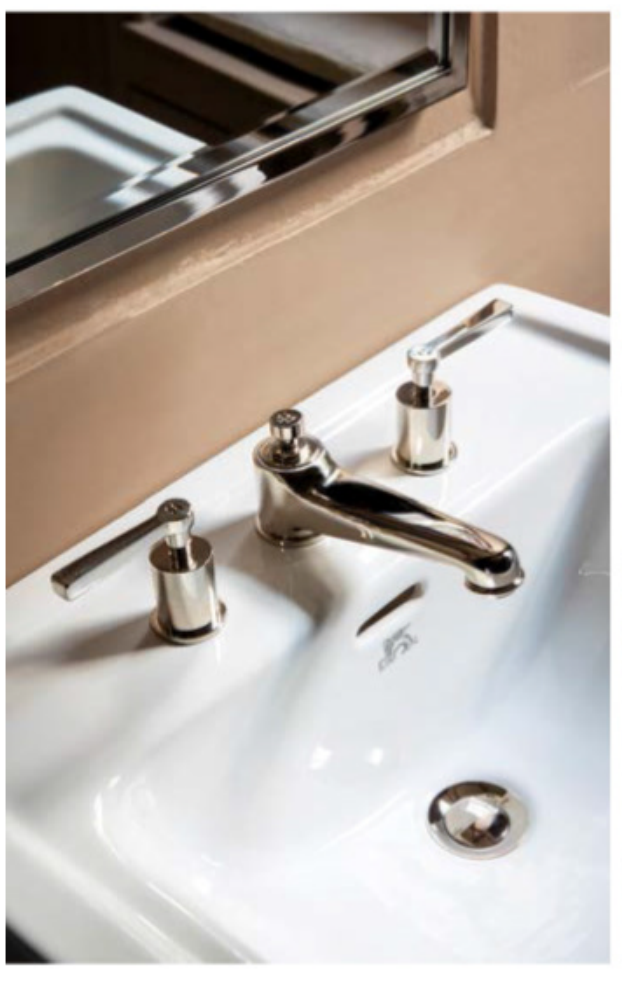
There is no doubt that the modern bathroom is seen as a sanctuary, a precious respite from the stresses of everyday life – especially when life is in a bustling town or hectic city. Creating the ultimate urban bathroom must take into account factors such as views (or lack of them), restricted space, awkward areas and storage.

A design that incorporates all the necessities while achieving a sense of welcome relaxation will also depend on the individual: it may be a streamlined, understated space or perhaps one with dynamic colours and drama. Either way, it will involve both minute detail and a well-planned overview, with special attention not only to colours, patterns and the shapes and sizes of fittings, but also to every material and texture, from floor coverings to reflective surfaces. ▶

Details

The urban bathroom is changing from a monochrome, minimalist style towards one that is much more personal, says Emma Joyce, bathroom brand manager at House of Rohl. "Sharp edges are being replaced by softer curves, warmer finishes, brighter colours and an injection of individuality," she explains. Alongside these considerations, designing a luxurious urban bathroom demands a combination of variety and unity. Variety in terms of texture – whether it be a wallcovering or window treatment, ceramic vase or wicker basket, contrasting with the often smooth, hard and shiny surfaces of fittings – and unity in terms of finish, so that the shape, style and surface colour of brassware, in particular, continues throughout the room, complementing the architecture of the property, the colour scheme, and the choice of other details such as mirrors, light fittings and door furniture.

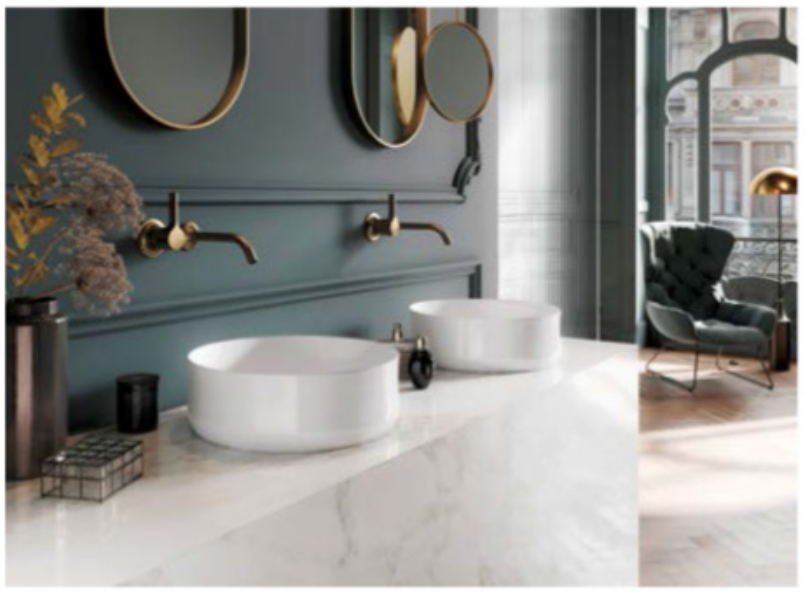
BELOW LEFT In this room by Jeffreys Interiors, a softly textured wallcovering contrasts with smooth tiles and a satin brass bath filler.
BELOW RIGHT Smart 1930s-style Janey Mac basin mixer, with levers and pop-up waste, in silver nickel, from Lefroy Brooks.
BELOW FAR RIGHT A pair of Ming steel enamel basins from Kaldewei are teamed with sleek, wall-mounted mixer taps.
ABOVE Elegant Carrara honed marble tiling features throughout this beautiful bathroom by Porter, in which a series of superbly co-ordinated fittings is finished in antique brass.

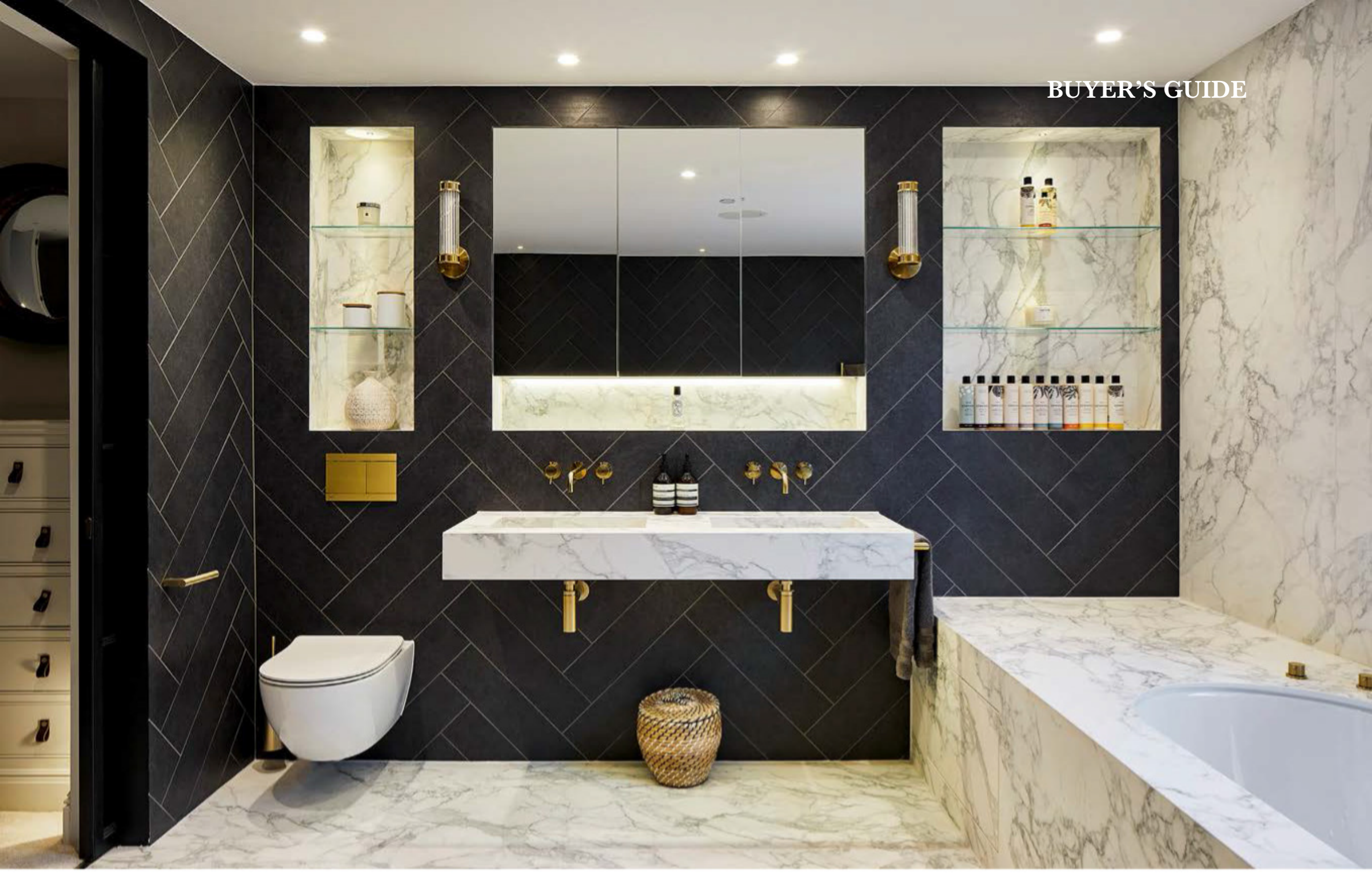


ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

On materials

"In an 'always-on' modern world, brassware is a response to the trend for bathrooms to be sanctuaries with elegant-yet-understated shapes, smooth edges and tactile surfaces. Choose timeless chrome or nickel for a glowing silver finish, or be bold and opt for a 24-carat gold finish, the ultimate statement of luxury."
Emma Joyce, bathroom brand manager, House of Rohl





Lighting

To create a welcoming, spa-like feel in a bathroom that can also accommodate all the practicalities of day-to-day use, well-designed artificial lighting is essential, especially in an urban environment where abundant natural lighting may not be readily available.

"Bathroom-rated pendants can be really useful as they don't hog limited wall areas, but you need to be able to get them high enough to allow for vigorous towelling actions without incident," says Rohan Blacker, founder of Pooky. "Otherwise, flat ceiling lights and wall sconces are effective, but might not throw a very strong light for grooming. Use wall lights either side of a mirror alongside a flush pendant or spots to ensure the most effective, and flattering, levels of light."

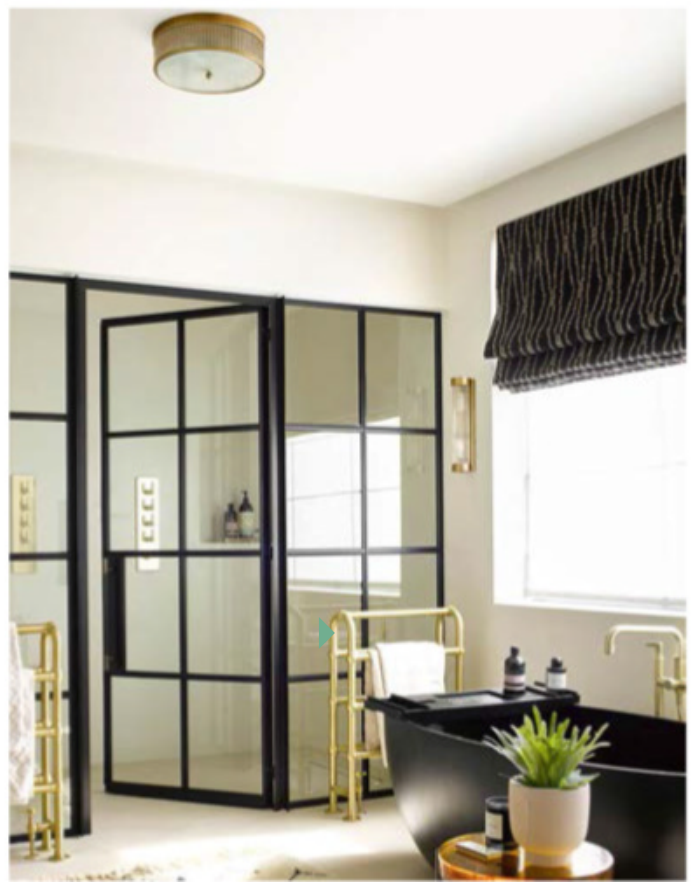
Another lovely addition to bathroom lighting is illumination within niches and shelving, using mini spots or linear LED lights. As for style, Blacker recommends brass and glass for a modern look, adding: "These materials, alongside mirrors and marbles, tend to have a more contemporary aesthetic that is perfectly suited to town and city bathrooms."

ABOVE A combination of inset ceiling lights, feature wall lights and niche lights enhance the drama of this bathroom in honed marble-effect porcelain slab tile. *Coliseum Arabascato tiles, from £156 a square metre, Stone & Ceramic Warehouse*

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

On lighting

"Avoid gathered fabric shades and heavy patterning, as these can introduce a more country, traditional look. Instead, opt for simple linens for any lampshade or choose all-metal or all-glass for the ultimate, contemporary scheme."
Rohan Blacker, founder, Pooky



RIGHT *IP44-rated Round Roddy flush ceiling light, £147; Long Roddy wall light in brass and glass, £139, both Pooky*
FAR RIGHT *Tacoma single bathroom wall lights in antique brass, £133 each, Astro Home*

Colour

Strong colours and bold patterns make a huge impact in a large bathroom and can be a good choice in a smaller room, too. Simply choosing a lively colour to paint the walls (and perhaps ceiling) is the straightforward option, while including blocks of different, toning colours can be hugely rewarding. Consider other areas where colour and pattern can be added – perhaps in the form of towels, rugs or window treatments, or the sanitaryware itself. Many baths, for example, have the option to be coloured during manufacture or painted in the home. Wall and floor tiles are, of course, often dominant features in a bathroom and, says Louisa Morgan, marketing director of Mandarin Stone, the boldest approach is to choose one patterned tile and use it on both floors and walls. "Alternatively, use patterned floor tiles and opt for a plain-coloured wall tile in a complementary shade," she says. "For a more subtle approach, use patterned tiles just in feature areas such as in the shower or as a splashback." There are other methods of creating interesting pattern, too, she points out. "Marble, or marble-effect porcelain tiles have their own patterns of veining and shade variation, or you could employ mosaics, chevrons or hexagon shapes, or interesting ways of laying brick-shaped tiles."

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

On tile designs

"While there is plenty of choice, don't be tempted to use multiple shades of patterned tiles in one space. Just one or two shades will feel far more timeless and sophisticated."

Louisa Morgan, marketing director, Mandarin Stone

TOP LEFT Carnaby Mint Ceramic wall tiles, £55.20 a square metre, Mandarin Stone, complement a bold colour scheme.

ABOVE This statement bathroom by interior designer Orla Read, in a four-bedroom London townhouse, features Series S hand-painted tiles by Balineum and Dalby showers in antique brass by Drummonds.

LEFT In a soft rose-pink, the Casini bath by BC Designs, £3,850, complements the London Basin Company's Angelica basin, £849, which features a delicate gold rim.

Small spaces

Townhouse bathrooms may sometimes be small, narrow or tucked in under sloping ceilings. Still, it is possible to create a sense of polish and luxury with a careful floor plan and a selection of beautiful, co-ordinating materials. One key question may be whether to opt for a shower or a bath, or perhaps a shower over the bath. The answer to this will depend on the configuration of any other bathrooms in the property, the size and shape of the room and, of course, personal preference. Another solution to the small bathroom problem, says Carley Kyle, lead interior designer at Jeffreys Interiors, is to avoid using deliberately small furnishings but instead – provided there is enough floor space – include over-sized pieces to create an illusion of grandeur. "You could include a large mirror, large-scale light fittings, large-scale patterned wallpaper – maybe even up and onto the ceiling," Kyle explains. Avoid off-the-shelf fittings that are specifically designed for bathrooms, she adds, but choose lovely paint colours, textured wallpapers and decorative accessories.

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

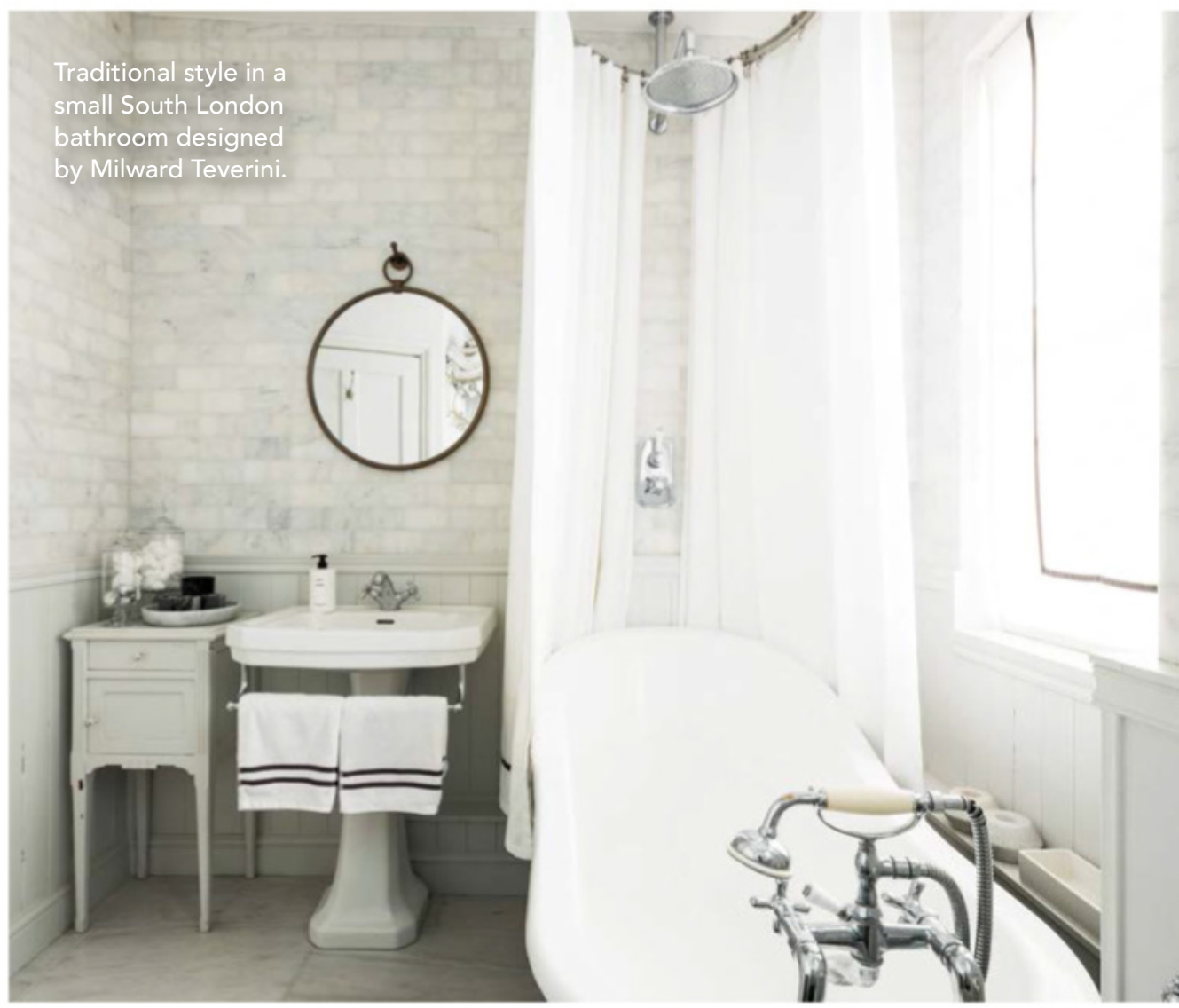
On custom vanities

"Going bespoke opens up options in a small bathroom. Off-the-shelf vanity units, for example, restrain the parameters of what you can do, but if you are able to have one made to the exact size and function that you need that's always the way forward."

Carley Kyle, lead interior designer, Jeffreys Interiors

ABOVE LEFT In this bathroom by Q Design House, mirrored storage with push-release doors has been cut to fit the sloping wall, helping to bounce light around the room.

ABOVE The Tubby Torre Plinth bath by Albion Bath Company is available in three sizes, from just 1195mm long (£2,541) and can be finished in burnished gold, iron or bronze.



Traditional style in a small South London bathroom designed by Milward Teverini.

Freestanding Marina bath, £3,972, Aston Matthews

BELOW LEFT
Le Thermo Grand exposed shower, from £3,000; Mayfair shower tray, from £5,000; Empire wire shower tidy, from £144, all Catchpole & Rye

BELOW RIGHT
Style Moderne V6K16 three-hole basin filler, in antique gold with Luxe controls, from £1,798, Samuel Heath

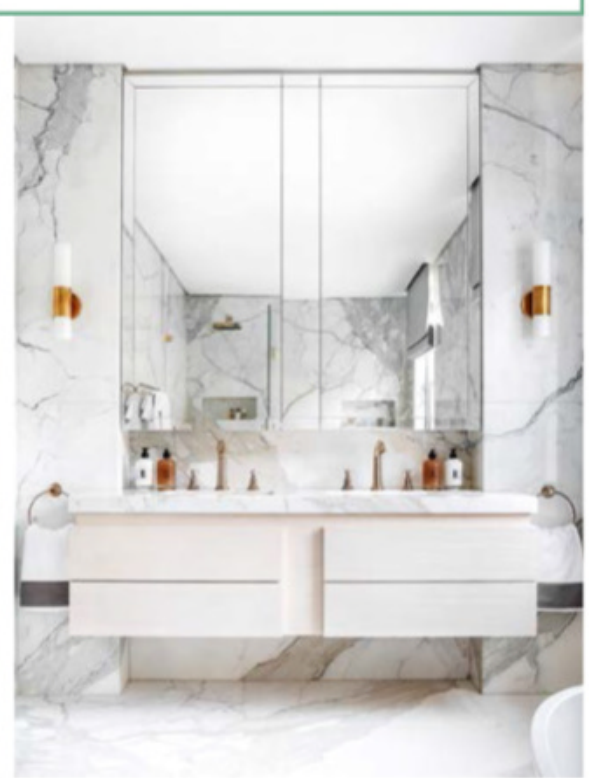
ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

On sleek fixtures

"Use minimal fixtures and wall-mounted solutions to aid the flow of finishes and add to a sense of space and openness."
Martyn Whieldon, managing director, Samuel Heath

Streamlining

Amid the hustle and bustle of city life, a sanctuary-like bathroom is the ultimate luxury, and for many the feeling of calm comes from a room – whether large or small – that is carefully designed to be minimal and streamlined, with plenty of light, carefully co-ordinated fittings and a muted or natural colour palette. "A sense of repose and luxury can be created through careful material choices, such as book-matched marble detailed with warmer finishes like polished nickel, bronze and crystal accents," says Martyn Whieldon, managing director of Samuel Heath. "Reflective surfaces such as high gloss, glass and mirror reflect light to open up the space and create a harmonious sanctuary."



SIX OF THE BEST VANITIES (*from left*)

White Tulip vanity unit by Philippe Starck, £3,533, Duravit

Double Crake vanity with an Arabescato marble top, from £10,992, Drummonds

Riviera vanity unit with Riviera square basin in pink, £1,028, Burlington

Derwent floor-standing basin unit 800 in Under The Wave, £2,350; Rio basin, £350, both Fired Earth

Clyde single metal vanity, £6,198, Porter

Rowan curved double vanity unit, £7,551.76, CP Hart

Tiles

RIGHT *Wall & Decò Wetsystem waterproof wallpaper in Domestic Cathedral, £240 a square metre, West One Bathrooms*
BELOW LEFT *Carrara White Jenga marble mosaics, £125.13 a square metre; Jerusalem porcelain tiles in Silver, £62.67 a square metre; Kyoto bath, £2,600; Empire bath and shower mixer, from £2,500; all Fired Earth*
BELOW RIGHT *Riad Green and Riad Sea Green Gloss porcelain tiles, laid in a herringbone pattern, £73.60 a square metre, Mandarin Stone*

The options for covering walls and floors in a bathroom have greatly increased recently, and include marble tiles and slabs, stone mosaics, ceramic tiles, waterproof wallpaper, paint, concrete, timber and terrazzo. "Normally, the decision of what material to use is dictated by the style of design you are trying to achieve," says Kaitlin Reading, showroom manager at West One Bathrooms. "For example, if we are looking to create a classic and refined style, we turn to marble and stone mosaics to emulate that luxurious, spa-like feeling. If the client desires a zen-like space for calming the mind, we pull together timber, concrete and muted tones. Or for that really adventurous client, focused on making a statement and having some fun, this is the opportunity to pull in the wallpaper, often creating a mural and pairing it with modern terrazzo or coloured ceramic tiles."

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

On wallpaper

"It is now possible to use waterproof wallpaper to create bespoke murals in the bathroom. Very versatile, they can tell a story, make a statement, link to a master bedroom or even increase the feeling of space with *trompe l'oeil* designs."
Kaitlin Reading, showroom manager, West One Bathrooms

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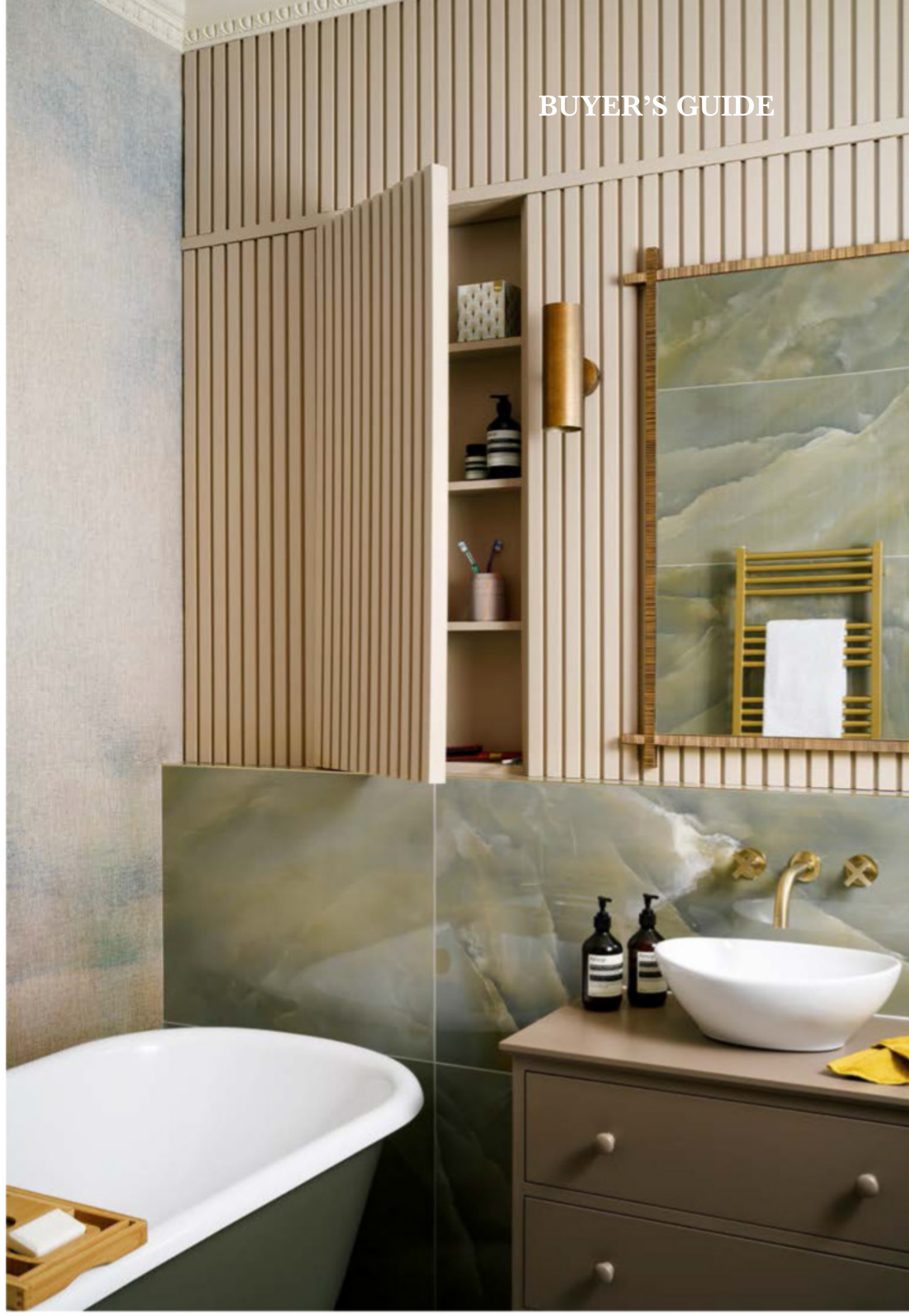
Storage

It can be surprising how much storage is required in a bathroom, particularly in a townhouse or city apartment that does not have the benefit of separate linen closets and utility rooms. As always with storage, it is essential to start by assessing how much there is to store and whether it can be displayed or should be concealed. The tiniest details, such as hidden toothbrush-charger sockets or drawer dividers, should all be considered.

If there is little or no room to create beautiful displays (more often the case in a main bathroom that is used every day than a guest bathroom), include vital design elements in the form of materials and finishes, says Michelle Katz, managing director of Q Design House. "Utilise as much space as possible," she urges. "For example, slim niches in shower areas can be incorporated into stud walls to provide functional shelving for bathroom products. Boxing is usually required to run pipework, and careful design can mean that niches are added without compromising space. We often choose a feature tile at the back of the niches to give them more detail. Similarly, if you are installing a WC with a concealed cistern, run the boxing that houses the cistern all the way to the ceiling and build a slim cupboard above the WC. This provides ideal storage for loo rolls and bathroom products."



RIGHT Concealed cupboards with push-release mechanisms work wonders in this room by Jeffreys Interiors.

BELOW RIGHT The Edinburgh double washstand from Neptune (£3,165) includes storage.

BOTTOM RIGHT This bathroom by Q Design House includes cupboards, drawers and a glass-fronted cupboard for displays.

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

On storage

"Select vanity units with storage rather than free-standing basins, remembering that the upper section of the vanity will mostly be taken up by plumbing for the basins. Under-mounted basins will take up more storage inside the vanity unit than a deck-mounted basin. Vanities with drawers are often more practical, but they do not provide as much storage as cupboards, because drawers need to have cut-outs for the pipe work."

Michelle Katz, managing director, Q Design House

Dark

Nothing creates drama quite like the liberal use of deep, dark colours, which is eminently possible in a bathroom, a space in which not necessarily a great deal of time is spent and, therefore, is an ideal environment to try something bold and exciting. There are no half measures for this look; it requires confidence and commitment to co-ordinating shades of paint, tiles, fittings and more – but the results can be simply gorgeous. Black is the ultimate expression of "going to the dark side", but charcoal grey, dark brown, navy and deep green all work equally well and can be combined in either modern or traditional style for a look that is at once classically elegant and full of panache. ■

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

On depth of colour

"Colour in the 21st century represents the ultimate in daring and imagination. If you want a space that's surprising and dynamic, an infusion of, or even an immersion in, colour invariably delivers, giving your bathroom a new level of energy and an unprecedented 'ta-da' effect."

Barbara Sallick, co-founder, Waterworks and author of The Ultimate Bath Book, Rizzoli

ABOVE LEFT A tucked-away bath feels like it is in its own small room, complete with wall lights, artworks and shelves of books. Room by Sabbe Interior Design and featured in *The Ultimate Bath Book* by Barbara Sallick of Waterworks.

ABOVE *Grand Bateau bath in Navy; Le Thermo exposed shower, both Catchpole & Rye*

RIGHT *Urban copper mirror, £219, Industville*

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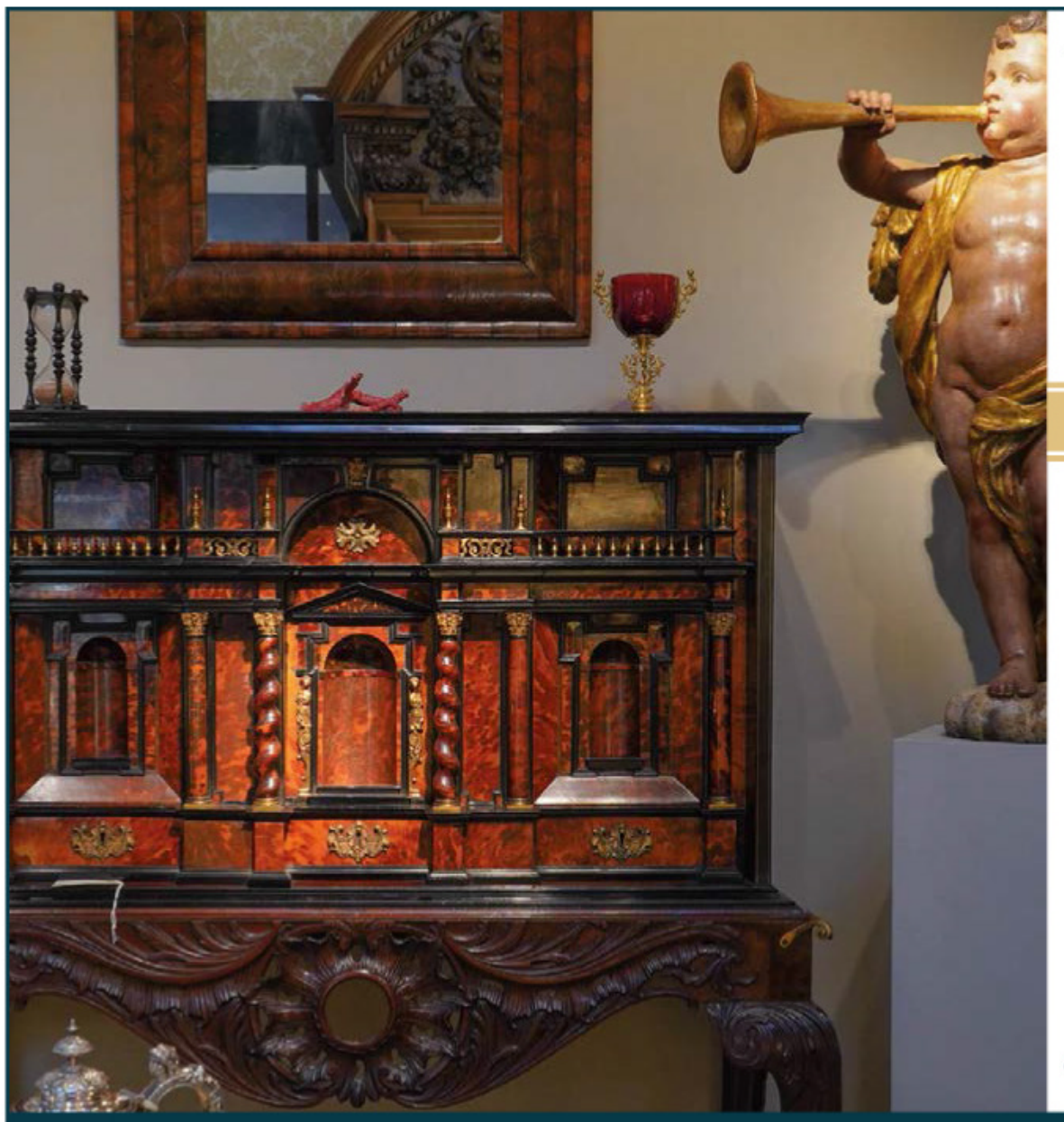

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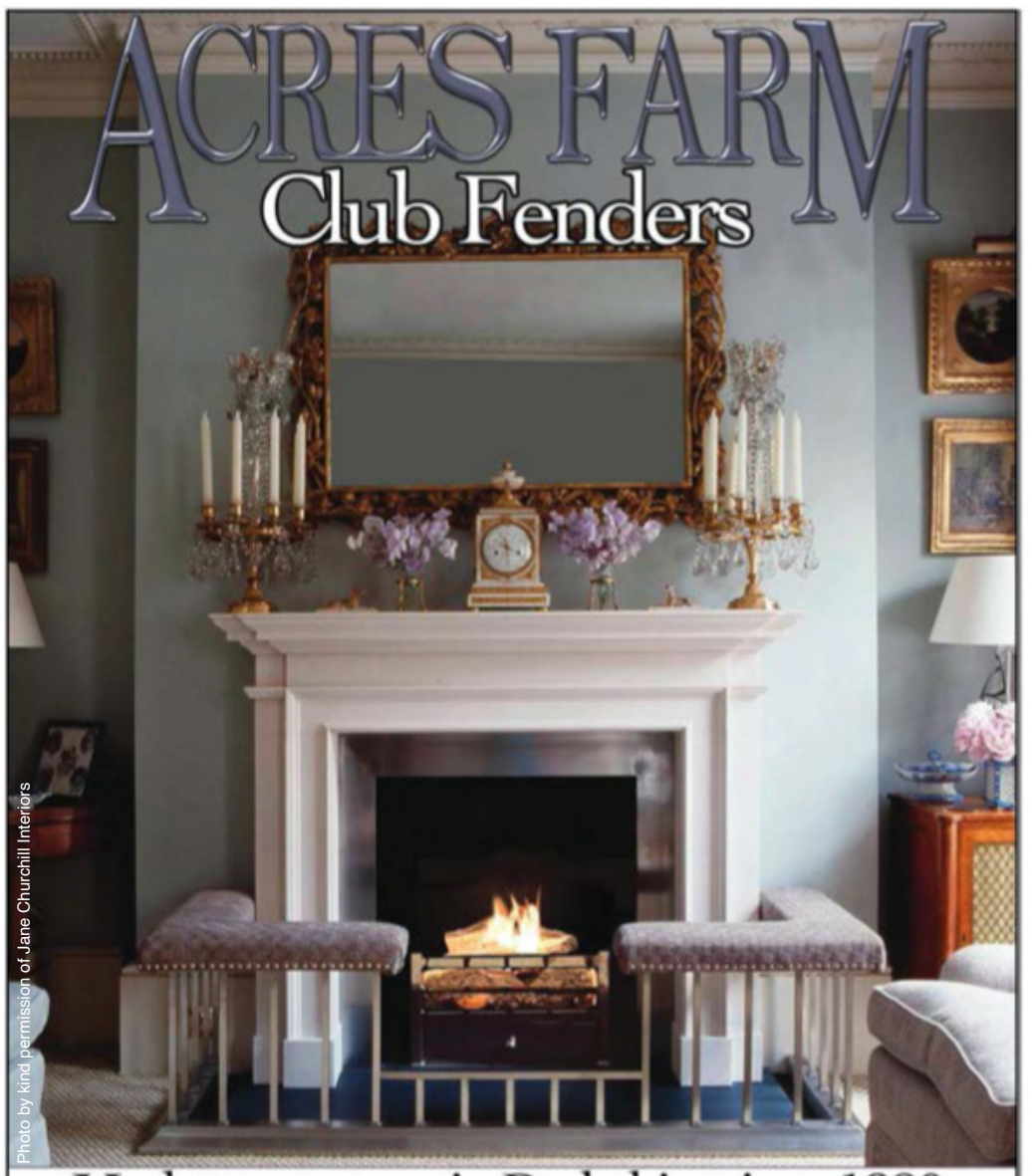

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QUINTESSENTIALLY

Inspiration for seasonal pastimes and making the most of life at home starts here

UNDER THE CANOPY

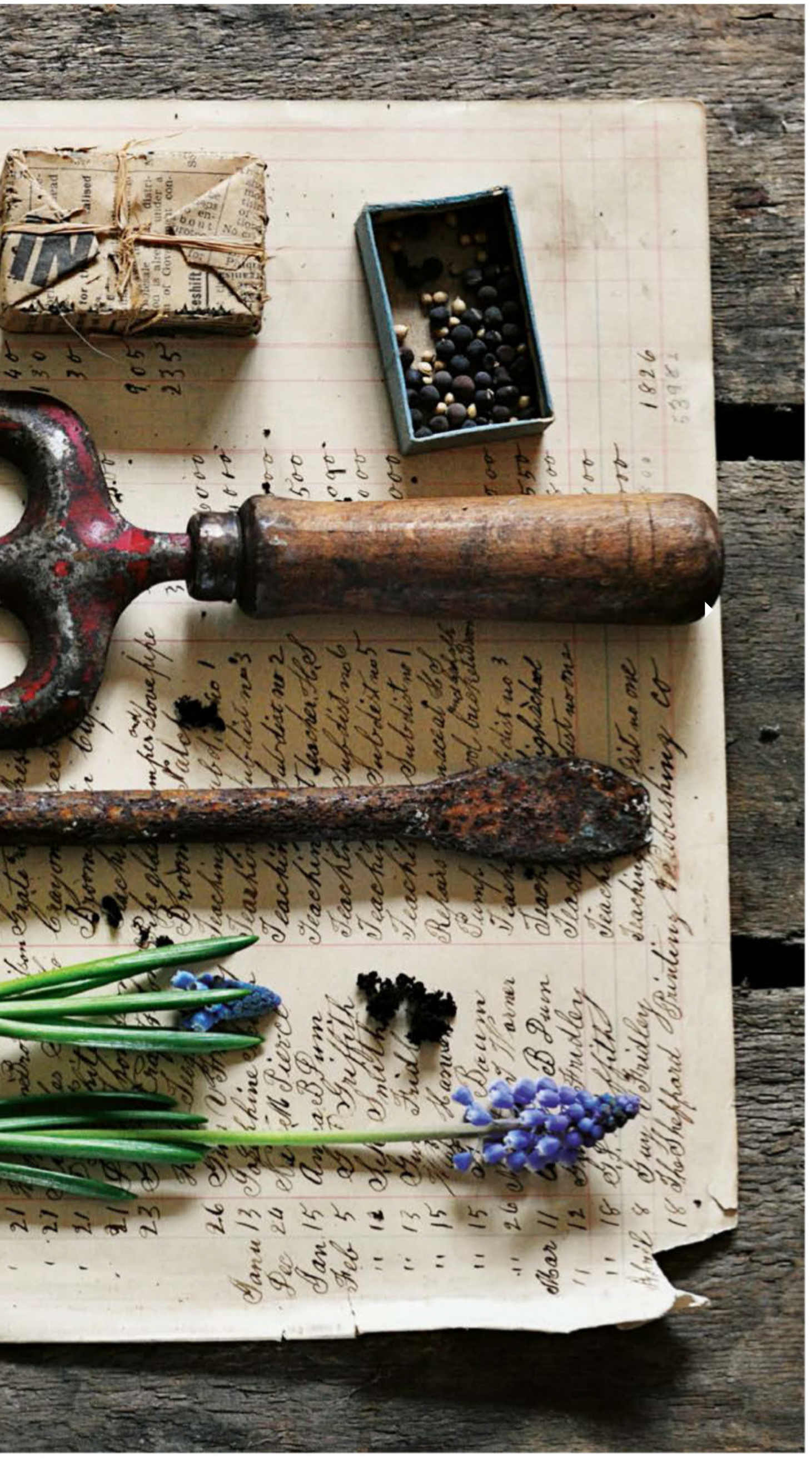
This is a timely month for a stroll amongst the trees. "With a variety of scarlet, orange and gold colour in the landscape, combined with a bounty of fruits, hips and berries, we see a natural display like no other in autumn and November," describes Rosie Anderson, dendrologist at Westonbirt, The National Arboretum. Exactly when leaves turn varies each year, says Anderson, but, "Generally, we do find that beech, Norway maple and larch are still showing leaf colour in November."

Westonbirt, The National Arboretum, open daily, *forestryengland.uk/westonbirt*

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPHY © ALAN CONNOR

What to do in NOVEMBER

Embrace seasonal pleasures with food, flower, craft and decorating ideas to indulge in and update the home with



GROW…
spring bulbs

Now is a good time to revisit the potting shed and sort out the last of the autumn jobs. Clean pots with a hard-bristled brush and get ready to refill with fresh compost for planting spring bulbs to ensure a wonderful rush of floral colour early next year.

This is also an opportunity to pot up forced bulbs for Christmas flowering. Favourites such as crocus, narcissus and grape hyacinth can all be planted in individual pots and brought inside to decorate mantelpieces or shelves. Select a pot at least twice as deep as the bulb, ensuring the tip of the bulb is peeping out of the soil – a layer of moss will add a nice finishing touch.

Hyacinths, tulips and daffodils make a dramatic statement outdoors in planters, so plant up now, ready to move to add a floral note to steps, entrances and window sills later on. Use the time, too, to tidy the potting shed, clean all the tools, and dry out any seeds from late-flowering summer plants on newspaper before storing them in paper envelopes ready for sowing next year.

Vintage gardening tools from a selection, Home Barn Shop

EAT… *mushrooms*

Make the most of all types of edible mushrooms and celebrate their deep earthy taste in risottos, pasta, pies or sauteed with garlic and piled high on slices of toasted brioche. Rally round friends for a rustic supper and enjoy the best of what autumn has to offer. Forage for easily identifiable field mushrooms, wood mushrooms, ceps and chanterelles, and if in doubt, check online or in a foraging handbook.

The chefs at Daylesford Organic recommend foraged mushroom linguine served with brown butter and thyme (*opposite*).

Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

300g linguine or spaghetti
100g butter
3 cloves of garlic, finely sliced
4 sprigs of thyme, plus extra to garnish
200g foraged mushrooms such as chanterelle, ceps or puffballs (never eat any wild mushroom unless 100 per cent sure of what it is and that it is edible).
Juice of ½ a lemon
Sea salt and black pepper

METHOD

- Bring a pan of salted water to the boil and add the linguine. Cook the pasta in a pan with a little salt for 6-8 minutes or until al dente.
- Whilst the pasta is cooking, place a large frying pan over a high heat. Add the butter, garlic and thyme sprigs and fry for a minute or so until the butter has turned slightly golden and is foaming.
- Add the mushrooms to the pan and sauté for 2-3 minutes until they are evenly coated in the butter and just tender. Remove the stalks of thyme, add the lemon juice and a generous sprinkling of seasoning and toss together.
- Drain the pasta and return to the pan, tossing through a generous glug of olive oil. Tip the mushroom and brown butter mixture into the pasta and toss together really well to evenly combine all of the ingredients.
- Taste to check the seasoning and serve with Daylesford Organic's freshly grated Single Gloucester cheese or parmesan and a sprinkling of chopped parsley.

UPDATE… *a kitchen with a simple fabric curtain*

A length of linen or ticking cotton can be transformed into a curtain and fixed to sections of open shelving to hide appliances and kitchen clutter. Stripes work well, adding a dash of utilitarian functionality as well as orderly pattern. Measure the area to be covered with the curtain, allowing a little extra for gentle gathering. Hem the bottom and turn over the top leaving a channel for a length of curtain wire to be threaded through. Use hooks and eyes to attach the curtain to each end of the wall, or the underside of the worktop. Fabrics in rich terracotta tones, russet, forest green and earthy neutrals will add authentic charm and character and create a space perfect for enjoying rustic comforting suppers on an autumn evening. ▸

Curtain, Sackville Stripe Linen/Cotton, Russet, £49.50 a metre; tea towel, Ticking Stripe Linen/Cotton, Monarch Blue, £49.50 a metre, both Ian Mankin 1485 Collection in association with The Landmark Trust

GATHER…
garden plants

Any delicate plants that might not be hardy enough to survive the winter frost can be stored in a greenhouse or under a large glass cloche, so gather them up, remove any dead leaves or wilting foliage and water them well.

Make the most of hardier plants such as heuchera, which boast a striking display of seasonal colour from caramel and intense orange through to deep purple and say autumn in an instant. These can be brought into sharper focus as a filler in a window box or by the front door. Alternatively, bring them indoors to add rich autumnal colour and life in the seasonal gap between late summer's abundance of fresh flowers and the influx of festive Christmas foliage. Source generous-sized bowls and planters in warm yellow, gold and bronze tones to showcase the colourful foliage against darkly painted walls.

Chawton dresser, from £2,790; Bayswater bowl in Saffron, £75; Heddon candlestick, £45; Mayfair martini glasses, £30 for a set of two; Ashcroft jug, £70; Constable Green emulsion, £48 for 2.5l, all Neptune

MAKE… *a gallery wall*

Add interest to a hallway or bare section of a corridor wall with a selection of framed prints and curios. Spend the long autumn evenings experimenting with art techniques and use paints, sketchbooks, pencils, and even collage to create personal art that can be hung alongside framed prints and unique pieces by contemporary artists.

Keep an eye out for affordable art and craft fairs in the run-up to Christmas, where interesting pieces can be purchased directly from the makers. Use frames in different materials, finishes, colours and sizes to create a gallery wall full of visual interest. ■

Original Lobster watercolour, £430; Original Wine Bottle watercolours, £240 each, all by Hamish Alexander £430, from a selection, ND On The Green

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Beauty In Utility

Originally the preserve of the English country house, laundry rooms, flower rooms, boot rooms and utility rooms have become desirable, practical spaces for city, town and country homes of all sizes today, as interior designer Emma Sims-Hilditch illustrates

A LAKESIDE HOUSE IN SURREY
Woven storage baskets bring a rustic feel to this boot room, fitted with a bench seat for putting on and removing boots and shoes.

A CONVERTED BARN IN WILTSHIRE

Even narrow spaces lend themselves to use as utility rooms. Here, brickwork paving and simple panelling add a pleasing, rustic feel to a laundry area.

A VICTORIAN TERRACE HOUSE IN PARSONS GREEN

In this utility room, patterned floor tiles add a splash of colour to the otherwise neutral scheme. In smaller rooms, the addition of a mirror will always enhance the feeling of space.

Practical spaces are key to any beautiful house. A pantry in the kitchen or a cupboard in the hall allows the spaces they serve to be unburdened of things that might be used only occasionally. Or it could be a fully functioning boot room, flower room, or laundry room that plays a supporting role to other parts of the house. However practical these spaces might be, I am a firm believer that they can be calm, attractive areas where everything has a place and activities such as sorting, washing, ironing, or caring for pets become a pleasure rather than a chore. Depending on the layout of a house—or the needs of a client—we tend to distribute all these types of functions across different spaces. Some might choose to have a laundry room upstairs close to the bedrooms; others will prefer to combine it with a utility room near the kitchen.

In a laundry room, a drying rack suspended from the ceiling, ideally over a table for folding, is a great addition. It also makes sense to utilise all the available space by installing tall cabinets, one of which can accommodate a dryer on top of a washing machine if necessary. Storage that is out of reach can easily be accessed by steps or a ladder. Custom solutions dedicated to specific items, such as laundry baskets or cleaning equipment, are a huge advantage.

If there is sufficient space, a dedicated boot room could have bespoke storage for shoes, coats, and sports equipment, with receptacles for items that need cleaning. The earlier in the process that you plan storage, the more opportunities you'll have to create spaces for specific items. A locker or shelf and hook for each member of the family makes storing and finding things easier. A mix of open storage (for footwear) and cupboards (for equipment and tools) offers the best of both worlds. Wicker baskets are another practical and aesthetic option.

In laundry areas and boot rooms, a deep sink is the ideal option for soaking and scrubbing. Choose natural surfaces for floors; they look great and are more functional, and materials such as stone and brick combine well with underfloor heating. An eggshell paint is the best for walls because it is by far the easiest finish to keep clean. Alternatively, panelling can be a smart decision, particularly in a boot room where dirt is inevitable.

A LAKESIDE HOUSE IN SURREY

This upstairs laundry room is situated close to family bedrooms, providing a convenient place for drying and ironing clothes away from high-traffic areas downstairs.

A FORMER SCHOOLHOUSE IN OXFORDSHIRE

A utility space with pale grey cabinetry, large subway tiles, and panelling to the ceiling has a crisp, contemporary feel.

OPPOSITE If there is not space for a dedicated boot room, a bench beneath a row of coat hooks near a back door keeps outdoor clothing in one place.

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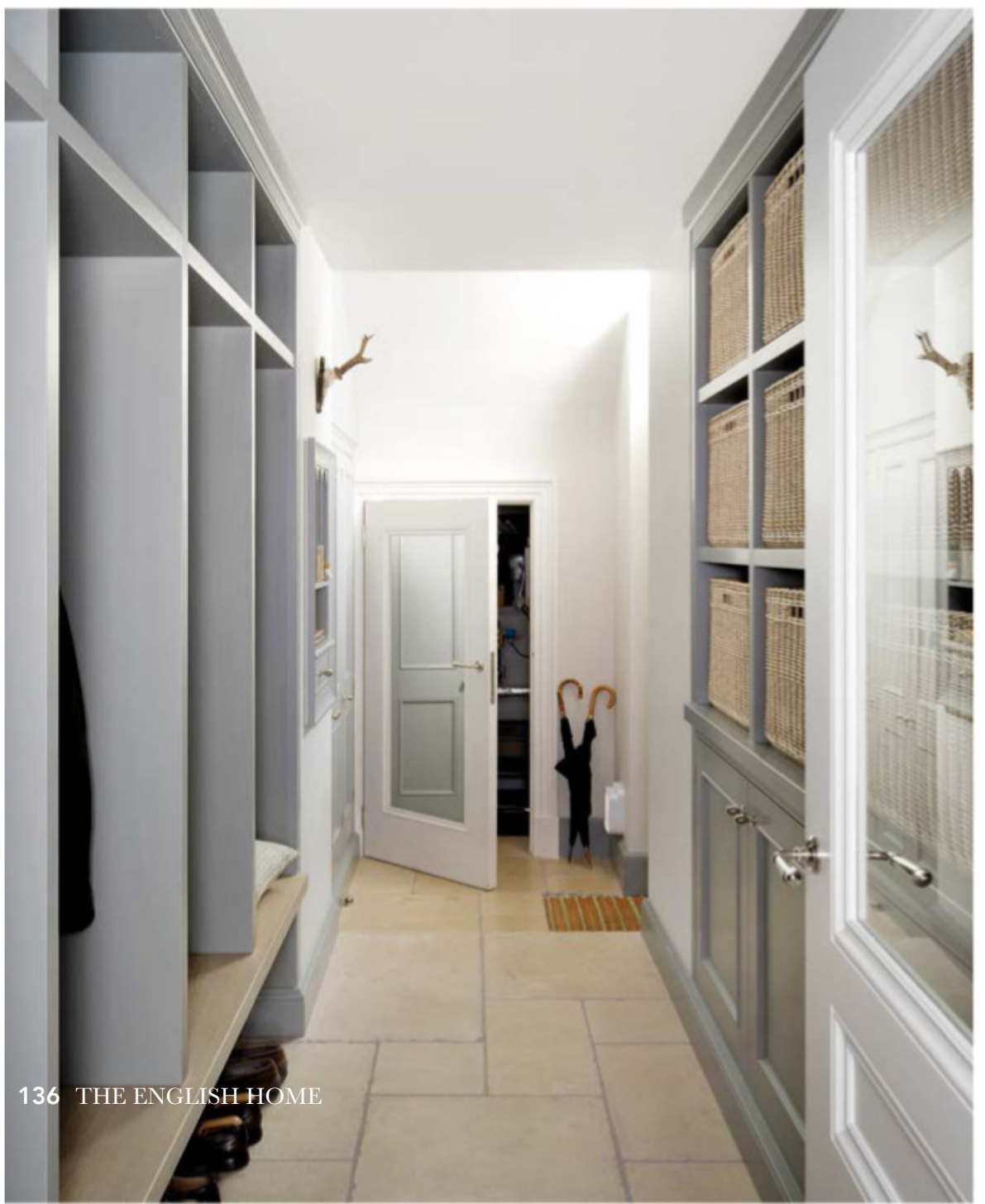
A SEASIDE COTTAGE IN CORNWALL

This small, glass-panelled extension, which leads to the garden, not only makes the most of the garden views but also provides storage space in the recesses on both sides of the door.

A CONTEMPORARY TOWN HOUSE IN KNIGHTSBRIDGE

RIGHT A utility room provides space for doing laundry and preparing flowers.
BELOW The basement entrance of this townhouse leads to a hall area that has been fitted with storage for outdoor clothing and an easily maintained limestone floor. A mirror panel has been fitted to the back of the door. ■



READER OFFER

The Evolution of Home by Emma Sims-Hilditch and Giles Kime is published by Rizzoli, priced at £40. *The English Home* readers can buy copies at a special price of £35 including P&P (UK readers only) by calling 01235 465577 and quoting the code EOH1.

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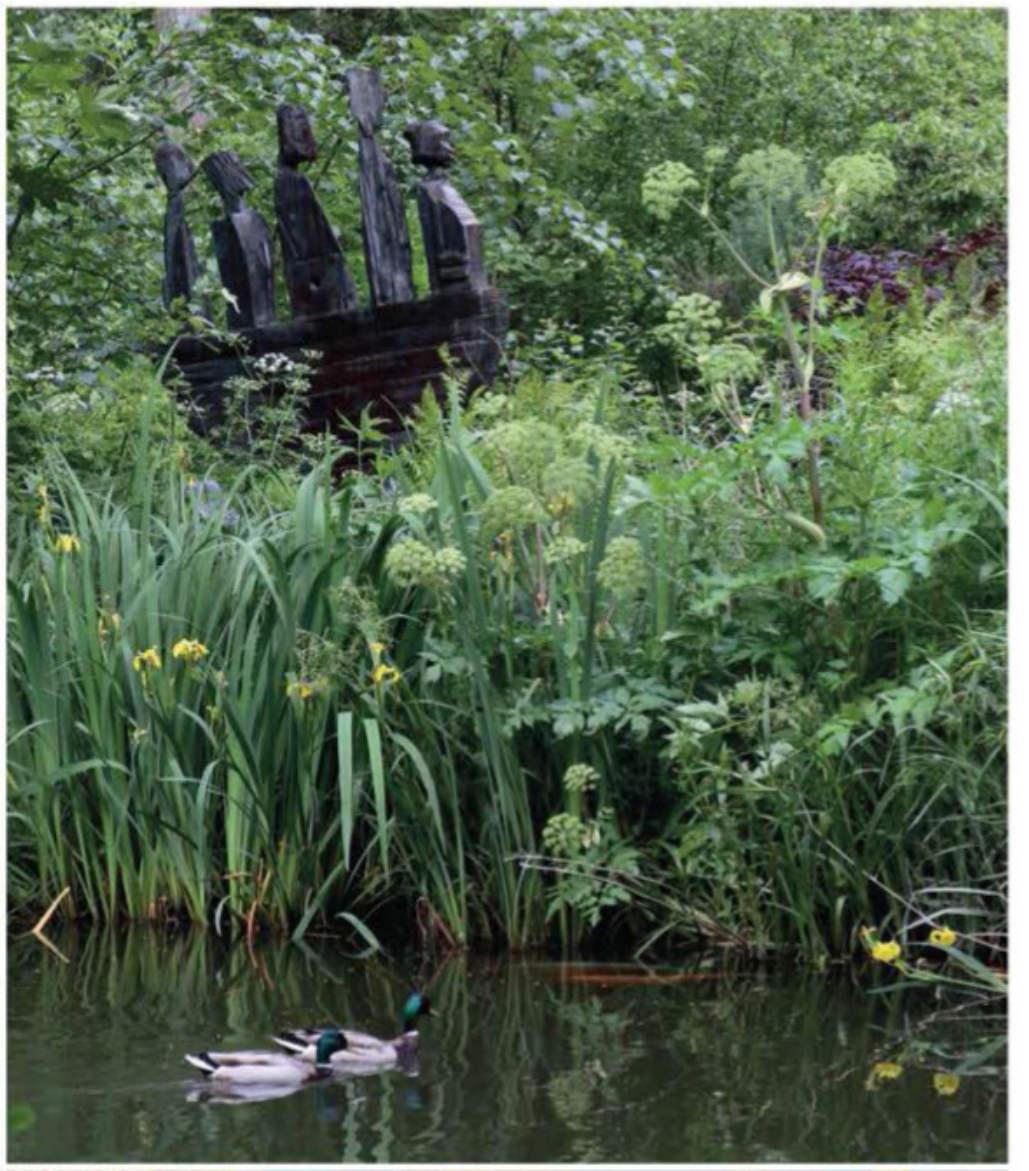

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Nature's ENCORE

Orchestrate a spectacular finale to a year in the garden with vibrant foliage, showy blooms and spectacular hips and berries

Embrace the fleeting beauty of autumn by planting a garden that bursts with seasonal colour. Abundant with fiery foliage and bathed in soft golden light, the English garden can be every bit as spectacular at the tail end of the year as its spring and summer zenith. With thoughtful and judicious planning, plus carefully selected plants, it is possible to extend the season of colour and interest all year round.

Seek inspiration from leading garden designers, specialist plant nurseries and their catalogues. Take time to visit some of England's glorious gardens and marvel at the fanfare of vibrant colours set alongside smaller, intense details such as seedheads, fruits and berries. All these elements can be introduced at home to inject colour and add interest, whether on a small scale – such as a single well-placed planter – or to revamp a garden border, patio or entire planting scheme.

Perhaps inspired by the pandemic and more time spent at home, there is now more awareness of how our immediate surroundings, views from windows and connections with nature impact our health and well-being. Impactful year-round planting utilising the power of colour celebrates seasonal changes and creates inspiring and inviting outside spaces, and has never been a higher priority for garden designers and homeowners alike.

SEEKING INSPIRATION

With heavy dew giving way to biting frost, and warm, mellow sunshine fading to a pale and fragile light, autumn is most definitely a time of change. While many homeowners can be forgiven for wanting to retreat inside and hibernate, with just a little thought and a few choice additions, every garden can provide a vibrant and uplifting end-of-year display.

LEFT Seek inspiration from the brilliant autumn display and National Collection of spectacular Nyssa trees at Exbury Gardens, The New Forest, Hampshire.

"November can be a damp and dreary month so it's important to consider adding some vibrant colour to lift the spirits," says Barry Grain, head gardener at Cholmondeley Castle Gardens in Cheshire. "Trees and shrubs should be planted strategically for best impact and to make the most of their form. Japanese maples intensify as autumn progresses, add dramatic structure in November and are perfect for the smaller garden. Liquidambar, *Euonymus alatus*, and *Acer rubrum* 'Brandywine' are some of my other top picks for terrific late colour."

MINDFUL PLANTING

Whether there is a single vista, border or area of the garden that needs injecting with autumn colour and interest, there are a few key pointers that experts are keen to share. "To make the best of any autumn colour in your garden, have a look around and work out which areas catch the sun at that time of the year," says Neil Cook, head gardener at Hanbury Hall in Worcestershire. "These are the areas to concentrate any planting for autumn colour, as when the sun hits the plant or flower, the colours will sing out for you even better."

Taking a close look at existing planting is a useful starting point. Award-winning garden designer Juliet Sargeant emphasises that as well as colourful trees, shrubs and evergreens can also contribute to a vivid autumnal look. "Some evergreen, silver-leaved and red-leaved shrubs are great for enhancing the vibrant colours of plants that that take on autumn tints," she says. "*Cotinus* 'Grace' changes to warm colours, and *Cotinus* 'Lila' is a dwarf smoke bush with constant purple leaves, great for low hedging. The silver of olive leaves, or the small eucalyptus France Bleu, adds a light, airy contrast to intense reds and oranges."

LATE-SEASON HEROES

Borders that feature carefully crafted layers of contrasting trees and shrubs look magical in autumn. One standout example can be seen at Green Island Gardens in Essex, owned and created by Fiona Edmond. "Liquidambars, *Sorbus*

ABOVE Bring a dash of scarlet to a planter or border, with a Rugosa shrub rose. *Rosa Schneezwerg, from £19.95, Peter Beales Roses*

TOP Fiona Edmond has filled the borders at Green Island Gardens, Essex with rich colour, drama and impact. *Acer japonica* 'Aconitifolium' and Black Gum Tree (*Nyssa sylvatica*) prolong the show into early December.

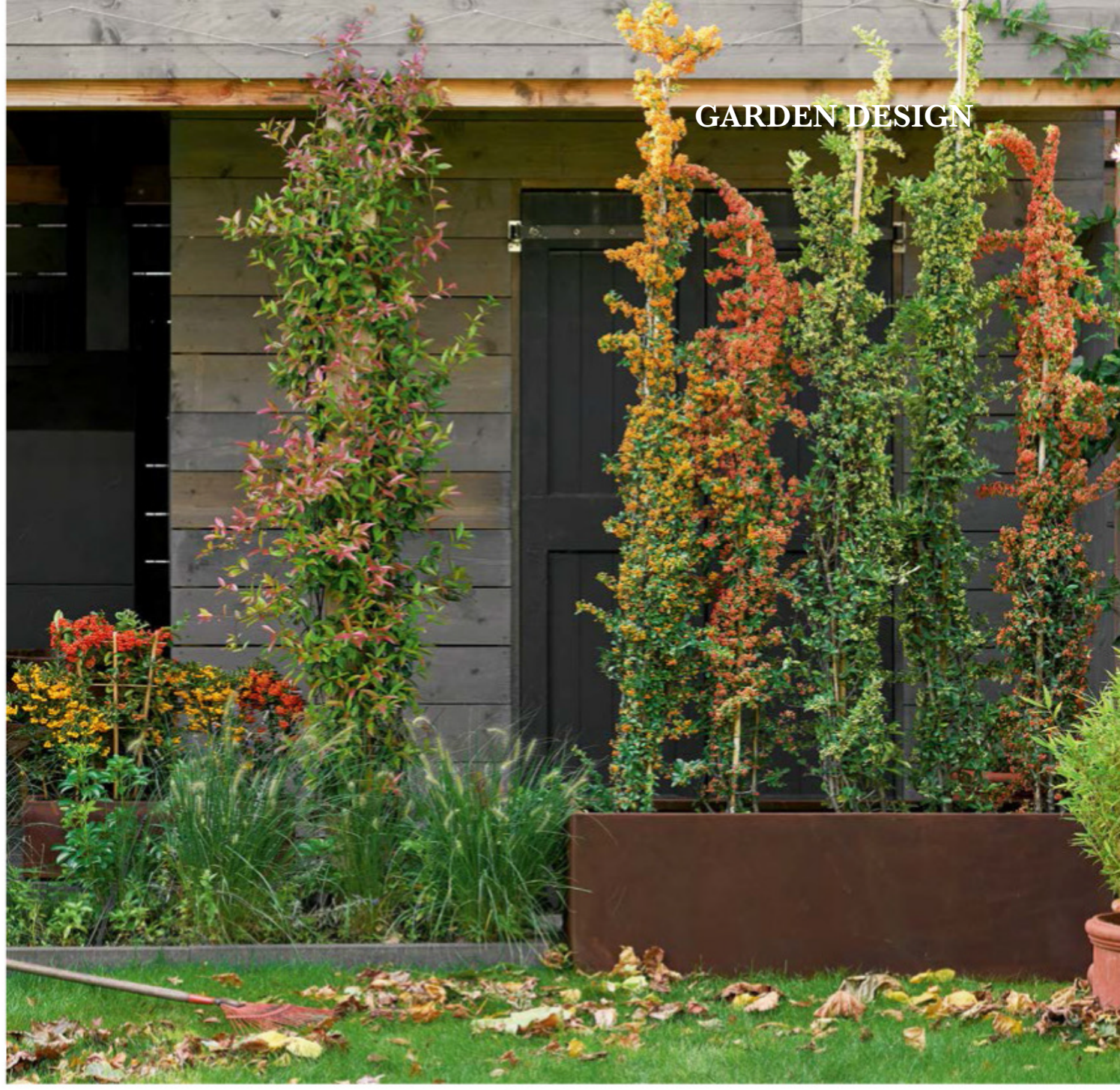
RIGHT A majestic sight, reaching 12 metres plus, the Candy Floss Tree (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum* or katsura tree) dazzles with pink and yellow autumn colour and an enticing burnt toffee scent. *Katsura Tree, £384, Barcham Trees*

TOP A secluded Japanese-inspired patio is clothed in unusual climbers that provide spectacular late-season colour. These include Japanese hydrangea vine, Cross vine and Chocolate vine.

ABOVE Edge paths, fill planters or grow Chinese lantern seedheads to cut and display indoors. The bright orange paper-like lanterns slowly fade to pale skeletons adding tactile interest well into winter. *Chinese lantern plant, from £15.49, Thompson & Morgan*

LEFT These 2.5m-tall steel obelisks with their rust finish add sculptural form to a foliage border. *12mm Clematis & Rose obelisk tall, from £355, Muntons Traditional Plant Supports*

The 200 acres of landscaped woodland, herbaceous, contemporary, formal and wildflower gardens at Exbury Gardens in Hampshire's New Forest provide an ever-changing palette of colour and put on a dazzling display in late autumn.



sargentiana and *Cotinus* 'Grace', along with acers *palmatum* and *rubrum* keep the show going right through November, with liquidambars and *Cotinus* 'Grace' lasting well into December," she says. "*Nyssa sylvatica* is one of my favourite trees, with its fiery orange and red November leaf colour. It is the focal point down the main vista."

Nyssa trees also provide a stunning show at Exbury Gardens in Hampshire, whose head gardener Thomas Clarke says: "We are the national collection holders, with names like 'Wisley Bonfire' and 'Jermyn's Flame' giving more than a clue to their glorious colour."

Climbers continue to provide impact during cooler months. "Although relatively understated throughout the year, the Crimson Glory Vine (*vitis coignetiae*) can steal the show in autumn," says Sam Shipman, head gardener at Beningbrough Hall Gallery & Gardens in York. "Grow over a gate, fence or wall – and along with striking colour, you can frame the view. It's a low-maintenance climber that can tolerate partial shade."

Another star contender is Virginia Creeper. "A spectacular climbing plant and it requires no support," says Peter Freeman, buyer and product development manager at Suttons. "Its dark green foliage explodes into vivid shades of red, orange and yellow in autumn."

SPECTACULAR BLOOMS

"If it's flowers you're after in November, then autumn-flowering camellias are the best," says Edmond. "Evergreen, more tolerant of less acidic soils than their spring flowering relatives, they flower over a period of months and even produce scented, frost-proof blooms. They are, in my opinion, far superior to the blowsy spring flowering *Camellia japonica*. My two favourites would be *Camellia sasanqua* 'Hugh Evans', which is covered in single pink flowers from late September to December, and *Camellia* 'Crimson King', which has masses of single red flowers with prominent yellow stamens from November to February."

Other long-flowering performers can be seen at RHS Garden Hyde Hall in Essex and are favourites of curator Robert Brett. "For many plants, autumn is their one last show before heading into winter dormancy. So why not end the year with a bang. *Symphyotrichum* 'Little Carlow,'

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Impressive in a pot or border, this deep claret acer grows to 1.5m high and has a compact, upright habit. *Acer palmatum 'Bloodgood', £9.99, Suttons*

Showcase pyracanthas jewel-like berries by planting several species together. Easy to grow, train them as a hedge, standard or climber.

Bring a touch of cheer to a dull corner or tabletop with a lively mix of violas and pansies. Boost with an occasional feed of liquid seaweed.

Add height and distinct lines with a decorative steel arch. *Metal garden arch with feather design, £399.99, Gardenesque*

ABOVE Shrubs are unsung autumn heroes. Plum red *Cotinus* 'Lila' and small eucalyptus France Bleu extend colour and interest deep into winter.
BELOW Marvel at the claret-speckled blooms of this evergreen clematis that last from November to February. *Clematis cirrhosa 'Freckles', £11.99, J Parkers*

with its violet-blue, yellow-centred daisy flowers, does just that, as does *Sedum* 'Herbstfreude' with its deep pink flower clusters that turn almost to a burnt hue. Red-hot poker (*Kniphofia rooperi*) with its upside-down 'tequila sunrise' flowers is a must."

BEAUTY IN THE DETAIL

Late-autumn interest in the garden does not lie solely in bold foliage and flowers, but also in more subtle shades, textures and details. "One of my big autumn things is seedheads in the border," says Grain. "Provided your perennials are not going to proliferate and give you problems next season, leave the heads on for interest and structure, they look great with frost on them too. Some of the best are displayed by *Phlomis russeliana*, *Iris foetidissima* and *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty'."

Ornamental grasses also play an important role. "We are lucky to have a fine collection of grasses here at Bates Green Garden in East Sussex," says head gardener Emma Reece. "They move beautifully in even the slightest breeze and there is such a variety of seedheads providing texture too. Autumn colour is not all about leaves. The stems of *Cornus* and *Salix* light up when the sun hits them at its lower autumn angle. Cultivars include the plum-coloured *Cornus alba* 'Kesselringii' and the multi-coloured *Cornus sanguinea* 'Midwinter Fire'." ■

Easy-to-grow varieties

Six of the best plants for spectacular colourful flowering in November

ASTER

In shades of pure white and lilac to deepest purple, pink and red, Michaelmas daisies are easy to grow. Loved by bees and pollinators, they need a sunny spot and well-drained soil. Available from RHS Plants.

PYRACANTHA

Clusters of shiny red-orange berries bring joy, colour and wildlife to the garden. Also known as firethorn, they have dense evergreen foliage and white blooms in spring. Available from Hedges Direct.

OPHIOPOGON PLANISCAPUS 'NIGRESCENS'

Ideal for a dramatic contrast, Black Mondo grass has a fountain of strappy leaves. Hardy, it prefers sun or semi-shade. Available from Thompson & Morgan.

ALSTROEMERIA

Flowering from June to November, these upright perennials grow to 60cm and make great cut flowers. *Alstroemeria* 'Summer Breeze' has deep green foliage. Available from Suttons.

NERINES

These long-lived flower bulbs put on a stunning show of bright pink flowers every autumn. Plant with the neck above ground, in full sun and leave undisturbed. Available from Crocus.

EDGEWORTHIA

For plants or borders, these scented and sculptural blooms in pale yellow, orange and rust red like full sun, well-draining soil and are hardy down to -5°C. Available from Hayloft.

FEATURE JILL MORGAN **PHOTOGRAPHS** P141 (TOP) GREEN ISLAND GARDENS/MARIANNE MAJERUS GARDEN IMAGES. P142 EXBURY GARDENS. P143 (TOP & BOTTOM RIGHT) & P144 (TOP LEFT & RIGHT) THE JOY OF PLANTS.CO.UK

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LEFT TO RIGHT Lulu Guinness at the folly she rents and loves for its view and unique shape (which inspired a recent handbag design); A popular collectable designed by Lulu is the embroidered Birdcage handbag, which sings when you press a secret button hidden in its base; The sitting room in the folly which shows Lulu's ever evolving display shelves and style.

My English Home

Quintessentially British designer Lulu Guiness OBE, lives in the Golden Valley in Gloucestershire. She currently rents a beautiful folly while renovating her new country home

Where do you live and why?
I have always been in love with the five valleys surrounding Stroud. Cath Kidston first brought me here and I've been coming for 25 years since. I love the creative community here, the open studios, the history of the cloth and wool trade.

Who do you live with?
My boyfriend of 18 years lives in the nearby town and visits me at the weekends. My grown up children visit too. It's perfect!

Tell us about your home?
I've just bought the west wing of a pretty house, a long property divided into three parts. It's Grade II listed and has an 18th-century front with an enormous L-shaped wing on the back which was a school in Victorian times and will eventually be the drawing room. In the garden there is a ruin of an orangery and next to it, the pumping station that served the orangery. It hasn't been altered for about 20 years.

What are your renovation plans?
My friends call it 'Lulu-fying' things! In fact it's going to be a big building job. There is only one bathroom and – amongst other structural things – I'm opening up the top floor to add bedrooms. It's just a quarter of a mile from the folly I've been renting and living in for three years, so I go there every day while designing it.

How will you decorate?
I love working with local designers and craftspeople. The Textile Wall Company is adding a Christopher Moore fabric (a toile de Jouy or chinoiserie) in the bedroom where I'll have my four-poster bed. I'm also working with Mel Campion on a shell fireplace, and have plans for a freestanding kitchen.

How is your approach to creating your living spaces linked to your work as a designer?
It's all one thing for me. I have no rules. I'm a creative and I don't stop, whether it's interiors or fashion. Whatever is in my mind goes on the shelves in the sitting room. As I'm renting and unable to hang things on the walls, I painted the shelves (originally from Oka) and use them to display objects, books and paintings. I try to keep it elegant but warm and busy.

Do you have specific collections?
I've bought antiques and vintage forever. It's always been my taste. I have a powder compact collection of around 200 pieces and I have collected old painted furniture for a long time. I also adore antique fabrics. I shop on Instagram and it's all antique.

What are your most treasured possessions?
My mother's dressing table. She was very glamorous and I remember her sitting at it, doing her make-up. Also, a pair of white-on-white decorative Oriel Harwood candlesticks that I wanted for ages and finally bought for myself five years ago.

Finally, what should no English home be without?
Warmth. My greatest luxury is a log fire, but warmth isn't just about heat; it's the visual feeling a home can give you too.
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FEATURE SAMANTHA SCOTT-JEFFRIES PHOTOGRAPHS © RACHAEL SMITH

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