

The

# ENGLISH HOME



*Celebrating the essence of English style*

January 2023 | Issue 215 | £4.99 | UK Edition

## CELEBRATE IN STYLE

Enchanting table settings & decorating inspiration

### New Year Honours

The finest fabrics, wallpaper, furniture, lighting and more...

### A Considered Christmas

Beautiful, natural & ecological ideas

# 50

ways to live more sustainably

## ALL IS CALM

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JANUARY 2023



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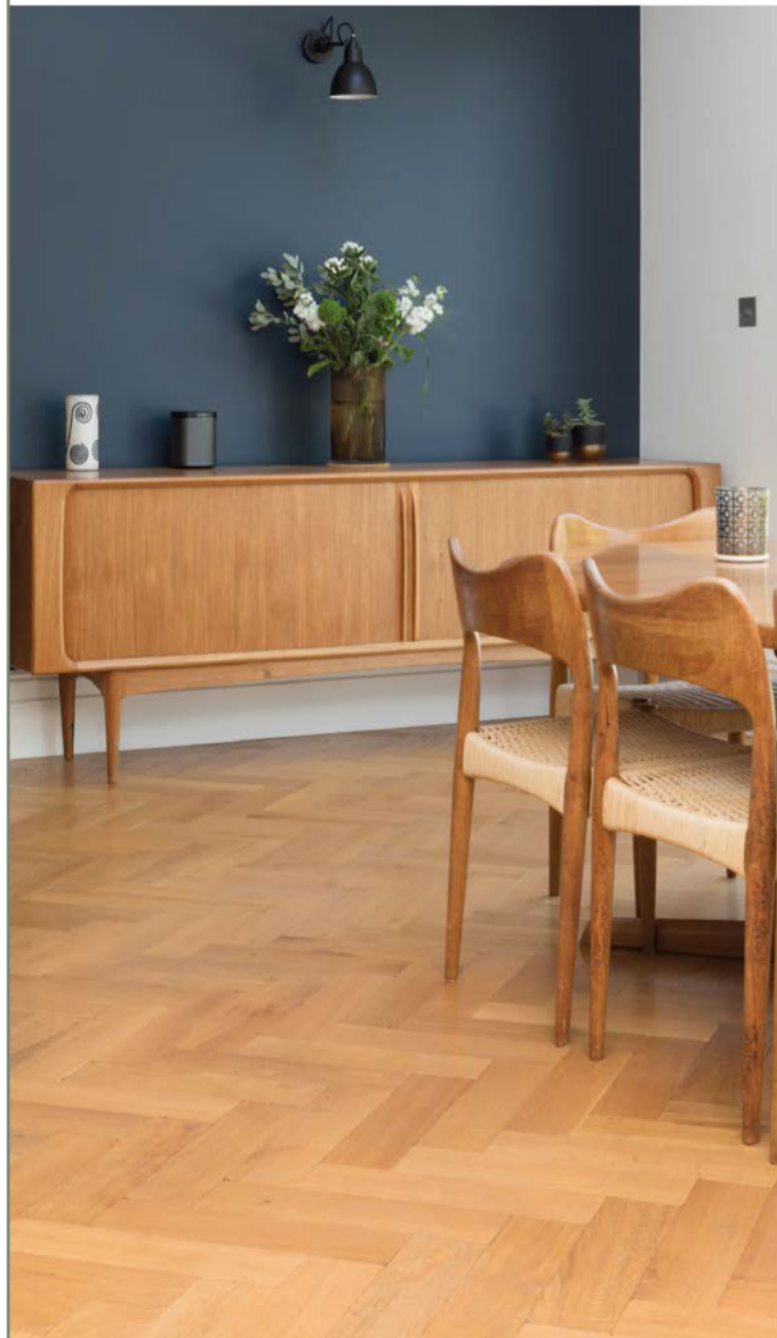
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Set the scene with charming festive touches such as these ceramic Christmas trees and tealight houses from Neptune. Turn to page 20 for more

## A letter from home



There is much to celebrate as we put this special edition of *The English Home* together for you. 2022 has been a year of immense creativity and innovation for the interiors industry, despite the challenges of world events, and we've been exploring the finest products, most exciting launches and noteworthy

designers of the past 12 months to mark these achievements with our New Year Honours Awards. We hope you enjoy our curation of standout pieces and make some new discoveries reading the results on page 81.

At the end of a busy year for all, we are also looking forward to preparing our homes to spend the festive season with our loved ones. In this issue, you'll find ideas and inspiration for the last-minute additions that make celebrations special and guests feel cared for. Like Lady Bamford (whose Cotswold home you can read about on page 130), we love setting a festive table and bring you ideas for creating tablescapes on page 96.

This year it also feels right to remember that not everything need be new, opulent or excessive at Christmas and New Year for it to feel special. In *A Considered Christmas* (page 74), we look at beautiful ways to decorate with natural and sustainable pieces that are often inexpensive and can be reused alongside other much-loved decorations. Plus we have expert insights on how to live more sustainably in 2023 (page 104).

However you'll be celebrating and planning ahead, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor

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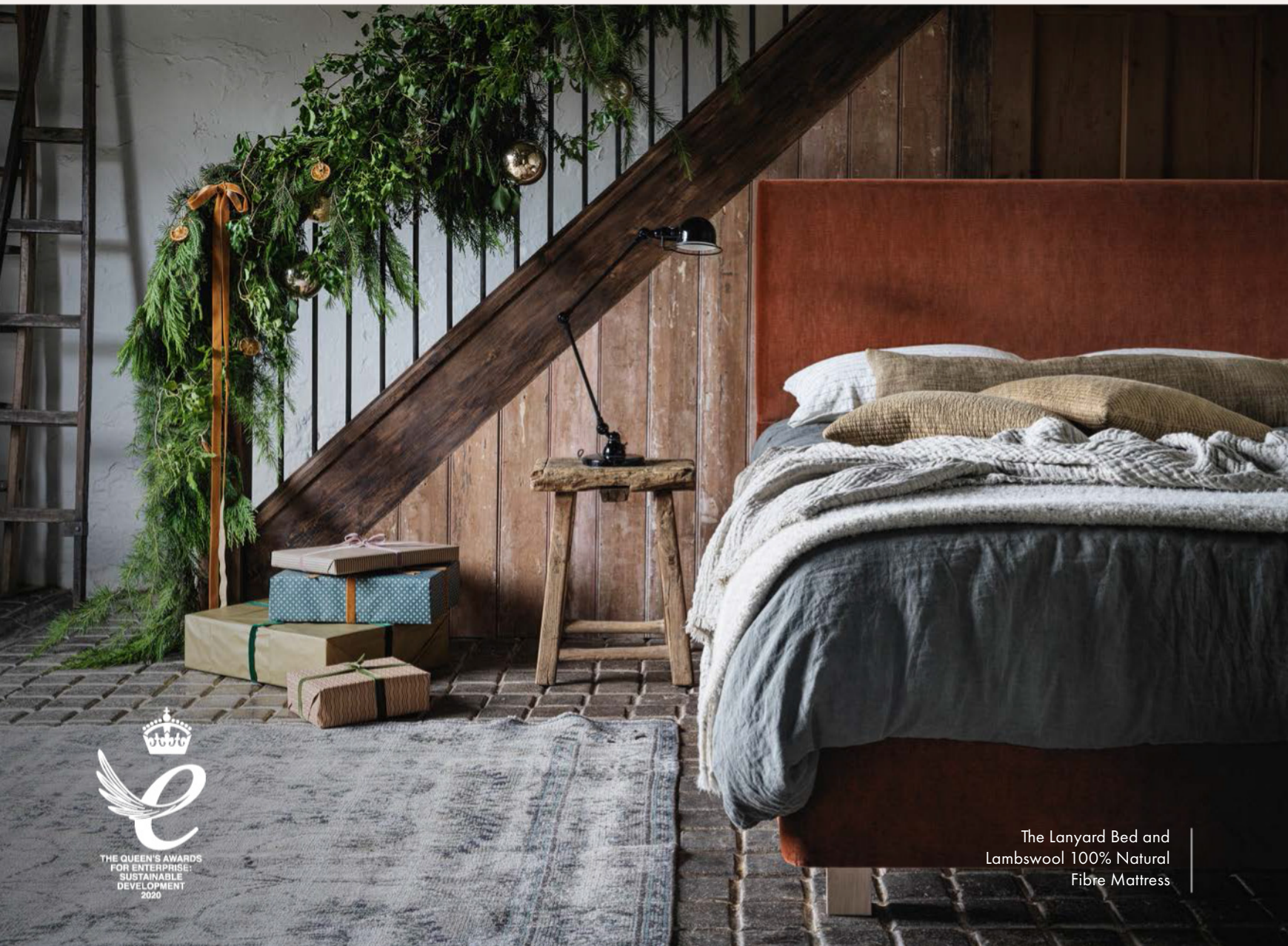
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# NOTEBOOK

Our monthly edit of news, shopping inspiration and inside information >



## SPOTLIGHT ON...

### *Toast To The Host*

With friends and family visiting over the festive season, a sleek bar cart makes a stylish statement while the host or hostess makes drinks for their guests. This brass beauty from Soho Home (pictured above)

was inspired by the vintage drinks trollies found in Soho House venues around the world, and perfectly showcases different beverages for guests to peruse.

Both beautiful and useful, it holds various shapes and sizes of elegant cut glasses, barware such as an ice bucket and cocktail shaker, and finishing touches like

citrus wedges, twists of orange peel, cinnamon sticks for mulled wine and olives for martinis. Whether serving cocktails or mocktails, champagne or sparkling water, the flexibility of a moving bar means it can be tucked away between guests and rolled out with a welcoming flourish when loved ones arrive. [sohohome.com](http://sohohome.com) >



## Capturing Character

*Portrait baubles painted by Katie Simpson*

Artist Katie Simpson painted a portrait of her friend's dog onto a bauble in 2017 after failing to find her the perfect Christmas gift. "She was bowled over by the uniqueness of it," says Katie, "and encouraged me to paint more for other people by listing it as a bespoke item in my Etsy shop. They quickly became popular and have been my bestseller every year since. The range has extended over the years to include baubles for everyone in the family, not just the pets!"

Cornwall-based Katie, who founded her own business, Winterhart, hand-paints personalised portraits of people and pets onto blank ceramic baubles made in Derbyshire. She sketches a design on paper before drawing it onto the bauble, hand-painting it and glazing the bauble before adding a gold cap and velvet ribbon. [winterhart.co.uk](http://winterhart.co.uk)



## Illuminating The Past

*Festive candle from Henry's Townhouse*

Henry's Townhouse in London's chic Marylebone is the former home of Jane Austen's favourite brother Henry (pictured left), luxuriously transformed into an exclusive place to stay. It also offers a range of scented candles, including the new Saturnalia candle – the fruit of a collaboration with a French perfumier to capture the perfect scent to embody the ancient Roman and Pagan festival of the same name. This was celebrated by decorating the home with winter greenery, which the Georgians continued as a nod to this ancient tradition, with swags of evergreen decorations woven with holly, ivy, mistletoe and rosemary adorned with spices and oranges. The candle has seasonal notes of warm vanilla, mellow cinnamon, sweet orange and a touch of fiery ginger. [henrystownhouse.co.uk](http://henrystownhouse.co.uk)



## Twinkling Adornments

*Decorations by designer-maker Jo Downs*

Jo Downs was all set to pursue a career in ceramics, but the first time she took a piece of fused glass out of a kiln, she instinctively knew she wanted to make it for the rest of her life. She is now recognised as one of the world's best fused-glass designer-makers, and has galleries across Cornwall and in Surrey.

Unlike glassblowing, which manipulates molten glass, fused glass (also known as kiln-formed glass) uses pieces of cold glass melted together in a kiln. Jo's advanced fusion techniques create abstract designs of great individuality and depth inspired by Cornwall's beautiful coastal landscape.

Known for her Shoaling Fish glass artworks, and for large corporate commissions, Jo has now produced a range of delightful hanging Christmas tree decorations. [jodowns.com](http://jodowns.com) ▶





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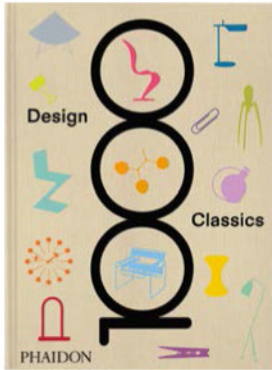


[timberwindows.com/eh](http://timberwindows.com/eh)

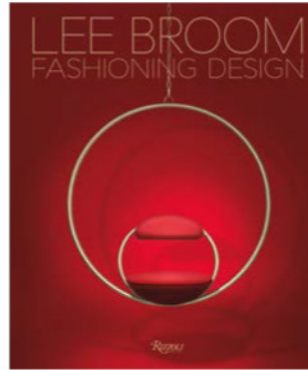


## Well Read: Divine Inspiration From Beautiful Interiors Books

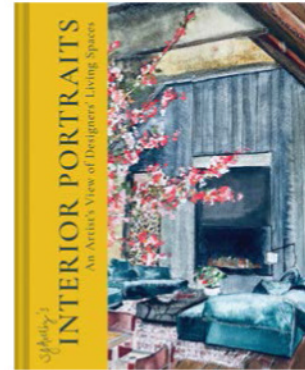
*Whether treating yourself or a loved one, here are six indulgent recent releases to delight every home-lover*



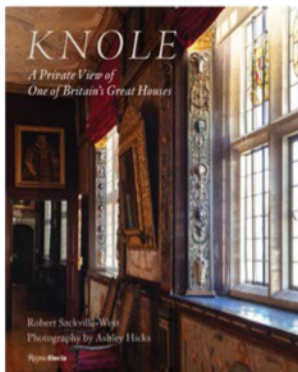
**1000 DESIGN CLASSICS**  
by Phaidon editors (£69.95, Phaidon)  
From tiny to giant, impressive to everyday, this book spotlights 1,000 of the most globally innovative and iconic products designed from 1663 to the present day, telling each one's origin story. From home design classics like the Windsor chair, Aga and Anglepoise lamp to clever and useful items such as the safety pin, key-opening can, clothes peg and vacuum cleaner to epic inventions like the hot air balloon, Spitfire aircraft and more, this book draws the reader in with intriguing insights.



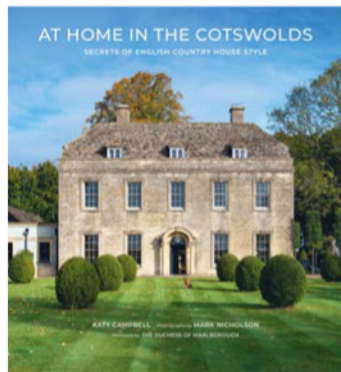
**FASHIONING DESIGN: LEE BROOM**  
by Becky Sunshine (£49.95, Rizzoli)  
Tipped for greatness on our *Notebook* pages back in 2016, Lee Broom is now a design star on both sides of the Atlantic. His furniture, lighting and home accessories are works of art, some held in permanent collections at cultural institutions in New York and London. This exquisite coffee-table book is a fascinating glimpse inside his mind, showing his sketches and creative process, with sumptuous photographs and glowing contributions by Dame Vivienne Westwood and Christian Louboutin.



**INTERIOR PORTRAITS: AN ARTIST'S VIEW OF DESIGNERS' LIVING SPACES**  
by SJ Axelby (£25, Pavilion)  
In an exclusive peek behind closed doors, artist SJ (Sarah-Jane) Axelby's watercolour paintings capture the colourful homes of 89 creatives, including top names like the late, great Robert Kime, Penny Morrison, Martin Brudnizki, Willow Crossley, Ben Pentreath, Rita Konig, Ashley Hicks and Cath Kidston-Padgham. Playful conversations with each homeowner offer design secrets, inspiration and tips.



**KNOLE: A PRIVATE VIEW OF ONE OF BRITAIN'S GREAT HOUSES** by Robert Sackville-West (£47.95, Rizzoli)  
Majestically standing within Kent's last medieval deer park, Knole was built as an archbishop's palace and passed through royalty to the Sackville family, who have lived there for over 400 years and still do today. Robert Sackville-West, the 13th generation, takes the reader on a personal tour, Ashley Hicks' photography beautifully capturing its resplendent state rooms.



**AT HOME IN THE COTSWOLDS: SECRETS OF ENGLISH COUNTRY HOUSE STYLE** by Katy Campbell (£45, Abrams)  
The idyllic villages and rolling hills of the Cotswolds feature some of England's most beautiful homes. This book takes us behind the gates and inside private homes, from a chocolate box cottage to an old rectory, a Georgian farmhouse, a stately home, a quintessential manor house and more. Marvel at their architectural beauty and revel in their enchanting stories.



**THE COLOURFUL PAST: EDWARD BULMER AND THE ENGLISH COUNTRY HOUSE** by Edward Bulmer (£40, Rizzoli)  
In his first book, Edward Bulmer takes us inside grand English homes including Althorp, Goodwood, Broughton Hall and his own Queen Anne manor, highlighting his interior design work. It is a masterclass in breathing new life into centuries-old houses, sensitively transforming them with comfort and style for contemporary living through a deep understanding of the past. ▶

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## A Royal Christmas

### Windsor Castle & Buckingham Palace

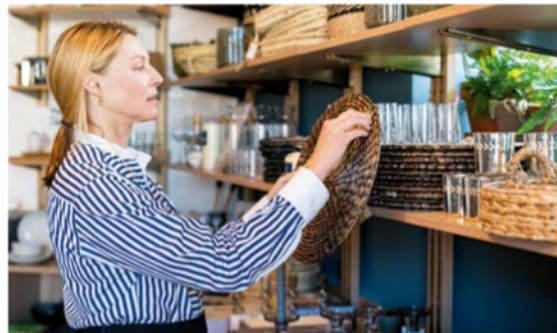
Shimmering Christmas trees, twinkling lights, festive foliage and garlands galore will greet visitors at His Majesty The King's official residences.

A magnificent 20ft Nordmann Fir is the glittering centrepiece of celebrations at Windsor Castle. Grown in nearby Windsor Great Park, and bedecked with hundreds of iridescent ornaments, it stands resplendent in St George's Hall (*above right*). Carols will be sung beneath this tree throughout the day on 8, 9 and 12 December by local choirs

Another spectacular tree is on display in the Crimson Drawing Room (*right*), one of the castle's most ornate rooms. Created as private apartments for George IV and used by the Royal Family for official entertaining, the Semi-State Rooms opened to visitors for winter from 24 November.

Beneath glittering chandeliers in The Waterloo Chamber is a display of decorative items from the Royal Collection, and on the first three weekends in December craft activities and workshops will explore how the Victorians celebrated Christmas.

At Buckingham Palace, visitors can enjoy a guided behind-the-ropes experience of the State Rooms on selected dates throughout winter. [rct.uk](http://rct.uk)



## A Feast of Local Fare

### Chic festive shopping at Chatsworth

Of the many reasons to visit Chatsworth House, the super-chic shopping on the estate cannot be missed, especially at Christmas. Exclusive products on sale are the fruits of collaborations between the treasure house and artisans across Derbyshire and the Peak District – and the biggest-ever collection for the winter season has just been launched.

Lady Burlington (*above left*) has been leading the way in sourcing for the Derbyshire estate, including a switch to more sustainable festive decorations made with recycled materials inspired by this year's Christmas decorating theme in the house.

Her ladyship says: "We have the opportunity to collaborate with businesses right here on our doorstep to develop new products inspired by the house and garden that have an authentic connection to Chatsworth. We are looking across our businesses and seeing where we can be more sustainable and constantly looking to make improvements in this area – one of the easiest ways is to find more suppliers closer to home. We hope that Chatsworth can be a platform to promote the best of the locality." [chatsworth.org](http://chatsworth.org)

\* To discover the full magic of Christmas at Chatsworth, turn to page 122 for a spectacular seven-page feature.

## Diary



Hailed as a once-in-a-generation exhibition of paintings, watercolours and drawings by Paul Cezanne, this new Tate Modern show has a galaxy of five-star reviews. Until March 2023. [tate.org.uk](http://tate.org.uk)



Collectors and designers flock to London Antique Rug & Textile Art Fair (LARTA), in Battersea Park from 24 to 29 January 2023, with textiles, rugs and carpets from around the world. [larta.net](http://larta.net)



The Mayfair Antiques & Fine Art Fair, from 12 to 15 January 2023 at The London Marriott Hotel in Grosvenor Square, will feature 40 distinguished specialist exhibitors [mayfairfair.com](http://mayfairfair.com)

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# DESIGN DISCOVERIES

Create an atmospheric mood with winter decorations and celebratory serveware to move seamlessly from Christmas to New Year and January's first crisp days

## DAINTY BAUBLES

Whether searching for a new decoration to add to the Christmas collection this year or seeking something a little different for a New Year's party centrepiece, these glass baubles bring a mood of promise with graceful snowdrop flowers set inside. *Snowdrop glass baubles, set of four, £29.95, Sarah Raven*

## MIDNIGHT TOAST

Add to the build up on New Year's Eve with special tableware. These elegant glasses have a classic design to match with different types of serving sets for occasions throughout the year. *St Tropez champagne glasses, set of four, £49, ProCook*



## LIGHT SHOW

Bejewelled with red berries, these fairy lights could be used for all kinds of festive displays. Battery operated, the lights can be arranged along the Christmas table, wound with a natural garland down the banister, used in rooms lacking a tree or draped on high shelves in children's bedrooms for a festive illumination. *Red Berry Christmas lights, £34.95, Sparkle Lighting*

**RELAXED DINING**

Keep festive feasts and New Year's Day lunches effortless with an extendable kitchen table that will easily seat extra guests. Select chairs with low, raked backs and soft seat cushions to make sure one and all are comfortable for post-meal games played at the table.

*Jigsaw kitchen table, £1,395; Drummer kitchen chairs, £460 a pair; Soft Scoop seat cushions, available in 12 colourways, £49 each; Bobble rug from, £245, all Loaf* ▶





### GLAMOROUS SERVEWARE

Elevate self-serve party food areas with luxurious stone platters alongside marble-and-gold cake stands that can tie in with decorations in metallic finishes.

*Fern garland, £47; Marble cake stand, £53; platters from £74 for an agate platter; LSA Ivalo cake/cheese dome and board, £123; Tom Dixon stone pestle and mortar, £211; Michael Aram butterfly ginkgo canister, from £116; LSA chevron tealight holder, set of four £49, all at Amara*

### PRACTICAL PARQUET

For those looking to combine a sustainable flooring choice with a classic material and design, this oak parquet is made from reclaimed wood. The rustic surface makes it practical for the wear and tear of daily life, and even occasional late-night partying by any family members, furry or otherwise.

*Signature reclaimed oak in large parquet laying pattern, from £83.99 a square metre, Amtico*



### MIX AND MATCH STOCKINGS

Select handmade Liberty print stockings in different designs to create a co-ordinating family set that can be personalised with up to two letters. *Tana Lawn Christmas stockings in various Liberty prints, £42, Coco and Wolf* ▶





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**\*The Profit from Patience Report, Alliance Trust, September 2022 [alliancetrust.co.uk/patience](https://alliancetrust.co.uk/patience)**

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**SNOW-COVERED SCENE**

These ceramic tea light houses and Christmas trees have a nostalgic charm and can be displayed with different decorations each year to create a familiar-but-fresh tableau for an atmospheric candlelit mood.

*Castleton ceramic tea light houses, from £7; Roseberry trees, from £5, Neptune*

**CELEBRATORY TABLE LINEN**

Inspired by vintage designs, these tablecloth and napkin designs will be in keeping with a Christmas table as well as a vibrant choice to mix and match with table linen throughout the year.

*Joy of Print x Tori Murphy, Zig Zag Stripe tablecloth in Berry, £195; Chequerboard napkins in Berry, set of two, £45, Tori Murphy*



FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPHS P20 (SARAH RAVEN) © JONATHAN BUCKLEY P22 (COCO AND WOLF) © OLIVER PERROTT; P24 (WEAVER GREEN) PAUL RYAN-GOFF



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For times of the year when friends and family congregate in the sitting room and other living areas, hardwearing flooring pays dividends. This traditional kilim rug design is made from up to 5,400 recycled bottles. The tough weave is stain resistant and machine washable while also feeling soft to the touch.

*Nomad Atlas rug, from £195, Weaver Green ■*





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SHOPPING

Gold Linen napkin, £80; Jacques Gold leather napkin ring, £75, both Katharine Pooley



Gold Star fairy lights, £49.95, Sparkle Lighting



Selene White dried flower wreath, £65, Mary Elizabeth Flowers



Manor White No 1, £41.95 for 2.5l, Victory Colours,



Marble & Wood Stripe board, £125, Hudson Home



Veloce champagne glasses, £62.50 for a set of two, Riedel



Tableware and products all from Amara

Pine & Eucalyptus home candle, £58, Jo Malone London

# SNOW WHITE

Set a sparkling scene for festive parties and seeing in the New Year with gleaming white accessories and a sprinkling of gold for a chic winter wonderland

Large Bubble lamp with Butler Sink clever vintage linen shade, £135, Loaf



Still White Natural Linen, £169 for a double duvet cover set, Chalk Pink Linen Company



Pearlescent Glaze, £13 for 250ml, Annie Sloan



Paper Snowflake, £12, The Shop Floor Project



TLC Noah Chair in White Sand, £729, The Lounge Co



Etoile fruit stand, £205, Astier de Villate at Liberty



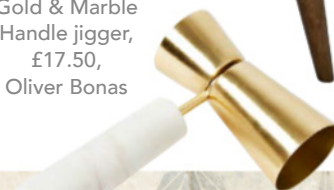
Oli Ruffle White Linen cushion, £47, French Bedroom



Gold & Marble Handle jigger, £17.50, Oliver Bonas



Toffee Mother of Pearl cocktail pick set, £65, Julia Knight at Decoralist



Pearl White punch bowl centrepiece, £58.99, Quince & Cook

Border: Heritage Star White ceramic tile, £36.60 a square metre, Porcelain Superstore

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN

A five-arm chandelier with lit candles hangs in a dark wood-paneled room. The chandelier has a central stem with five curved arms, each holding a lit candle. The room features dark wood paneling with decorative carvings and a window with a wooden frame. The lighting is warm and focused on the chandelier.

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Sofia desk lamp, £282, Anbôise

Small Panthère de Cartier pot, £340, Harrods



Manuscript Victoriana writing and sealing wooden box set, £46, Fortnum & Mason



Personalised vegan leather embossed pencil case, £18.95, Martha Brook



Siam secretary desk, £2,900, Jonathan Adler

Thank You card, from £5.95 for a single card and envelope, Scribble & Daub



Decorative trinket box in patterned paper, £330, Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler



Cleveland chair, £4,200; Dryad Rattan Leighton desk, £6,600, both Soane Britain

2023 Soho Diary with slide closure in Mara, Nile Blue, £240, Smythson



lanthe slim leather 2023 diary, £49.95, Liberty



Letter tray in Greek Fret, £33, Pentreath & Hall



Green marble paperweight, £28, Graham & Green

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Palazzo personalised notecard set, from £25 for 10, Papier



Scallop Edge pen pot, £14, Papier



Tibaldi ballpoint pen in Zest, £165, Harrods



Marco side chair upholstered in Sanara Indigo by Harlequin, £795, Gabriella James Chairmakers



Alma table light in Seaweed, £649, Original BTC x Beata Heuman

A Bloomsbury wastepaper bin, £72, Cambridge Imprint



FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD



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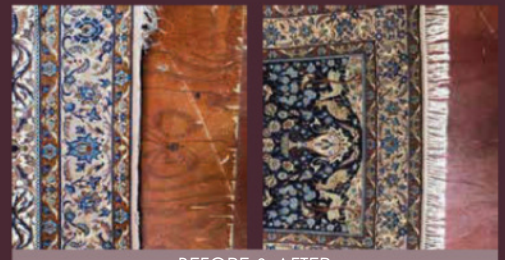
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# THE EDIT

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

## TIMELESS DESIGN



Lefroy Brooks, manufacturer of classic British bathrooms, has luxury brassware, sanitaryware and accessories with styles as varied as the Edwardian turn of the 1900s range, the 1930s Art Deco collection, the glamorous black lacquer of the 1940s and the 1950s collection which evokes the streamlined style of American automobiles. New to the series is the 1900 Classic in the Old Apothecary, a fresh take on the brand's signature range, (particularly striking in polished brass) with the Charterhouse pedestal basin (*above*) and the exposed riser shower in silver nickel.  
[lefroybrooks.com](http://lefroybrooks.com)

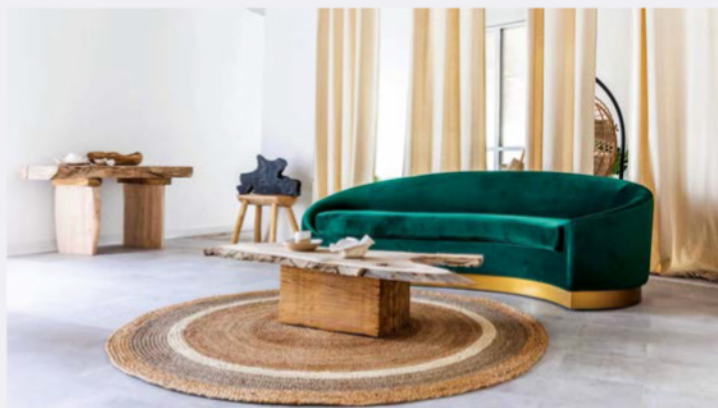
## MUST-HAVE

Sleep aficionados all know about the good night's rest guaranteed with a Naturalmat mattress, so it will come as no surprise that the company, which also makes beds and bedding, now supplies mattresses to some of the best hotels in the world. Its sustainable ethos means all its products are handmade in Devon using natural, organic fibres including superior-quality renewable mohair, cashmere, bamboo, cotton and natural latex, with no chemicals. alongside bedding and beds for everyone in the household, from babies up. Its latest launch is The Devon Oak bed, a chic, modern design crafted from timber from locally managed oak woodland. We also like the luxurious simplicity of the Stella Bed (*below*). [naturalmat.co.uk](http://naturalmat.co.uk)



## HIDDEN GEMS

For interior designers and architects looking for a high-impact piece of furniture or a decorative addition to a project, Hidden Gems Design has become a go-to. These timeless wood and ceramic pieces are all handmade in London, from sustainably sourced British wood. Founder Steve Nyman's lifelong passion for nature is clear to see in his creations, recycling urban trees into beautifully crafted pieces, each with its own character. The designs range from centrepieces and sculpture bowls, to large-scale seats and dining tables and now include The Burr Oak collection of coffee tables, sculptures, wall art, and table tops, and The White Desert Rock collection, inspired by the rocks' harmonious shades, contrasting textures and forms. [hiddengemsdesign.com](http://hiddengemsdesign.com) ▶



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Steve Boss, Waddle, bronze, 10.5cm high

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Timothy Rukodzi, First Meeting, leopard stone, 66cm wide



David Cooke, Orangutan, bronze on stone base, 250cm high

**The Sculpture Park in Churt, Surrey, houses an eclectic mix of modern and contemporary sculptures, thoughtfully displayed throughout 10 acres of tranquil arboretum, water gardens and indoor art gallery.**



Ivor Roberts-Jones, Winston Churchill bust, bronze, 95cm high by 127cm wide



Denis Mitchell, Polzeath bronze, 32cm high



Sean Crampton, Goose Flock, bronze, 35cm wide



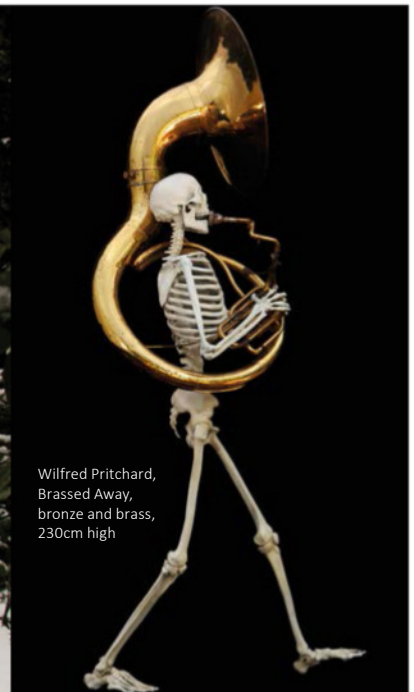
Jacob Edward Mufty, Bark bronze, 78cm high



Innocent Nyashenga, Uplifting, springstone, 172cm high



James Doran-Webb, Rutting Stags, driftwood and steel, 235cm high, 530cm wide



Wilfred Pritchard, Brassed Away, bronze and brass, 230cm high

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## CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

For those who like to go all out at Christmas, Cox & Cox, as always, has the festivities covered, with everything from outdoor decorations and pre-lit trees to garlands, baubles and table decor to boot. With six distinct looks to choose from, the traditional style is all grandeur and gold, with little gilded clocks and hand-blown baubles for the tree. The Blue and White chinoiserie-inspired collection is also a hit, with pretty ginger pots to hang on the tree. For children, The Candy Cane scheme is a nostalgic return to Christmases past with red and white baubles, gingerbread, felt mice, and hand-blown candy canes.

[coxandcox.co.uk](http://coxandcox.co.uk)

## ANTIQUUE FINDS



This year, the Salisbury Antiques Centre is celebrating 30 years as an antiques hot spot for interior designers and private clients alike. With 11,000 square feet of showroom on the outskirts of Salisbury in Wiltshire, it is a treasure trove for beady-eyed collectors, and sells everything from furniture and clocks to fine art, weaponry, bronzes and *objets d'art*. So, whether furnishing country houses, Highland castles, city townhouses or a French chateau, there is plenty to tempt here. [salisburyantiquescentre.com](http://salisburyantiquescentre.com) ■

# 6 OF THE BEST CHRISTMAS WREATHS



- 1 Dried Citrus Wreath, from £105, [flowerbx.com](http://flowerbx.com)
- 2 Red Berry Wreath, £25, [marksandspencer.com](http://marksandspencer.com)
- 3 Foraged Winter Wreath, £125, [thewhitecompany.com](http://thewhitecompany.com)
- 4 Midnight glitter-embellished recycled bauble Christmas decoration, £210, [selfridges.com](http://selfridges.com)
- 5 Dusky Blush Wreath, £75, [coxandcox.co.uk](http://coxandcox.co.uk)
- 6 Winter Fayre Pine & Mistletoe Wreath, £40, [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)

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# A MANOR HOUSE CHRISTMAS

For the Guest family, Christmas is a time to come together and deck the halls in this enchanting English setting filled with history

FEATURE AND STYLING COSMO BROCKWAY  
PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER



**ABOVE** The original entrance facade of Ashby Manor House with its mullioned windows and handsome gables.

**RIGHT** The Lutyens Hall, the heart of the historic family home, is seen here decorated for Christmas. A pair of Rose Uniacke sofas covered in Roma linen and topped with Fermoie cushions mingle with George Smith armchairs.







*“Decorating the house for Christmas is pure joy and almost anything goes”*

**ABOVE** The Lutyens canal bed, seen here in the garden view of Ashby Manor House, has recently been redesigned by Salisbury-based garden designer Daniel Combes.

**LEFT** Nova stands at the garden door, which leads into the kitchen area, with the family’s dogs, Toy Cockapoo Mabel under her arm and French Water Dog Mimi by her side.

**C**hristmas at Northamptonshire’s Ashby Manor, ancestral home of the Guest family, is a festive gathering surrounded by the past but with a healthy dash of the contemporary. Owners Nova and her husband Henry, a financier, together with their two children, relish the chance to deck their historic house with traditional baubles and fill the rooms with music and laughter. “Decorating the house for Christmas is pure joy,” says Nova. “We listen to all kinds of Christmas albums and haul out boxes of decorations from the cellar. I am usually fairly minimalist, but all that changes at Christmas and almost anything goes – except for tinsel, which is *verboden*, much to my children’s dismay!”

Nova, who is originally from Perth, Australia, recalls her first glimpse of her now-home – which was previously owned by Henry’s cousin, Ivor Guest, 4th Viscount Wimborne – as being a memorable one. “I’ll ▶



In the formal Lutyens Dining Room, the scene of many festive dinners, Nova has draped a Victorian leafed dining table with old house linen and added flair with William Yeoward Iona crystal glassware and vintage silver. The 20th-century reproduction dining chairs are covered in velvet by Rogers & Goffigon.



*“I was blown away. It was quite simply unlike any house I had ever visited”*

**ABOVE** Snowy-white B&B Italia sofas lend a contemporary air to the Music Room, with its Kilkenny marble coffee table from Rose Uniacke and carved fireplace with family crests. The cushions are vintage Fortuny fabric by Rhona Valentine.

**LEFT** In the old Entrance Hall, the leather-topped library table from Alston & Ashton antiques holds the guest book, which boasts names from an array of glittering pre- and post-war house parties.

never forget the first time I was driven through the front gates,” she says. “It was 2007, and Henry had said we were going to stay with his cousin for a night. He had told me nothing about the house, and so, of course, I was completely blown away. It was quite simply unlike any house I had ever visited.” Fast forward several years to 2015, and Ashby Manor came up for sale. The couple were looking for a country base after years in London, so it seemed right to take the plunge and “keep it in the family.”

The golden-stoned mansion was first built in the Middle Ages, and has rubbed shoulders with some of the great events of English history. Temporarily confiscated in 1485 by Henry VII when the owner, Sir William Catesby, was executed after the Battle of Bosworth Field, the estate went on to remain in the family for several hundred years. The Catesbys became infamous for hosting meetings for the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 in the Gatehouse.

At the turn of the 20th century, Ivor Guest, 1st Viscount Wimborne, purchased the house and ▶



engaged renowned architect Sir Edwin Lutyens to modify it. Having made a fortune in Welsh ironworks and railways, the Guest family's ascendancy saw them married into the Spencer-Churchills of Blenheim Palace and become owners of Wimborne House in St James's (now part of the Ritz Hotel). They also counted a Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, a Vicereine of India and fashion icon C.Z. Guest among its members.

Nova has taken to the adventure of marrying into such a storied tribe with typical aplomb. Both capable and warmly personable, she has become known as one of the most charismatic chatelaines in the county. "I long to have met Henry's grandmother, Lady Mabel, who grew up with Holland Park as her garden, and to ask her questions about our garden, especially the trees she planted. An admired dendrologist, she was also well known for her very down-to-earth approach to running a country house. Apparently, she would ask guests in advance how many potatoes they would eat at dinner as she couldn't stand any waste," smiles Nova.

Decorating such a hallowed space might be daunting, but the couple have approached it with gusto and are unafraid of bold choices. The arching Lutyens Stone Hall is where the family spends the most time. However, it suffered from a lack of natural light. "We repainted the room in Farrow & Ball's ▶

**ABOVE LEFT** A second Christmas Tree dominates the entrance hall. The Persian rugs are from Ron Green and the antique Gainsborough chairs are from Axel Vervoordt.

**ABOVE RIGHT** The galleried Stone Hall is used for informal dining. Wishbone chairs by Hans J Wegner are teamed with a table from Lantiques in Petworth.

**RIGHT** The sleek Bulthaup kitchen, chosen for its form and functionality, is where Christmas feasts are conjured up, with the couple's children contributing their own touches to the festive menu.





*“It is a family home because we have filled it with the things we love ourselves”*

**ABOVE LEFT** Nova and Henry engaged De Rosee Sa architects to design this guest bathroom. The roll-top bath is from Jacob Delafon.

**ABOVE RIGHT** The Oak Room is given a feminine flourish with a ruffled tablecloth in a Colefax and Fowler chintz. The Hillsleigh table lamp from Julia Boston Antiques is topped with a Fermoie shade.

**LEFT** An antique roll-top writing desk in the Oak Room is the epitome of English country house style.

Wimborne White, which immediately brightened the whole space,” explains Nova. They also upgraded the lighting to new LED fixtures at the same time. Another contemporary note is the sleek and unobtrusive Bulthaup kitchen at one end of the hall. “It allows every inch of cupboard space to be utilised to its full capacity,” says Nova as she prepares festive garlands to be hung across the huge stone fireplaces strewn through the house.

Apart from maximising light, another priority was, in Nova’s words, “A sense of abundance – comfortable chairs, many by Rose Uniacke, fabulous books, striking textiles, children’s toys and fresh flowers from the garden.” A playful take on the classic Lutyens layout has seen the old Medieval kitchen transformed into a playroom with pirate shacks and table tennis, and which at Christmas is also the setting for a second beautifully decorated tree, while the formal panelled dining room has been given vim with a collection of Fornasetti plates, trays and candles alongside the Guest family silver and a ▶



Nova has kept the Oak Room lightly elegant to complement the limed oak panelling. A 19th-century linen throw from Guinevere Antiques on the bed is teamed with tapestry cushions from Peta Smyth Antique Textiles. The Louis Vuitton trunk at the end of the bed was owned by Lady Alice Wimborne, a noted society and political hostess.



*“We wanted a sense of abundance – comfortable chairs, fabulous books, striking textiles, children’s toys and fresh flowers from the garden”*

roaring fire. “It is a family home because we have filled it with the things we love ourselves.”

Nova’s love of antique textiles is evident throughout the rooms. “I love 17th- and 18th-century tapestries and textiles,” she reflects. “Peta Smyth Antique Textiles and Katharine Pole have been great sources for glorious cushions to go on plain linen sofas. Rhona Valentine is a one-stop shop for old Fortuny fabrics and wall hangings. Her cushions brought our Music Room to life.”

Life is certainly never mundane at Ashby Manor. The couple have poured their energies and talents into the business of continuing the restoration and improvement begun by Henry’s cousin in the late 1990s. The estate is a lyrical setting for beautiful weddings and fashion week events, among many other happenings. “It is so important to us, realising the privilege of living here, to give back,” says Nova. This year’s world events have also brought some very

welcome houseguests in the form of a Ukrainian family of seven via the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Christmas this year will be a slightly more comfortable one than the first celebration at the house, which, according to Nova, “was magical, but we didn’t have much furniture, so we set up trestle tables in the dining room and draped them with house linen. Thank goodness my mother came over from Australia to help, as I was heavily pregnant and gave birth three days after Christmas!” Cooking family recipes from *Down Under* helps keep the family linked to Nova’s roots, while the 1,000-year-old Norman church on the estate is an atmospheric setting for a December calendar highlight, the children’s nativity play.

Charades in front of the fire, long walks through the estate, a roast Christmas lunch, all the hallmarks of an English festive time, with much merriment and, of course, the dogs joining in the fun. Where better to celebrate than this timeless and deeply loved house? ■

**ABOVE** Lady Wimborne’s Boudoir features a 19th-century Orientalist room divider repurposed as a headboard, a chest of drawers from Hugh Leuchars and an antique Heriz rug from Gallery Yacou. Cushions from Chelsea Textiles, a throw from Guinevere Antiques and a lamp and shade from James McWhirter Antiques complete the look.

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*BISCA*



In the sitting room, the red velvet wingback armchair from Changing Lives in Clevedon proved to be the ideal 'Santa's chair' when Helen created a grotto a few years ago for local children. The classic chesterfield-style leather sofa from John Lewis has been teamed with Stonewashed Linen cushions in dusty rose and a Plain Velvet burnt orange cushion from Oka. Presents have been wrapped in paper from The Danes.

# SLEEPING BEAUTY

A once unloved manor house in Somerset left sitting empty for years has been coaxed back to life with vision and a sympathetic approach

FEATURE CLAIR WAYMAN  
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH  
STYLING CHAMIL LIYANAARACHCHI AND CLAIR WAYMAN





ABOVE An ornately carved Tudor dresser from Focus on the Past in Bristol sits beneath the Tudor window that Helen and Mick discovered hidden behind the wall when renovating. The embellished faux garland is from Lights4Fun.

Some might say that houses have a way of finding us, which could well be true of the serenely beautiful Court House Farm. Set in the seaside town of Portishead, it had lain empty for eight years when a twist of fate brought it to Helen Kay's attention, and she was unable to resist its romantic yet decaying charms.

After living in Portishead for many years, Helen had been thinking of leaving for pastures new, but a chance conversation with a local estate agent was the catalyst for an unexpected change of heart. "He asked if I would consider buying another property in Portishead, and I said the only place I would be interested in would be the derelict farmhouse next to the church, which I'd spotted just a few months earlier."

At the time, the ancient property, dating back to the 1350s, was owned by the Spitalfields Trust, who had been keeping it watertight to prevent further damage.

BELOW Dahlias from Helen's garden are bathed in sunlight. As well as occasional workshops and retreats, Court House Farm is available for holiday lets, location hire and special weddings, which helps fund important ongoing maintenance and renovation work to protect the building for future generations. People can pick their own flowers from Helen's flower farm. For more information visit [courthousefarm.com](http://courthousefarm.com)



*'Court House Farm has a wonderful, magical energy. It's a very special place – a little pocket of history and timelessness'*

Serendipitously, not long after his and Helen's brief conversation, the estate agent was asked by the Trust to value Court House Farm, as it was thinking of selling it, so he mentioned Helen could be a potential buyer.

Being Grade II\* listed, the house is a national treasure, and because it was in desperate need of a full restoration, the Trust was keen to interview Helen to find out if she was up to the challenge. "The Trust's architect and one of its trustees came down and interviewed me. I assured them that the property would be in safe hands as I've been renovating properties for several decades, and my partner Mick has worked as a master carpenter for 50 years," says Helen. "I've only ever been interested in houses that need rebuilding, reinventing and bringing back to life in some way. I was intrigued by the romance of Court House Farm – it felt like it was in a time warp and needed so much love. The stone



floors were green with damp, the windows were broken, and there were brambles and climbers growing into the rooms. It all looked very romantic, in a decaying sort of way. It was pretty bleak, but we could see how much potential it had.”

Made up of a large Tudor manor with a smaller adjoining medieval manor, the house sits on three acres within the conservation parish of St Peter’s, nestled under the protective shadow of a 12th-century church. Helen and Mick were fascinated to discover that there has been a settlement on this site since as far back as 1000AD and pre-Domesday. Much of the history of the place is unknown and shrouded in mystery, but it is known that some of the past inhabitants include George Chappell, who became bailiff of Portishead in the mid-1600s, and Edward Morgan, a wealthy merchant who added the flamboyant hexagonal tower in the 1880s so that he could see his ships in the harbour.

In the early 1930s, the property, which had been bought by the local council, was let to a family of tenant farmers named Gayle, whose daughter Gertie ►

ABOVE A striking Turkish kilim hanging on the wall in the sitting room acts as a rich backdrop for a Balsam Hill Christmas tree decorated with John Lewis baubles. The 1960s coffee table, picked up at Clevedon Sunday artisan market, sits on a vibrant rug that Helen sourced from Turkey. A Neptune Stanton bowl is filled with clementines.

RIGHT The hexagonal tower was added to the Tudor front of the house in the 1880s, the last time that major work was carried out.





ABOVE Wall lights from Industville add a modern contrast to the vintage finds, including a statue sourced from Wells Reclamation. An Alice Palmer Tangier Stripe cushion blends with the pink Slim Jim sofa from Loaf.

ABOVE RIGHT The Tudor fireplace, with herringbone brick back, is a focal point in the garden room.

RIGHT Candlesticks, votives and a tray from The Danes sit next to dahlias picked from Helen's flower farm. The mince pies are from Bettys of Harrogate.



lived there until her death in her early 90s in 2008. "Gertie was an elderly woman living there for many years on her own," explains Helen. "She had to rely on the council to do any maintenance and the house fell into a poor state of disrepair, which only got worse after she died and it was left empty."

Undaunted by the huge challenges ahead, Helen and Mick started the renovation in 2016 with a small, experienced team. "We had to do everything from the roof down, including insulation, plumbing, electrics, damp coursing, reglazing, repairing and replacing floorboards and flagstones, plastering, and repointing stonework; the list was endless," she says. Careful to enhance and celebrate the ancient features of the property, the couple used natural, earthy limewashes on the walls to blend with the original plasterwork and allow the building to breathe. They also sourced reclaimed timber and rustic materials in keeping with the age of the property. "We wanted to keep the fabric of the building intact and avoid over-renovating," adds Helen. "It's important to treat a historic building gently, with knowledge and a sensitive hand." ▶



*'We wanted to keep the fabric of the building intact and avoid over-renovating. It's important to treat a historic building gently'*



ABOVE The antique mirror was found at The Frome Independent and the tapestry cushion was made for Helen by a friend.

LEFT An abstract watercolour by Bristol-based artist Angel Baum echoes the salmon pinks on the garden room walls, which are a mix of shades made using Mike Wye limewashes. The desk is painted in Paris Grey chalk paint by Annie Sloan and the pair of Art Nouveau armchairs were bought 30 years ago from a Clifton antiques market.



*‘I’ve only ever been interested in houses that need rebuilding, reinventing and bringing back to life in some way’*

**ABOVE** Helen and Mick have turned the kitchen into a light, practical space with a utility area on the other side of the partition. The Antiqued Granite work surface is from Bristol Marble.

**ABOVE RIGHT** Helen found the Victorian kitchen dresser at Shepton Mallet flea market and has painted it in Annie Sloan’s Country Grey.

One of the pair’s biggest triumphs was the creation of the double-height kitchen, which was previously a dark, dingy garage with no windows and a broken stone floor. Mick installed a new timber floor over the broken stonework, handmade the hardwood windows and built the kitchen cabinets. The couple enjoy designing together and created the simple but effective utility area off the kitchen, keeping it open with a glass partition to allow light to flood in.

During the renovation, Helen and Mick discovered clues to the building’s past, including a Tudor window hidden in the sitting room wall. This would have been the original exterior wall of the house and now creates a striking focal point above a Tudor dresser. “The renovation was hard work, in often cold and damp conditions, but we cherished every day and delighted in making new discoveries,” Helen says. “We felt very lucky and privileged to be able to renovate such a historic building – it was a real joy.”

While Mick and the team focused on the building and carpentry, Helen was busy project managing and sourcing for and designing the interiors. She has chosen vintage furniture, ecclesiastical treasures, richly patterned fabrics and kilim rugs to complement the raw plaster walls and rustic patina of the property. Doorways are festooned with curtains to keep drafts out, in keeping with how the house would have been decorated in Tudor times. Helen has embraced an eclectic, mix-and-match style with a soft thread of warm coral, pink and ochre linking the spaces and enhancing the romantic feel. “I love the juxtaposition of modern and ancient linked by colour and texture,” she says. “Parts of this building are almost 700 years old, so imagine all the different styles that would have unfolded here.”

Coming from a creative background, Helen wants to share Court House Farm with like-minded people, so she offers occasional retreats and workshops in ►



The arrangements in the dining room have been made using flowers from Helen's flower farm. The linen tablecloth is from Toast and the linen napkins are from Cologne & Cotton.



artistic pursuits such as furniture painting, textiles and wreath-making.

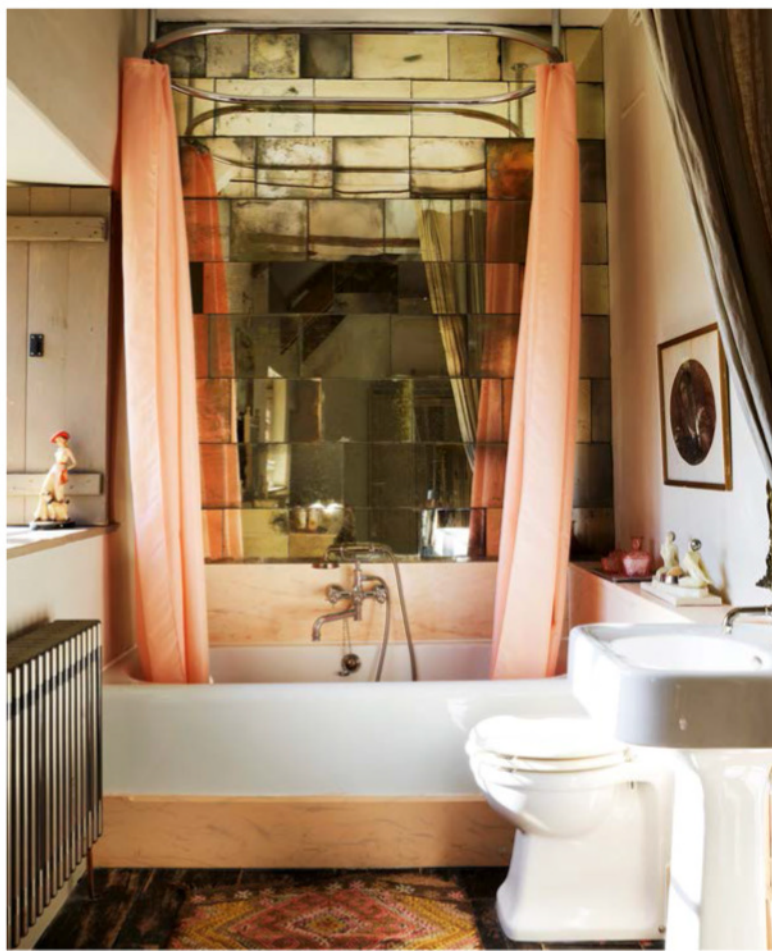
The house comes really into its own at Christmas, and in previous years, Helen has hosted artisan markets – complete with a ‘Santa’s Grotto’ as well as crafts stalls. Another festive highlight has been when a group of all-male singers, called The Owls of Pill dressed in Dickensian outfits, came to the manor to sing carols. These old-fashioned traditions are a touching reminder of Christmases gone by.

“Court House Farm has a wonderful, magical energy,” she says. “It feels like you’re in a hidden oasis in the middle of the countryside, yet we’re in a town. Often when people visit, they say they feel like they’ve gone back in time. It’s a very special place – a little pocket of history and timelessness.” ■

**ABOVE** Helen kept the pretty wallpaper in the main bedroom in memory of previous owner, Gertie Gayle. The Victorian dressing table from The Frome Independent is painted in Annie Sloan’s French Linen chalk paint. The cushion is from Salvesen Graham and the Victorian fire screen was a Shepton Mallet flea market find.

**ABOVE RIGHT** The four-poster bed is topped with Lilius Sage cushions from Oka, a Diamond kantha quilt from Sourced by Holly and a Wes Gingham Frill tablecloth from Projektityny. The wreath is by Light4Fun.

**RIGHT** Rose marble from Bristol Marble enhances the romantic feel of this bathroom. The antiqued, hand-silvered mirror tiles from Looking Glass of Bath, complement the age of the house and are made to order.



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# Winter WONDER

A traditional old stone farmhouse on Yorkshire moorland has been transformed into a magnificent home full of warmth and beautifully festooned with Christmas cheer

FEATURE SARA EMSLIE PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH  
STYLING ANNA JONES AND FREYA WASTIE

**ABOVE** The low stone house was once a traditional lathie house with integrated barn space at one end. The surrounding area is perfect Lydia and Nick to go on winter walks with their dog Pixie, a Bedlington terrier



Specialist painter Sean Oldham created a bespoke colour and limewash-effect finish for the sitting room walls. It is a soft, heather shade, echoing the moorland outside. The tapestry was stitched by Lydia and the main design is by Candace Bahouth. The red velvet chair below is from David Seyfried. Lydia has hung baubles from the Visual Comfort chandelier for festive charm.





*‘Having the joinery enabled us to add depth of colour and height in certain areas, both of which we feel are imperative to any good room design’*

**ABOVE** Lydia wanted plenty of space for books, so Stephanie Dunning designed the tall bookcase around the doorway that leads to the dining room. The bespoke Dunning & Everard sofa is covered in fabric from de Le Cuona, George Spencer, and Lizzo. The faux garland along the top of the bookcase is by Lights4Fun.

A solitary wreath of fir, holly, and heather interwoven with pine cones and sprigs of purple berries provides the only festive decoration to the exterior of the stone farmhouse that poet Lydia Macpherson shares with her husband, Nick MacKinnon. Beautifully simple in form and as natural as its surroundings, it is also, fortunately, exceptionally well tied on. “With 40mph winds and sideways rain a fairly common challenge up here, we don’t really decorate outside for Christmas, apart from a very well-secured wreath on our door,” laughs Lydia, before adding, “Hopefully we will have snow, which always provides the perfect setting.”

Snow is very likely: set high on the top of West Yorkshire’s Stanbury Moor, the house is the last inhabited dwelling before the famous Top Withens, the now crumbling stone ruin that was the inspiration for the location of Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights*.

It is a bleak place, dotted with trees bent by the wind, but always, as Lydia is eager to point out, totally captivating. “Every season brings a different delight, from the curlews and lapwings in spring, the heather blooming in high summer and then the turn of the year as the sun sets earlier in autumn and the bracken turns rusty brown before the thick snow of winter.” It is magnificent, with sweeping views over the moors and steep valleys, and particularly at Christmas when the elements close in and the instinct is to hunker down and stay indoors to keep warm. “Inside, we bring out lots of candles and fairy lights go everywhere,” says Lydia. “A roaring fire, candlelight, an eclectic range of decorations collected over the years, generous amounts of seating with velvety cushions for family and friends, a Cire Trudon scented candle or two and something delicious cooking away: that’s Christmas.” ▶



The bespoke bookshelves are painted in Picture Gallery Red by Farrow & Ball. A woven rattan pendant shade made in Morocco, found on Etsy, takes centre stage above the dining table and a natural jute rug covering the wooden floor adds warmth and softness underfoot.



A glass-fronted seating and dining area has been added to the kitchen so Lydia and Nick can sit and enjoy the magnificent view out over the moors. At Christmas it gets a Nordic-style makeover with piles of logs, sheepskin rugs and a tree. The mince pies and Christmas cake are from Bettys of Harrogate.



Lydia and Nick's home no doubt draws an enthusiastic crowd; thankfully, there is plenty of space for social merriment. "The huge kitchen/dining room can seat 20, and the drawing room has massive sofas, so entertaining on a large scale is easy," Lydia says. The double-height drawing room is also suitably lofty for a huge Christmas tree and has several quirky nooks for filling with extra sparkle: "We hang giant glass baubles from the arms of the chandelier and the sliding library ladder is very useful for festooning the top of the bookcases with greenery."

The decorative festive adornments are set against an interior that seems at one with the landscape in which it sits. A mix of dusty heather purple, berry red and a varied palette of greens and neutrals resonates strongly with the seasonal changes outside, and is enlivened with intricate patterns, elaborate textures, luxurious finishes and, of course, a gloriously huge open fire.

It is a far cry from the condition the farmhouse was in when the couple serendipitously stumbled upon it. "I was born and grew up in a nearby village," Lydia explains. "In fact, my family and ancestors have lived ▶

**ABOVE** The bespoke kitchen by The English Joinery Company is painted in Messel by Mylands and complemented with handmade Zellige tiles by Habibi. Bobbin bar chairs from Julian Chichester and glass pendant lights from Pooky provide a contemporary twist.

**LEFT** The blind fabric in the kitchen is bespoke by Isabel Kimbell. The sink is from Shaws of Darwen and the tap is Perrin & Rowe.



*‘We wanted somewhere that was easy and practical but that was also going to make us feel cocooned and delighted to be living in this unusual place’*

**ABOVE** Fresh foliage and lamps from Graham and Green topped with shades from Pooky adorn the console table from Chelsea Textiles in the entrance hall. The small tree is from Balsam Hill and the presents have been wrapped in paper and ribbon from The Danes.

within a couple of miles of the house since the 1500s. We were up here visiting my parents in summer 2018 when we walked past and saw that the house was for sale. At the time, we were just about to start renovating a cottage in the Test Valley, which we intended to use as a weekend bolthole from Winchester, but within a week, we had put that property on the market and made an offer on this one.”

A stone inscribed with 1761 suggests the date of the house’s construction and the pair believe it was most likely a traditional *laithe* house; a vernacular architectural style typical of the farmsteads of the Yorkshire uplands, where separate domestic and agricultural space would have been incorporated into one dwelling.

Over the years, the property had been subject to various alterations. “When we bought the house, it was on many different levels and there was a little-used

sitting room beyond what was the kitchen,” Lydia explains. “The extraordinary view was only visible from the large drawing room, which also had a sort of faux minstrels’ gallery across part of its double-height ceiling, which, as we say in Yorkshire, was ‘neither use nor ornament’. That went straight away.”

Renovations took about 18 months. The level issue was resolved by digging down by almost a metre into what is now a dining area. The small sitting room became part of a larger kitchen and a glass-fronted dining and seating area was added to make the most of the view from the house. There are now five bedrooms with en suites, which come in very handy for all those extra guests, and are all sumptuously decorated. “We wanted a relaxed, cosy family house which could accommodate a huge collection of books, art and objets. And we love colour,” explains Lydia. “We had used Stephanie at Dunning & Everard for the interior ▶



**LEFT** Made from sustainable solid ash, the Kingston bed by Turnpost creates a striking focal point in this guest bedroom while the opulent Romeo crystal chandelier from Pooky brings subtle glamour. The table lamp is from Vaughan and the shade is from Porta Romana.

**BELOW LEFT** An intricate mother of pearl Indian inlay chest of drawers from Graham and Green perfectly complements the taupe tones in the principal bedroom.

**RIGHT** Jasper Peony wallpaper by Lewis & Wood brings a whimsical feel to Lydia and Nick's bedroom. An ornate headboard by Dunning & Everard is covered in Wildwood, a lino cut design by artist Izzy Williamson, from Cocoon Home.

**BELOW RIGHT** Claybrook Arabesque Mosaic tiles line the shower walls, while the bath is from Harlequin Bathrooms in Salisbury. Visit [dunningandeverard.com](http://dunningandeverard.com) to see more of Stephanie Dunning's interior design work.





design when we renovated our previous house in Winchester, so we knew we could trust her with this project and we both have very similar tastes.” Stephanie agrees: “Once I had visited the farmhouse and fully appreciated the majestic views that surround it, the interior colour schemes just had to reflect the moors and the ever-changing scenery.”

At Christmas, the deep green in the kitchen lends itself to the festive feel, as does the red bookcase in the dining room. “It’s the perfect backdrop for a Christmas table,” Stephanie says. “The joinery was devised to create seamless, hidden doors from room to room so that the whole could be opened up or not. It enabled us to add depth of colour and height in certain areas, both of which we feel are imperative to any good room design.”

Lydia and Nick now use the house as their main home – testament to a job well done. “We wanted somewhere that was easy and practical, but that was also going to make us feel cocooned and delighted to be living in this very unusual place,” says Lydia. “That it most certainly does.” ■

**ABOVE & RIGHT** Lydia purchased the twin beds from an online sale and has accessorised them with blankets from Melin Tregwynt. India Yellow

by Farrow & Ball has been used on the woodwork to provide a playful note to the decoration. The faux Christmas tree is from Balsam Hill.



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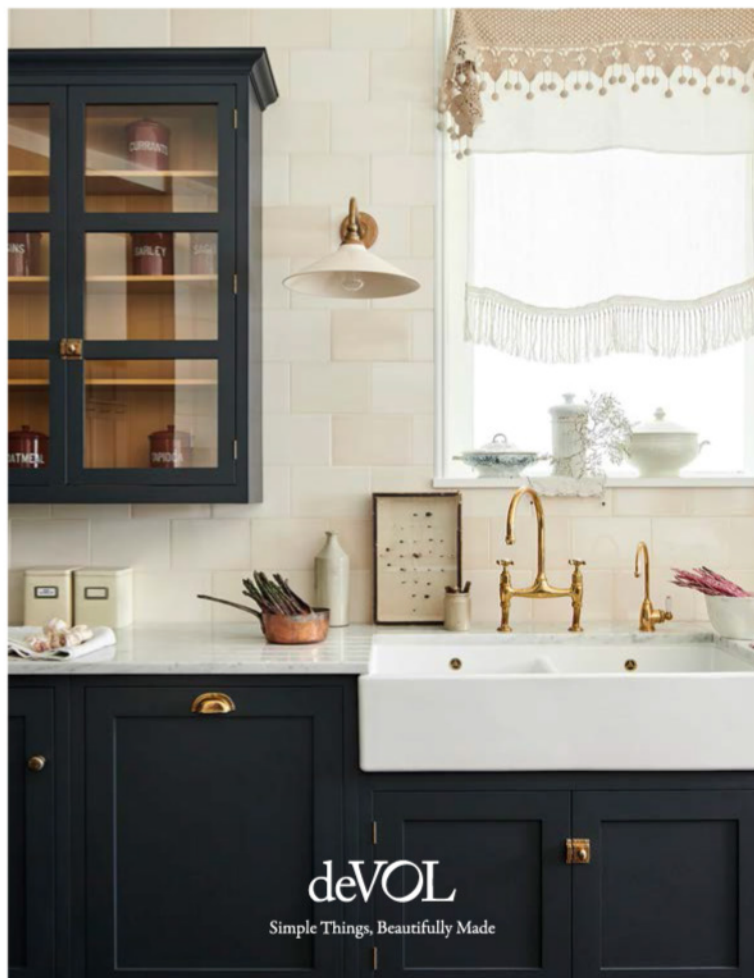
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# *Festive* WELCOME

Textile designer Kate Forman has warmed up this Georgian lodge with rich colours and patterns, providing the perfect backdrop for a family Christmas

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM  
PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER  
STYLING MARISA DALY



**ABOVE** Textile designer Kate Forman at the front door of the lodge, which was built in 1800 and forms part of the Petworth House estate.

**LEFT** "I knew this earthy tone would work perfectly here as it goes beautifully with the jewel tones," says Kate of the choice of Brown Betty by Atelier Ellis for the drawing room walls. To the left of the fireplace is a treasured 19th-century painting she found at Olive Interiors in Haslemere. The ottoman is covered in Kate's Kenji fabric. ▶



*'The house is so colourful that I tend to opt for quite neutral decorations. I like to mix fresh ivy with faux greenery'*

Some houses seem to particularly lend themselves to the festive season, Kate Forman's Georgian lodge in West Sussex being one of them. With their jewel-like colour schemes and cosy lighting – provided by myriad lamps topped with patterned shades – its interiors exude a sense of warmth and comfort. "It's a very Christmassy home, even before I have put up the decorations," agrees Kate, who is a textile designer. She continues, "The house is so colourful that I tend to opt for quite neutral decorations. I have collected vintage-style baubles in silver and glass, and I use those to decorate the two trees. I also introduce lots of foliage: I like to mix fresh ivy from the garden with the wonderful faux greenery I bought many years ago."

Kate moved to the house in 2018 with her husband, Jake, who works with her on the eponymous textiles brand she created almost 20 years ago. "We were living in Hampshire before we moved here but we already had a lot of friends in the area and it was one of them who told us that this lovely house in Petworth had become available. It forms part of the Petworth House estate, which belongs to the National Trust; ours is one of the cottages that used to serve the main house."

The lodge was built in 1800 for the butler and it backs onto the 700-acre Deer Park, which was transformed in the 1750s and early 1760s by the renowned landscape architect Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. "We have the best of both worlds, as we can walk out of the house into the countryside, yet we are still in the town, with all its wonderful antiques shops, which are my idea of heaven," Kate explains. By the time the couple moved into the house, their three grown-up children, as well as Jake's son, had already left home: "They were very much around during the pandemic though, when we were all thrilled to have such a lovely home to be in," says Kate, adding, "The layout of the house is lovely; it is very classically proportioned." ▶



**TOP LEFT** In the drawing room a painting by the couple's son Sebastian Forman hangs above the George Smith sofa covered in Laundered Linen in Venetian Red by Kate.

**LEFT** An antique Chinese paper parasol provides a striking light fitting in the dining room, which is painted in Farrow & Ball's India Yellow. The dining table, picked up at Petworth Antiques Market, is surrounded by French antique chairs, while on the wall hangs one of Kate's most treasured textiles, an antique Indian tree of life embroidery.

The mirror above the dining room fireplace is from antiques dealer Fifi Leuchars. "I have used a lot of mirrors as it is important to make the most of reflected light in this house," explains Kate. The table is an antique, as is the lamp, which is topped with a shade made from a vintage ikat.





**ABOVE** The yellow console table, a flea market find, pops against the Farrow & Ball Smoked Trout walls in the breakfast room. The limited edition print above is by Kate Boxer. The antique chairs are from Myriad while the antique table came from Fifi Leuchars.

**LEFT** Kate's Georgian lodge looks warm and welcoming at dusk.

**RIGHT** This cosy space adjoining the drawing room serves as Jake's study and is furnished with an armchair covered in a kilim. The Himani lampshade in and Josephine curtains are both Kate Forman.



*'I love pinks, yellows and reds, and these colours provide a common theme as you move from room to room'*

When the couple first moved in, every room featured magnolia walls and royal-blue carpet. The latter was swiftly replaced with textural coir matting, while Kate repainted the rooms one by one, choosing a different hue for each space. "Many of the colours have since changed, as I didn't quite understand the sense of light when we first moved in," she says. "The front of the house is east-facing and at the back we have a lot of trees, so, as a result, the interiors don't get any warm light at all. I soon realised I had to carefully select the colours to prevent the spaces from feeling cold." A case in point is the breakfast room, which adjoins the kitchen and is positioned at the front of the house. "I originally painted it a beautiful shade of blue but it felt like we were sitting in a fridge," admits Kate, who revised the wall colour to a shade of pinkish taupe. "It is so much cosier and I really don't mind getting the paint brush out - I love change."

Infusing each space with another layer of warmth are Kate's own fabric designs, which take their inspiration from vintage textiles spanning French linens to embroidered tribal designs. "It all began in my late twenties when I had an antiques shop on the Lillie Road in London," Kate recounts. "I had a whole cupboard full of textiles, which at the time were mostly French, and I was frustrated that I often couldn't use them in my interiors projects because I'd only have, say, one ripped half of a pair of curtains. I discovered a couple of wonderful printers up in the north of England and it went from there." A lot of her more recent designs are inspired by Asian textiles: "I have never stopped collecting antique textiles and all sorts of pieces inspire me - it could be a tiny scrap of fabric that provides the beginnings of a new design."

These fabrics inform many of the room schemes: "This house lends itself so well to fabrics, as the high ceilings call for long drops of material, which is perfect for showing them off," notes Kate, who has also used her linens, cottons and velvets to re-cover sofas and chairs. "My upholsterer is never out of work," she ▶

**TOP RIGHT** Art, table lamps and textiles bring decorative touches to the kitchen, where a vintage zinc-topped table, found at Hill & Co Home, provides a useful preparation area. The table lamp is the ceramic Red Ribbed Vase by Penny Morrison.

**RIGHT** A sumptuous curtain in Pink Velvet by Kate lends a cosy touch to the hallway, which is carpeted in Crucial Trading coir matting. The wall light is from Pooky. To see more of Kate's fabric designs visit [kateforman.co.uk](http://kateforman.co.uk)





laughs, adding, “There are almost no modern pieces in the house. I love to use antique and vintage finds.”

While each room has its own distinct identity, from the enveloping, earthy-hued drawing room to the mustard-toned dining room, the house still has a sense of flow: “I love pinks, yellows and reds, and these provide a common theme as you move from room to room,” explains Kate, who has included fabrics and decorative pieces in the more utilitarian spaces such as the bathroom and kitchen. “I would be hopeless at doing a modern bathroom. I’m not a fan of overhead lighting, so the kitchen is mostly lit with lamps. I love any excuse to get more lamps and textiles into a space.”

At Christmas, the couple are joined by their children for a classic festive meal. “Our only break from tradition is that I cook beef or pheasant rather than turkey, but we have all the usual trimmings. After lunch we spend the rest of the afternoon sitting around the fire, holding our tummies,” laughs Kate. She adds, “Our daughter and her husband have recently had a baby so this time we’ll be spending Christmas with our first grandchild. It’s wonderful to bring a child back into Christmas after all these years.” ■

**ABOVE** Kate mixed together three shades of pink to achieve the gentle hue on the principal bedroom walls. The vintage kantha quilt has been teamed with a headboard covered in Kate’s Freya design.

**LEFT** A pair of mirrored doors suggest a room beyond the bathroom and help increase the sense of light and space. The antique armchair is covered in Kate’s punchy Jag ikat. The mirror in the alcove is from Fifi Leuchars.



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# STYLE INSPIRATION

Our special section dedicated to interior design and decorating begins here ➤



## IN THE DEEP MIDWINTER

Embrace dark winter nights with a deeply decadent bedroom. Rich navy, green and brown hues can feel warm and cocooning, with antique and burnished golds adding opulence. This pretty wallpaper has a little light relief yet still feels sumptuous, cosy and luxurious. This would make an ideal choice, too, for making a guest room feel special – add a Christmas tree for a thoughtful festive touch over the holiday season. Our February issue (on sale 28 December) will feature further inspiration for decorating guest bedrooms with panache. *Bee Bloom wallpaper, Dark Blue, £89 a roll, Hattie Lloyd Home*



# *A considered* CHRISTMAS

In a season of indulgence and excess, find ways to be sustainable, thoughtful and restrained without losing any of the enchantment

**T**hough we love to embrace the opulence, glamour and sparkle of the festive period, there is a way to reduce some unnecessary excess and waste, of being kind to the planet, and to the pocket, without losing the beauty and wonder of Christmas. Some might already embrace using natural materials to deck the halls, eschewing glitter and sequins in

favour of foliage and paper decorations. Others might just be looking for a small way to 'do their bit' - using recyclable paper to wrap presents or investing in pieces that can be used year after year rather than disposed of once the season is over. Here we curate some inspiring ways to be more considerate at Christmas, perhaps with less sparkle, but still full of magic. ▶



A simple yet effective display of abundant foliage sets a wonderful festive note.

*Wall in Pompadour; door in Pointe Silk, both £24.95 for 750ml Satin Paint, Annie Sloan*

OPPOSITE TOP Paper decorations can make quite the impact especially in large sizes.

*Paper decorations, from £10, all Layered Lounge*

OPPOSITE BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT

Personalised velvet crackers can be used each year and filled with a lovely treat.

*Personalised House Name Velvet*

*Christmas crackers, from £14.50 each, Sunday's Daughter*

Use stamps to in a variety of inks create bespoke wrapping paper.

*Starry printing blocks, £40, Cambridge Imprint*

Elevate humble brown paper with a pretty ribbon and sprigs of greenery and flowers.

*Floral arrangement by Phillipa Craddock*



## Keeping time

Kick off the season by marking Advent with a calendar that can be used time and time again. Refillable fabric pockets allow personalised trinkets or favourite chocolates to be hidden each year. Or make a natural display, hanging strings from a simple branch or rod of wood decorated with greenery. Attach numbered envelopes or small sacks to fill with treats.



LEFT Make or buy reusable advent calendars that can be filled with favourite sweet treats or small trinkets. Top: Selection of craft materials, Hobbycraft Below: Fabric Christmas Advent

calendar kit with foliage, £19.99, GingerRay ABOVE Enjoy an afternoon making paper chains for a charming decoration. Paper chains set, £12; Wreath garland, £8, Wildflower Illustrations

BELOW Embrace the natural look with a jute-wrapped pot for a stand and paper decorations on the tree. Jute/Galvanised Steel Christmas tree bucket, £59.99, Ivyline



Creating something beautiful and unusual from waste products, this garland is handmade from salvaged newspapers, phone directories and books, with glass bead embellishments.

*Beaded Newspaper Garland, £59, Re-Found*



## *All the trimmings*

Decorations are often treasured for years, even passed down through generations – so there is an argument that whatever medium used can be sustainable and not part of a single-use, throw-away ethos. However, those seeking a quieter look that champions abundant foliage alongside homemade adornments and intricate paper honeycomb decorations will also appreciate the natural mood and eco-friendly approach this style imbues. Gather bunches of ivy, holly, fir and mistletoe to create garlands, wreaths and simply buckets or vases filled with greenery and berries for dramatic displays. There is no shortage of beautiful paper decorations, from snowflakes and stars to honeycomb trees or baubles that can be hung on the tree and dotted around the house. Create an impactful display with assorted hanging paper stars that can be hung above a table from a beam or a clip-on frame. Set aside an afternoon to make paper chains from old wrapping paper or buy a kit for a more co-ordinated look. Wooden ornaments suit this look, too, perhaps with personalised carved details. Add a little glint of gold with some antique finished bells, and finally, light some candles for a natural twinkling glow. ▶

### **RIGHT, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT**

Create vignettes with standing decorations on tabletops or sideboards. *Cream Honeycomb Christmas trees, £19 for a set of three, Rockett St George*

Add a glint of gold to festive foliage with some handmade bells. *Rustic Bell decorations, £12 for six, Rowen & Wren* Use foliage, berries and dried fruit to create a charming scented garland for a

mantelpiece or table. *Christmas Garland by Ronnie Colbie* The natural glow of candles gives a warming festive mood. *Hanging Christmas Advent wreath, £17, Charlotte's Shopping*





## What a cracker!

The final flourish on the table, and something it seems Scrooge-like to do without, is the Christmas cracker. There has been much improvement in most crackers available today to do away with frivolous plastic toys that are almost instantly thrown away, and most high-street offerings will feature instead paper tree decorations or a game that provides after-dinner entertainment. If something a little more generous is desired, consider making crackers – kits are available from retailers such as Hobbycraft and can be filled with small, personalised presents – perhaps a miniature of a favourite tippie or beauty product. Fabric crackers can also be filled with a bespoke offering and have the bonus of being reusable the following year.

## All wrapped up

Gift wrap is perhaps one of the most wasteful products at Christmas. Hours spent beautifully wrapping presents are gone in moments as the paper is torn off and discarded. Offset this by using paper made from recycled materials, and which can be recycled itself – this might mean taking the time to remove bits of Sellotape before disposing of it in the recycling bin. This can also be avoided with the use of biodegradable paper tapes that are readily available. Or abandon paper altogether and perfect the art of using fabrics that can be cleverly folded or tied and adorned with a ribbon. The fabric can be returned or even act as a gift if using a beautiful scarf for example.

Simple brown paper can be personalised for an easy, eco-friendly option. Invest in some rubber stamps (or even carve some from potatoes) and merrily print away with a festive design. To add a decorative finish, attach offcuts of fabric or tie up with reusable colourful string or ribbon, and adorn with sprigs of greenery.

**ABOVE** Use fabric such as linen or cotton to wrap gifts and finish with a pretty bauble which can be kept and treasured. *Sardi Star baubles, Gold, £28 for 12, Nkuku*

**BELOW LEFT** Fabric offcuts can be used to enliven gift wrapping – ideally in merry festive colours. *Tribes Horizontal Stripe fabric, Raspberry, £68 a metre, Julia Brendel*



**ABOVE & RIGHT** Add an eco-friendly flourish to the table with fabric crackers. *Above: Printed Velvet Christmas Cracker Set, £75 for five, Sunday's Daughter* *Right: Happy Linens Mixed Box Christmas Crackers, £120 for four, Happy Crackers* **LEFT** Cox & Cox has wrapping paper that is recyclable, made from recycled paper or made using eco-friendly methods. *Reversible Dot & Star recycled wrapping paper, £4.50 for 10m, Cox & Cox*






## Set the table

Choose a plain linen tablecloth that can be used year-round rather than one reserved for use once a year (or worse, a disposable one). This can be made to look more festive with a decorative runner, napkins and placemats – again in luxurious linen that becomes softer with every wash. Continue the theme for decorating the house into the table settings with honeycomb paper Christmas baubles adorning on plates. While place cards are not always necessary, they can make seating friends and family at the table much easier, and can be reused for subsequent family occasions rather than thrown away. Adorn plates or napkins with the addition of a bauble or sprigs of natural or gold-sprayed greenery tied with a pretty ribbon. ■

**ABOVE** A pared-back, natural palette of green and white with an abundance of candles looks fresh and festive. *Moss Green linen tablecloth, from £110; and all tableware and decorations, Layered Lounge*

**RIGHT, FROM TOP** Give crisp white table linen a Christmassy flourish with gold cutlery and handmade place settings. *The Montecarlo White napkin, £14, The Fine Cotton Company* Florist Phillipa Craddock has


hand-tied a small arrangement of foliage for a beautiful place setting idea. A pretty honeycomb bauble makes an attractive decoration for the table. *Honeycomb Paper Christmas bauble, £6, Handcrafted Cin*



Helena Lee  
STUDIOS


STATIONERY  
GIFTS  
PHOTOGRAPHY

@helenaleestudios



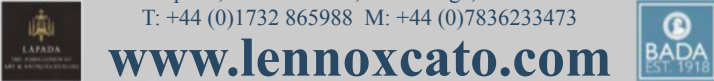
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# NEW YEAR HONOURS AWARDS 2023

Celebrate and discover the most covetable products, notable brands and inspiring designers bringing creativity, comfort and joy to English interiors in our highly respected annual awards

Wallpaper,  
Floriana, £990 a roll,  
Schuyler Samperton  
at Tissus  
d'Hélène (see  
page 84 for more  
information)

## New colours

There were several paint collections released in 2022, increasing palettes with some beautiful options. These are a few of our favourites...



- 1** Pale Periwinkle, The Alice collection, £41.95 for 2.5l Emulsion, Victory Colours
- 2** Livid, Re:mix, £28 for 2.5l Flat Emulsion, Little Greene
- 3** Peastachio, The Alice collection, £41.95 for 2.5l Emulsion, Victory Colours
- 4** Eddy, £54.50 for 2.5l Estate Emulsion, Farrow & Ball
- 5** Pippin, £55 for 2.5l Wall Emulsion, Edward Bulmer Natural Paint
- 6** Sunlight, Re:Mlx, £28 for 2.5l Flat Emulsion, Little Greene
- 7** Block Print Yellow, Waving & Smiling collection, from £51 for 2.5l True Matt Emulsion, Atelier Ellis
- 8** Summer Pudding, Waving & Smiling Collection, from £51 for 2.5l True Matt Emulsion, Atelier Ellis
- 9** Mason Pink, £55 for 2.5l Wall Emulsion, Edward Bulmer Natural Paint
- 10** Tailor Tack, £54.50 for 2.5l Estate Emulsion, Farrow & Ball

## Wallcoverings

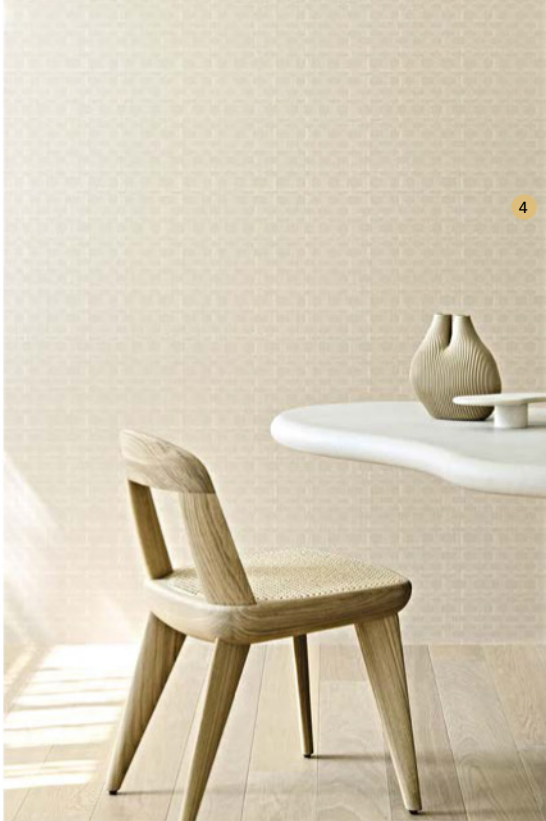
Whether adding colour, texture or subtle pattern, these are the paints, papers and tiles that have caught our eye for creating an enriching backdrop



- 1** Quad & Fragment tiles, £7.20 each, Bert & May
- 2** Cream subway tiles, £15 each, deVOL
- 3** Jaipur Pink and Kasbah, both from £56.50 2.5l Pure Flat Emulsion, Paint & Paint Library



NEW YEAR HONOURS AWARDS 2023  
\* Best for new colour



## 1 BERT & MAY X KITESGROVE

As its name suggests, the Irregular Collection's abstract shapes create a quirky character in soft earthy tones. Though a uniform tile, we love the bespoke feel and movement the irregular shapes create.

## 2 DEVOL

The subtle nuances of cream tones in these handcrafted, large-format subway tiles create a quietly understated, artisan look that is pale and interesting.

## 3 PAINT & PAPER LIBRARY

Expanding an already extensive colour card with three 'architectural families', nine new shades, and eight revivals from the archive, we love the bold, rich colours that work wonderfully in exciting combinations.

## 4 ARTE

Inspired by textures from woven baskets to coarse linen, the Textura collection offered exquisite detailing for backdrops. The design shown here has a relief that gives the impression of braided leather.

## 5 OMEXCO

The artistry and innovation of the Joy, Moonstone and Atelier collections astounded us. From woven banana leaves and recycled sari silks to subtly glittering natural mica wallcoverings, the designs add texture, colour and intrigue.

## 6 FIRED EARTH

Marble never fails to add drama and opulence, and this offering in unexpected tones of green is a striking design. The mosaic option offers yet more unusual looks, mixing formats.

## 7 FRANCESCA'S PAINTS

Inspired by the untamed landscape of Outer Hebridean Island, Barra, the curation of colours has been equally pigmented for 'tonal perfection' to be seamlessly used together for a soothing, sophisticated palette. ▶



- 4 Weave, £159 a 10-metre roll, Arte
- 5 Moonstone, £64 a metre, Omexco
- 6 Seaspray Green Marble tiles, £148.17 a square metre, Fired Earth
- 7 Selection, from £35 for 1l Eco Emulsion, Francesca's Paints



*Also of note...*

Marlborough Tiles' collaboration with Sims Hilditch, resulting in the pretty Emma and Ana tiles; Earthborn Paints' 20th anniversary of creating eco-friendly paints; House of Hackney's collaboration with heritage tile brand Craven Dunnill Jackfield which sees its distinct designs brought to life in ceramic form

# Pattern

Whether on wallpaper or fabric, these are the designs that have captivated with their artistry, colours and enduring style



- 1** Chintz Lustre wallpaper, £200 a panel (L1m x W142cm); Grand Paisley wallpaper, £614 a panel (W68.5cm x L10.3m), both Zoffany
- 2** Florence wallpaper, £370 a roll; sofa, Lovelace, £84 a metre; blind, Lady Alford fabric, £94 a metre, all Harlequin x Diane Hill
- 3** Floriana wallpaper, £990 a roll, Schuyler Samperton at Tissus d'Hélène
- 4** Selection of wallpapers from the Brantwood collection, GP & J Baker
- 5** Green Wall, £152 a roll, Osborne & Little
- 6** Anastasia wallpaper, £158 a roll, and fabric, £88 a metre, Manuel Canovas at Colefax and Fowler



## 1 ZOFFANY

The Cotswolds Manor collection instantly impressed us as it epitomises the English country house aesthetic we champion. With eclectic designs with historical influences, Eastern touches and contemporary nods, it perfectly creates a layered, interesting scheme befitting an English home. Chintz Lustre was a favourite, a revisited design from Zoffany's first-ever collection.

## 2 HARLEQUIN X DIANE HILL

We love every design in this collection. Capturing the artistic talents of Diane Hill, the fabrics and papers offer a modernised take on chinoiserie that is accessible in scale and price, in beautiful, bold colourways. Complementary patterns also entice, and simpler, pared-back, and painterly pieces offer a gentler mood for bedrooms.

## 3 SCHUYLER SAMPERTON

Based on an antique French fragment, Floriana captured our attention with the craquelure effect that gives it an aged grandeur. The large-scale pattern looks arresting in classic blue-and-white, as well as the richer blue and gold (see page 81). It provides a wonderful backdrop to antiques and pairs well with contemporary prints.

## 4 GP & J BAKER

The beauty and skill of Arts and Crafts designs never fail to appeal, so GP & J Baker's exploration of its archives to celebrate this movement in the striking Brantwood collection was a true highlight of the year. Featuring designs by both famous and lesser-known artists of the period, the range has been reimagined in contemporary colourways to remain relevant today.

# Designs we love

It is hard to narrow down the patterns we have admired the most from myriad exceptional designs, but these are some that caught our eye



## Also of note...

**Romo's Pluma** collection with its blowsy chintz prints and delicate leafy motifs; **Vanessa Arbuthnott's Forest** collection's geometrics and stripes, softened by leafy designs in smart new colours; **Buchanan Studio's Ticking Rose** design with its combination of stripes and textured pink roses

## 5 OSBORNE & LITTLE

Inspired by the luscious gardens found in sub-tropical Cornwall and its breathtaking coastal landscapes, the Lamorran collection features immersive panoramic papers of enticing sea views and detailed botanical studies. Light, bright designs are balanced with deep, darker offerings such as Green Wall, shown here, and spectacular printed velvets in rich burnished tones.

## 6 MANUEL CANOVAS

Designs of dancing tulips, trellises bedecked in blooms and pretty chinoiserie all exemplified the joys of spring. We also liked the quirkier patterns of hot air balloons, particularly Fabergé egg-inspired Anastasia seen above. The watercolour paintings of these exquisitely detailed eggs are captured beautifully in paper and fabric – a true statement design. ▶



- 1 Fungi Forest wallpaper, £500 a roll, Stella McCartney x Cole & Son
- 2 Herons, £99 a roll, Långelid / Von Brömssen, Ulricehamns Tapetfabrik
- 3 Persian Voyage outdoor fabric, £198 a metre, Liberty
- 4 Famille Rose fabric, £124 a metre, Madeaux by Richard Smith
- 5 Kamil Stripe fabric, £110 a metre, Tittle & Marr
- 6 Filigree Flower stone linen, £460 a metre, Soane Britain
- 7 Der Konig wallpaper, £195 for a set of three rolls, Mind The Gap
- 8 Nalina fabric, £240 a metre, Mahala Textiles
- 9 Indian Fuchsia fabric, £180 a metre, Sybil Colefax & John Fowler
- 10 Arya silk reversible cushion, £130, Daughters of Gaea

FEATURE: KATY MCLEAN PHOTOGRAPHS (2) © ANDY GORE; (3) ANNIE SCHLECHTER; (5) © JON DAY

## New options

In 2022, many lighting styles focused on scale and movement that allows adaptability for modern requirements. Here are some of our highlights



**1** Ramesses lantern in Brass, £455, Pooky  
**2** Original 1227 National Trust edition desk lamp, £259, Anglepoise  
**3** Lucia double rise and fall pendant, £1,626, Hector Finch

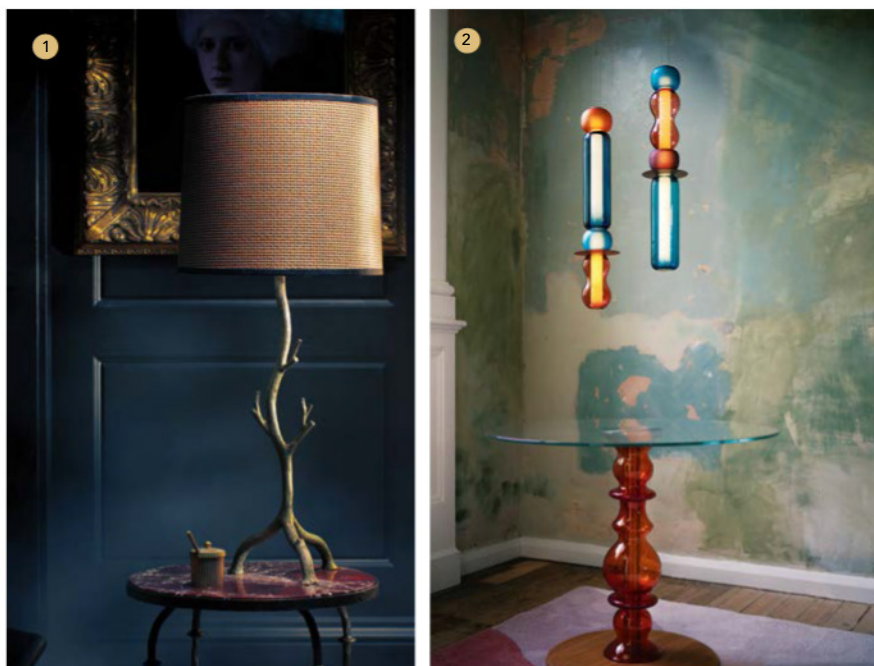
**4** Sirius Star lantern, small, in Distressed Brass, £958, Besselink & Jones  
**5** Shard chandelier, from £1,799, Original BTC  
**6** Farnham desk lamp, £532, Vaughan Designs

### Also of note...

**Richard Taylor Designs'** incredible range of handmade oak chandeliers; **Hadeland Glassverk's** customisable crystal spheres made with traditional techniques

## Lighting

Colour, craftsmanship and innovative designs culminate in these striking lights that are both eye-catching and practical





NEW YEAR HONOURS AWARDS 2023  
Best for colour range

## 1 PORTA ROMANA

Natural motifs add a grounding sense of calm to schemes. We love how this textured twig lamp has been elevated in a metallic design. To suit varying room proportions and requirements, the scale and design can be altered however required.

## 2 CURIOUSA

Combining traditional glass blowing with a modern design, this shapely collection is part free-blown to create an organic profile. As a result, light glows through the stacked glass.

## 3 DAVID HUNT LIGHTING

With a tailored paint palette of 10 colours to choose from, this dual-coloured pendant is hand finished and can be made bespoke to suit the colourways of different schemes.



NEW YEAR HONOURS AWARDS 2023  
Best for uplighting



6

## 4 ROTHSCHILD & BICKERS

These characterful lights add a flavour of 18th-century chinoiserie to interiors. Grouped or singular, the vibrant glass is finished with a fabric trimming that can be created in any colour combination.

## 5 COX LONDON

Inspired by French mid-century artist Serge Roche, this textured wall light emits a gentle glow from the back of the shell, adding an atmospheric mood to cosy corners and formal rooms alike.

## 6 NATASHA HULSE

The intricately painted motifs on Natasha Hulse's hand-painted lamp bases are complemented by appliqué features on her lampshades. Available in various floral designs and colourways, the lamps imbue schemes with an engaging layer of decorative detail. ▶

- 1 Forest lamp in relic bronze, £1,132, Porta Romana
- 2 Crest & Cascade lights, £3,850 each, Curiousa
- 3 Special Edition Scallop Hellebore pendant, £390, David Hunt Lighting

- 4 Opulent Optics lights, £475 each, Rothschild & Bickers
- 5 Scallop Shell wall light, £4,524, Cox London
- 6 Luna Highland lamp base, £370, Daisy Chain lampshade, £300, Natasha Hulse

# Flooring

Rug and carpet manufacture has reached a new level of sophistication, with breathtaking designs, incorporating sustainable, innovative materials



**1** Woosie Bouclé carpet, £79.95 a square metre, Alternative Flooring

**2** Rondel rug, £2,465 for a standard 2m size, Jennifer Manners

**3** Anemone rug, from £1,690 a square metre, The Rug Company

**4** Turner Pocock collection, from £2,640 for 2.44m x 3.05m, Peter Page



## 1 ALTERNATIVE FLOORING

Woosie is Alternative Flooring's first wool sisal blend in a neutral palette of warm oatmeals and cool greys. Both fibres are sustainable, with the three-ply woollen yarn giving a soft, luxurious feel underfoot, while the hardwearing sisal adds rustic texture and lustrous sheen.

## 2 JENNIFER MANNERS X HENRY PRIDEAUX

This ground-breaking, three-dimensional Rondel rug by interior designer Henry Prideaux and luxury rug designer Jennifer Manners, and has been innovatively designed using fibres made from recycled water bottles.

## 3 THE RUG COMPANY

The ethereal flower motifs on The Rug Company's new Sarabande Collection have been taken from an artwork by multi-disciplinary artist, Stephen Doherty. The finest Tibetan wool and silk have been used, in a delicate watercolour palette.

## 4 PETER PAGE X TURNER POCOCK

Rug specialist, Peter Page has collaborated with interior designers, Bunny Turner and Emma Pocock to produce a collection of striking flatweave rugs and runners with dynamic motifs that work beautifully in both modern and traditional settings.

*Also of note...* Sustainable flooring company **Crucial Trading's Balance collection** made from 100 per cent New Zealand wool.

# Furniture

We were drawn to pieces with beautifully crafted finishes and traditional details in classic shapes for timeless style



## 1 BETHAN GREY

For her inaugural bedroom range, Bethan Grey celebrates her signature detailed patterns using marquetry and cutting-edge techniques. This statement bed and cabinet would make a lavish bedroom centrepiece.

## 2 JULIAN CHICHESTER

This classic bench is inspired by 18th-century Italian styles. The piece is crafted with hand-applied antiqued gesso to achieve a traditional finish. Placed by a window or along a wall, the seat adds a subtle elegance.



1 Dhow bed, £20,520; Dhow one-door bedside cabinet, £6,240, Bethan Gray  
2 Elba bench, £2,130 (excluding fabric), Julian Chichester

3 Duke console, £8,622, Beaumont & Fletcher  
4 Eden bed, from £2,100, The Cornish Bed Company  
5 Side chair, from £1,660, Salvesen Graham

## 3 BEAUMONT & FLETCHER

Traditional consoles anchor modern rooms and enrich classic schemes. This characterful English design brings a sense of heritage to interiors and the shelf and roundels can be customised for requirements.

## 4 THE CORNISH BED COMPANY

We love how this distinctive headboard can be upholstered in any material to match existing fabrics and furnishings. The hand-cast frame also comes in any colour.

## 5 SALVESEN GRAHAM

Featuring piped edges and solid brass castors, this upholstered chair honours traditional details and provides the functionality and comfort required for modern living. ▶



*Also of note...*

Hypnos' certified organic mattresses that can be made to any specifications; Wrought Iron & Brass Bed Co in partnership with the British Wool Board's exclusive British wool mattresses; George Smith's bespoke beds in four designs that can be customised with George Smith upholstery; Beata Heuman's reimagined classic sofas

# Collaborations

Fruitful creative partnerships between designers and brands over the past year produced impressive results and kindled a spirit of togetherness, sparking ideas and infectious joy. Here are some of our favourites



## 1 A RUM FELLOW X ROGER OATES DESIGN

Woven in England, colour as expression and escapism is key to the magic of this playful rugs and runners collection, with vivid brights to muted tones and fine textures to bold stripes.

## 2 KIT KEMP X ANNIE SELKE

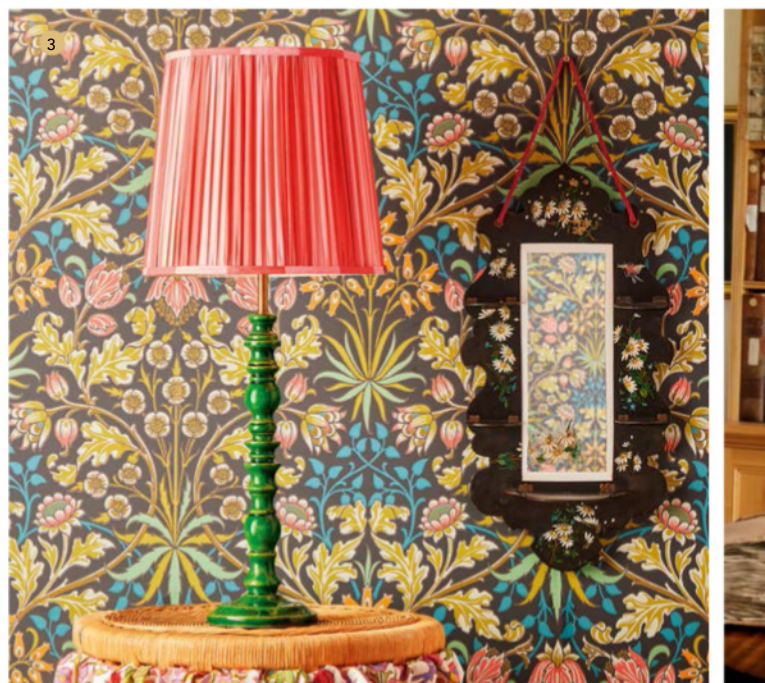
English interiors maven Kit Kemp and American design doyenne Annie Selke joined forces to produce a charming range of cushions, ottomans, rugs and bedding inspired by Barbados, New York and London, aiming to, in Kemp's words, "make rooms sing".

## 3 POOKY X ARCHIVE BY SANDERSON DESIGN

With 11 colourways, six distinctive lampshades and three quirky lamp bases, this collection boldly fuses vintage with vibrant, its characterful lamps adding unconventional accents to interiors.

## 4 IRIS APFEL X RUGGABLE

New York legend Iris Apfel's new 15 rugs and 5 doormats with Ruggable exemplify her signature maximalist style, adorned with tropical birds, monkeys, hothouse foliage, Persian patterns, 1970s paisley, ikats, needlepoint – and they are machine-washable.





NEW YEAR HONOURS AWARDS 2023  
Best for  
maximalist  
styling



5



5

1 A Rum Fellow's Caroline Lindzell and Dylan O'Shea with Roger Oates Design creative director Andy Guard.

2 Kit Kemp and Annie Selke.

3 Pooky's collaboration with Archive By Sanderson Design.

4 Iris Apfel and rugs from her new Ruggable collection.

5 Louise Sullivan of Johnstons of Elgin and Ben Pentreath, and the lively results.

6 The Quince Garden Collection by Daylesford and Colefax and Fowler



6

## 5 BEN PENTREATH X JOHNSTONS OF ELGIN

Dating back to 1797, Scottish woollen mill and brand Johnstons of Elgin teamed up with designer Ben Pentreath on a lambswool fabric and throws capsule collection with warmth in all senses, mixing cheerful colours and timeless heritage style.

## 6 COLEFAX AND FOWLER X DAYLESFORD

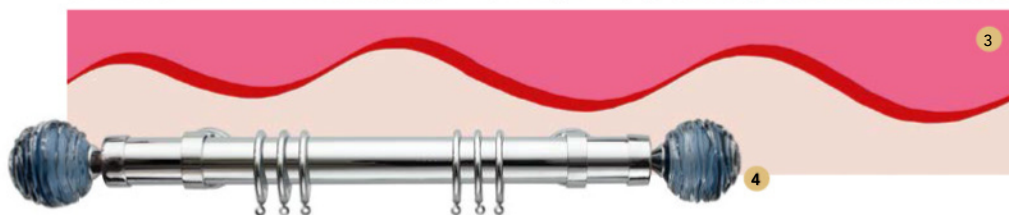
Elegantly painterly and quintessentially English, The Quince Garden Collection was the delicious fruit of the friendship and shared values of Daylesford founder Carole Bamford and Colefax and Fowler chairman David Green. ▶

### *Also of note...*

The Chatsworth Collection by Woolroom's luxury wool bedding range; Clarke & Clarke's decorative collaboration with Wedgwood of nine fabrics and 10 wallpapers blending colour, pattern and heritage; Divine Savages' impressive Natural History Museum wallpaper collection inspired by the latter's archive

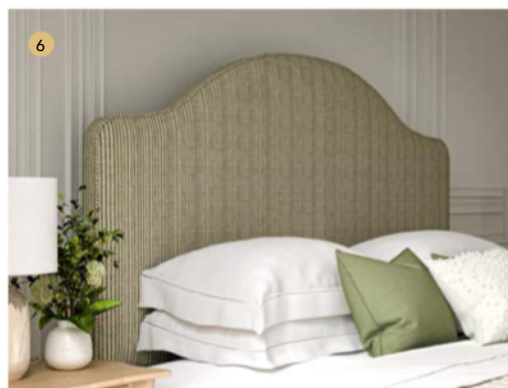
# Home details

From playful wallpaper borders to intricately handcrafted trims, these decorative finishing touches will elevate a room, as well as delight and inspire



- 1 Ernie wallpaper border in red, £68 a roll, Studio Atkinson
- 2 Trianon double-tassel tieback in Jewel, £920, Samuel & Sons
- 3 Painterly Scroll border in Brilliant Pink, from £64 a roll, Parker & Jules

- 4 Steel blue crystal Strata finial, £POA, William Yeoward for Hunter & Hyland
- 5 3-gang Invisible Plate with Brass Retractive Dolly switches, £174.89, Forbes & Lomax
- 6 Kingsize Barra headboard, from £926, The Headboard Workshop.



## 1 STUDIO ATKINSON

Studio Atkinson's vibrant new wallpaper borders are a modern interpretation of an old classic. They offer endless possibilities and are a wonderful way to add colour and interest to a room.

## 2 SAMUEL & SONS

The exquisite Trianon collection of luxurious 18th-century inspired passementerie by Samuel & Sons is made up of lavish trims and tiebacks in opulent colours and patterns. Beautifully constructed, the range is a collaboration between executive design director Marisa Gutmacher and her lifelong mentor and renowned trim historian Ed Goodman.

## 3 PARKER & JULES

Launched in September, Parker & Jules' new decorative borders are full of fun and energising colour. They are perfect for framing and softening architectural details.

## 4 HUNTER & HYLAND

Crafting beautiful bespoke drapery hardware in England since 1889, Hunter & Hyland has recently teamed up with William Yeoward to produce the new Strata collection. Working collaboratively, they've combined finials made from William Yeoward hand-blown British crystal and Hunter & Hyland poles.

## 5 FORBES & LOMAX

The Centre-Off Retractive Dolly is the newest addition to the Forbes & Lomax range. Combining elegance with functionality, it can be integrated with home automation systems so homeowners can create the perfect mood lighting.

## 6 THE HEADBOARD WORKSHOP

The new Barra arched headboard by The Headboard Workshop is an understated, timeless design with a subtly curved top. Covered in a classic striped linen called Roussillon Olive by fabric designer Sarah Hardaker, this headboard is beautifully finished and made to last.

*Also of note...*

**Hibernia** is a new collection of headboards by **Ensemble** together with **Fox Brothers Home**, maker of fine woollen cloth. Handcrafted in the UK using only natural fibres, the range is free of foam and toxic chemicals

# Rising Stars

We applaud creative and talented individuals whose work caught our eye over the past year, making us excited to see what they bring in 2023

## ALEXANDRA LLEWELLYN

Artist Alexandra Llewellyn – who creates hand-crafted luxury board games and games tables – was this year named one of ‘the 50 most influential people in British luxury’ in the Walpole Power List. Her exquisitely decorative backgammon, chess and poker sets, custom-made board games and ingenious games tables are mostly one-offs using inlaid wood and masterful marquetry, and all handmade in the UK. As well as being fully functional, her finely crafted creations are *objets d’art* in their own right.

[alexandrallewellyn.com](http://alexandrallewellyn.com)



## RORY HUTTON

With clients including The Royal Opera House, The British Museum, The Royal Ballet, The Noël Coward Archive and The French Porcelain Society, Rory Hutton expresses his passion for art, architecture, history, theatre, opera and dance through intricate lino prints in vivid colours. Interpreting heritage for contemporary audiences, the artist, designer and historian enjoys telling stories through his designs, printed onto silk scarves, ties and bow ties, gifts, stationery and more. His latest collection is a tribute to Shakespeare. [roryhutton.co.uk](http://roryhutton.co.uk)



## EVA SONAIKE

‘Bringing colour to life’ is the proud ethos of designer Eva Sonaïke. She founded her company in 2009 driven by a passion for African fabrics and interior design, and a mission to bring the vibrancy of African colours and aesthetics to the luxury home market. Her beautiful 2022 collaboration with Soho Home was music to our eyes, perfectly illustrating how her distinctive aesthetic and clever use of pattern and colour can enhance a home. Her new Kano collection is an absolute triumph filled with vibrant patterns and joyful colours. [evasonaïke.com](http://evasonaïke.com)



## AMECHI MANDI

Amechi Mandi’s Nigerian and Cameroonian heritage is a key influence on his designs, which explore indigenous African traditions, textiles and cultures and reimagine them with fresh, fun and exciting items that add character to any home. We fell in love with his 2022 collaboration with design atelier Dado, which saw his charming designs made into nine vibrant wallpapers featuring striking prints and palettes. His elegantly exuberant cushions are stocked by Heal’s and sold via his own website. [amechihome.com](http://amechihome.com) ▶

*Also of note...*

Glassmaker-designers **Phoebe Stubbs and Jonathan Rogers of Batch**; floral designer and gardener **Hazel Gardiner**; fabric designer **Alexandra Morrall of Mahala Textiles**; and furniture designer **Laura Bohinc**

# Designers of the year

From showstopping projects to product launches, we pay homage to two esteemed companies who celebrated impressive accomplishments in 2022



1 Trays in Bamboo Cane in Brown on White, from £95, Paolo Moschino  
 2 Scallop console table, £7,800; Coquille ceiling light, £3,600, Paolo Moschino  
 3 Palmyra wallpaper, Ochre, £220 a roll, Paolo Moschino



## PAOLO MOSCHINO

Established in 1980, Nicholas Haslam Ltd officially became known as Paolo Moschino Ltd in January 2022. This marked the start of an exciting year for the award-winning interior design firm.

Led by Paolo Moschino and Philip Vergeylen, the studio delivered several exciting projects, including the Villa Ignea hotel in Palermo, two apartments in Central

London, a chalet in Gstaad, and a beach house in Casa de Campo in the Dominican Republic. Alongside this, a host of new products were launched, as well as a third London showroom situated within the Design Centre Chelsea Harbour.

From projects to products, Paolo Moschino is definitely a company going from strength to strength.

## SIBYL COLEFAX & JOHN FOWLER

The epitome of English country house style, Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler was founded in the 1930s and is the longest-established interior decorating firm in Britain.

Now with a team of eight decorators, including joint managing directors Emma Burns and Philip Hooper (*above*), the company entered a new era with its recent relocation to London's

premier design destination, Pimlico Road. Yet, Sibyl Colefax's original principles remain – creating interiors that are at once luxurious, personal and comfortable.

Standout projects in 2022 included designing a drawing room with the Colefax Group PLC at WOW!House, and the transformation of Belvoir Castle's interiors together with de Gournay.

# A tribute to Robert Kime

We honour the late, esteemed interior designer and antiques dealer, admired for his rich, comfortable, and layered schemes



Antiques dealer, decorator, designer, and textiles collector, the work of the late Robert Kime (1946–2022) spanned many avenues in the design world, and his lasting influence on his contemporaries and the next generation is undeniable. Known for richly layered schemes full of uniquely mismatched pieces and global-inspired textiles, his style was one of comfort, practicality, and beauty, without feeling overly luxurious.

Passionate about history from a young age, Kime worked on archaeological digs in his teenage years before going on to study medieval history at Oxford. Forced to earn money to keep his family afloat while studying, he began selling furniture to his fellow students and university dons, and it was this that first taught him the trade.

After setting up his first shop, Kime soon built up a global clientele after customers began asking him to decorate their houses. With a talent for bringing together objects from a myriad of periods and styles, he preferred to refer to himself as an ‘assembler’ rather than a decorator. “I want my rooms to be lived in, not looked at,” Kime once said, and this ethos was at the forefront of all his work. The focus of his rooms was always on the client and their needs and lifestyle, rather than purely on appearance.

One of Kime’s greatest loves was for textiles, and he often used pieces he had found on his travels as the starting point for his schemes. In 1983, after decorating numerous houses had depleted his textile collections, he began designing his own fabrics inspired by pieces from around the world. During

his career, he collaborated on several new fabric collections, including with fashion designer Tory Burch and fabric house Chelsea Textiles.

Kime was renowned for being the favourite interior decorator to the then Prince of Wales, now His Majesty The King, who wrote in the forward of the 2015 book *Robert Kime*, “You often hear of people who are said to have ‘a good eye’, but Robert Kime’s must surely be one of the best.” As well as Royal residences such as Clarence House and Highgrove House, Kime worked on many historic properties throughout his career, from grand homes for the British aristocracy to country manor houses.

A true testament to his good eye, Kime’s aesthetic remains as popular and relevant today as it was in the late 20th century, and his interiors continue to exude his passion and irrefutable talent. ■

# *A feast for* **THE EYES**

Dress the table to impress even the most discerning of Christmas guests with some smart festive touches and seasonal styling





ABOVE Snowflake placemat, £3.75, Walton & Co  
LEFT Light-up Nutcracker figure £95.99, Festive Lights  
RIGHT Garnet tablecloth, £45, embroidered napkin, £11, and placemat, £12; White Rattan charger plates £39 for two; Dusky Pink velvet napkin bows, £13 for two, all Truffle Tablescapes  
OPPOSITE Les Airelles linen tablecloth, from £295; napkins

£27.50; Bumba glass in Grape, £52.50; Gisele candlestick by Astier de Villatte £215; handblown glass Clair jug in Rust Red, £215; Leaf engraved champagne flute £25; Leaf engraved red wine glass, £25, all Summerill & Bishop  
BELOW Luxury Red Winter Berries crackers £149 for six, Nancy & Betty



## TRADITIONAL

Bold and beautiful, yet reassuringly familiar, red is the perfect way to add a vibrant dash of charm to the Christmas table in an instant. Be inspired by the jewel-like colours of vintage glass baubles and the deep burgundy and scarlet hues found in holly berries, redcurrants and poinsettias to inject colour and pattern to the table. The more, the merrier rings true when it comes to a traditional table style, as Katie Fairlie of Truffle Tablescapes suggests: "A table looks best when busy and filled to the brim with festive accessories in bright seasonal colours."

Introduce linens embroidered with whimsical motifs and decorations inspired by the fairy tale magic of Christmas fantasies such as *The Nutcracker* or *Narnia* and repeat in the table decor with toy soldiers, glittery reindeer and golden trees for a theatrical dining experience guaranteed to delight. "Christmas tables should be joyful and fun, so never underestimate the excitement of leaving little keepsakes for guests on the table," Alice Herbert of Lay London says. "As it's the festive season, you might add velvet bow napkin ties or ribbon-tied baubles at each place."

For maximum impact, keep to red tones throughout, from tall, slender classic dinner candles to an eye-catching centrepiece of foliage weaving its way along the length of the table. ▶

### STYLE NOTES:

- Use red as the primary colour, and team with white for a fresh contrast.
- Add visual interest with patterned tablemats, tablecloths and napkins, and striped ribbons and festive decorations.
- A traditional cracker is a must. Look for ones that are whimsical or nostalgic in their design.
- Fresh flowers and foliage work best. Arrange in tiny bud vases and dot along the table or bunch together to create an attractive centrepiece.



ABOVE Nutcracker embroidered linen napkins: £64 for four; Fruit Punch napkins (used as placemat): £24 for four; Velvet napkin bow ties (made to order), £5 each; Bamboo-style cutlery set in Ivory and Brown: £20 for a set of four pieces, all Lay London



## CLASSIC

White is synonymous with luxury and purity. A table decorated in a palette of winter whites is as timeless as it is practical, and can be easily elevated to adapt to different types of gatherings over the festive period.

Any existing tableware, linens and accessories in white come into their own at Christmas, particularly when offset with an arrangement of suitably classic foliage and festive decorations. Sophie Conran suggests using ivy, a welcome staple of Christmas: "It looks so pretty against a crisp white tablecloth, especially when combined with mistletoe and fabric bows. I use ribbon with wired edges to make generous bows that hold their shape and then tie in some glittery emerald green baubles for texture and sparkle. I add height with a variety of candlesticks, candles and tealights in pretty holders for a magical twinkle."

A crisp white linen tablecloth is the perfect base for layering plates, bowls, and cutlery with serveware in silver and ribbed or etched glass for an elegant feel, and a year-round all-white scheme is hugely versatile and sustainable too. As Ellie Moore from Dress for Dinner says: "Dress the table with natural elements and textures teamed with quality, classic white pieces that can be used again and again." ▶



ABOVE Amor porcelain 12-piece dining set, £188; Sunburst chargers £100 for eight; White Berry embroidered napkins, £42 for four; Sleigh Bells napkin rings, £39 for eight; White Berry crackers, £40 for a box of six; Bamboo 24-piece cutlery set, £550; Sunburst white wine glasses, £69 for eight; Crown candle holder, £46, all Sophie Conran  
LEFT Gold Mistletoe place cards, £4 for a pack of 12, Talking Tables

BELOW Green-edged Scallop napkins, £96 for four, Rebecca Udall; Trivo candle holder, £15, Abode Living; Set of six candles, £30, Rockett St George



LEFT Still White linen tablecloth, £90, and napkins, £9 each, both Chalk Pink Linen Company  
ABOVE Acorns napkin decoration, £5 for two; Moss Green Velvet

napkin bow, £14 for two; White linen ladderstick napkin, £14 for two; Gabriela Colombian placemat, £22, Evergreen decoration set, £59, all Dress For Dinner

**STYLE NOTES:**

- Introduce antique and vintage style to elevate simple white china with silver-plated and bone-handled cutlery, cut-glass, and monogram embroidered napkins. The most glamorous glass and tableware really will make a classic table scenario extra special.
- Add freshness with a few natural textures and evergreen foliage, herbs and all-white berries such as mistletoe, rosemary and snowberries.
- Add hints of metals such as antique gold or mercuried silver for a twinkly effect and as vessels for candles. A string of fairy lights woven through foliage will also work well with an all-white scheme.
- Instead of a cracker, welcome guests to the table with a classic-style place card, or a starched napkin tied with a length of ribbon for a more formal dining experience.



LEFT Aurum tablecloth, £200; Charger plate, £24; Lattice three-piece plate set, £88.50; Crystal cocktail glasses, £78 for four; Speckled water glasses, £32 for two, all Maison Margaux  
 RIGHT Malachite tablecloth, £295, and napkin, £27.50; Gingko napkin ring, £160 for a set of four; Schubert charger plate, £230; Belvedere dinner plate, £185; Divertimento dessert plate, £450 for a set of four, Lalique Feuilles salt and pepper grinders, £1,580, all Bonadea  
 BELOW Candelabra, £58, Heavenly Homes and Gardens

## OPULENT

Be inspired by the riches of the festive season and indulge in an abundance of metallic colours, luxurious materials and elaborate decorative touches. “The Christmas table should be a feast for the eyes, and the glamour comes in the littlest of flourishes,” Gemma Martinez de Ana of Bonadea says. “It’s fun to watch a guest sit down and explore a tablescape, discovering what’s in front of them with all the little surprises peppered throughout.”

Choose sumptuous gold for all elements on the table, from table linen to platters, and even gold-sprayed foliage and flowers. For a gentler touch, introduce soft orange tones to complement the richness of the metallics. Tangerine, apricot and plum all work beautifully. Echo with flowers and motifs that hint at the exotic such as tropical orchids or seasonal poinsettias in unusual shades of orange and pink.

Introduce luxurious textures, detail and surfaces such as marble, lacquer and dark green malachite for a dash of contrast to the golden tones and style the table in anticipation of the feast to be served, layering each plate setting carefully. “We always work with the rule of

three, so either a charger, a dining plate and a top plate. Or a placemat, a dining and top plate,” says Louisa Preskett-Mobbs, creative director at Maison Margaux. “Make your top plate the most decorative, as that is what guests will see when they sit down.”

Be extravagant and mix dinner candles with tealights to maximise the levels of light on all the reflective gold surfaces, and use additional co-ordinating serveware such as trays and platters to create ‘service’ areas at each end of the table with space for sauces and condiments. Instead of a cracker, decorate each place setting with a luxurious gift instead. ▶



BELOW LEFT Jules drinks tray in Malachite, £180, Forwood Design  
 BELOW RIGHT Poinsettia napkin rings, £17.99 for four, Walton & Co





**STYLE NOTES:**

- Be decadent on all levels, with tableware, china, candles and flowers all bringing an element of luxury to the table.
- Think outside the classic festive colour scheme and introduce elements that bring an exotic twist to the table.
- Create a sumptuous visual feast and layer different-sized plates – the most decorative on top – to add drama and intrigue about the food to be served.
- Pay attention to every detail from salt cellars and condiment spoons to cutlery and glassware.



*Cut poinsettia from selected European poinsettia breeders, Stars for Europe*



ABOVE *Lavish Gold cutlery, £31.50 for a four-piece set, Beaumonde*  
 BELOW *Fiji 66-piece dinner set, £1,510, Micucci Interiors*





ABOVE *Wonki Ware pasta bowl, £32; Washed linen napkin, £11, both Toast*  
LEFT *Bertozzi Pratoline tablecloth, £430, and napkins, £100 for four; three-piece Yolanda dinner set, £62; hand-forged candle holder, £17; Rustic candles in Sand, £20 for eight; Green Bohemian Spiral wine glasses, £100 for two; baubles from £26 for four, all Petersham Nurseries*

### STYLE NOTES:

- Place foliage on the table and all around. Suspend a wreath from a ceiling beam and string with fairy lights for additional charm.
- Set the table with rustic textures and tactile fabrics such as linen, straw and velvet in rich forest green, deep midnight blue and earthy brown for maximum impact.
- Use fragrant early flowering potted narcissi and hyacinths as well as scented foliage.
- Take any sprigs of foliage or flowers left over from decorating the centre of the table to create a small posy or wreath and place on top of each napkin as a charming place setting detail.

## RUSTIC

Create a table dressed with the best that nature has to offer and enjoy the fragrance, textures and colours of the country landscape in wintertime. Consider soft heather pinks, muddy taupes and a host of seasonal greens including pine, moss, sage and even olive.

The key to a successful rustic tablescape is to be very generous with foliage. “Gather evergreens from the garden, such as conifers, privet, ivy, eucalyptus, pinecones, berries, moss and bejewelled branches of crab apple, cotoneaster and holly to incorporate lots of texture and natural elements to the table,” advises Thomas Broon-Hughes, director of horticulture at Petersham Nurseries. “And always think about how to complement the colour of your natural materials with the textiles, candles, votives and other decorations on the table. For example, if you are using eucalyptus, complement it with silver, whites, and greys.” He also suggests using large evergreens such as *Magnolia grandiflora* or dried leaves to create natural-style place cards, with guests’ names inscribed with a gold, silver or chalk pen.

Elegant but simple country charm is key, so introduce wood accessories, woven natural textures, country-style patterns, and soft, slubby fabrics with raw edges. Table linens that are decorated with foliage patterns in deep forest greens or on natural linen are ideal, as are hand-thrown ceramics, informal glassware and artisan pieces, for creating a relaxed, natural setting for a splendid Christmas feast. ■



LEFT TO RIGHT *Nkuku Mila Green wine glass, £50 for four, Nulen; Transylvania Roots ‘The Enchanted Woodland’ napkin, £50 for two, Mind The Gap; Crackers from £39.60 for six, The Handmade Cracker Company*



LEFT *Natural placemat, £18; Chocolate Ditsy Ruffle tablecloth £85, and napkin, £30 for four, all Sarah K*

*Kintaro dinner plates, £95 for four, and side plates, £65 for four; Eleganza candle holder, £55; Ranelagh wine goblets, from £55 for four; Machame Natural napkins, £70 for four; Ivory 16-piece cutlery set, £95, all Oka*



# 50

## WAYS TO BE MORE SUSTAINABLE IN 2023

Leading designers and sustainability experts offer their advice for greener interiors this year



**JENNIFER MANNERS**

*Rug designer and founder of Jennifer Manners*

**1 Curate curiosity.** Ask for the story behind the items you are purchasing for your home. Understand how they are made and by whom, as these are usually indications of ethics and business practices – and in the meantime, you can uncover some wonderful details that create an even greater appeal. We send photos of our rugs as

they are being made so our clients can see the individuals making them. We also send photos of the installed pieces to the weavers so they can understand how their work impacts its new home. It seems basic, but is so effective for both the weaver and the buyer.

**2 Ask about construction when you are buying a rug.**

A well-made rug should last for generations, and will only get better with time. There is a wide range of constructions available at every level of the market. Avoid machine-made and hand-tufted rugs if at all possible. The latter was developed to give the look and feel of a hand-knotted rug but with faster production times, and they quickly crush and pile, looking worn and aged, because the construction doesn't have the integrity to hold the wools (or other fibres) erect. The ideal option is a hand-knotted rug, dyed

in a small batch to minimise energy consumption.

**3 Buy bespoke.** When items are made individually it cuts down on waste, energy and shipping miles. Mass-produced rugs, for example, consume more energy to make and then sit in a warehouse, with many never sold and ending up in landfill.

**4 Keep an eye on packaging.** It is ironic when companies spend a great deal of effort creating a sustainable product, and then ship it out in plastic bags.

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT  
*Adire hand-knotted Himalayan wool rug, from £3,800 (1.8m x 2.4m), Jennifer Manners*  
*Roman blind made from Pondicherry printed recycled cotton in Sage, £25 a metre, The Pure Edit*  
*Wall painted in Re:mix Normandy Grey, £28 for 2.5l Flat Emulsion, Little Greene.*



**STEVE FORDER**

*Director, The Pure Edit*

**5 Support companies that bring sustainable innovation to market.**

Generating demand for more sustainable alternatives helps bring down production costs – which in turn helps bring these newer alternatives into the mainstream. Cocolok, for example, made from a mixture of coconut and latex, is being used to replace synthetic filling materials in upholstery manufacturing. The natural



latex in Cocolok is inherently hypoallergenic, anti-microbial and dust-mite resistant, so it's a great option for allergy sufferers in particular.

### **6 Look for a high percentage of recycled content when buying recycled products.**

You may be surprised to learn that the term 'recycled' can legally be used on both marketing and labelling for products that contain only a relatively small amount of recycled content.

### **7 Be mindful of the country of origin**

and the miles of transport and associated carbon footprint involved in getting the product to a store. Also, since Brexit and Covid, long-haul products have a higher cost of transport component within the product price, so buying more locally may save money as well as being more environmentally friendly.



**RUTH  
MOTTERSHEAD**

*Creative director,  
Little Greene*

### **8 Opt for water-based paints wherever possible.**

They are really easy to use, quick-drying and virtually odourless, and you can clean brushes and trays easily with water. Containing zero-added VOCs, they are completely safe to use in children's rooms – even on cots. Look out for ranges that meet Toy Paint Regulations, European

Standard EN 71-3: 2019. This means that they are completely safe to use in all areas of the home as they don't contain any dangerous ingredients.

### **9 Look for products which use upcycled or recycled materials.**

Our upcycled paint collection, Re:mix, sees leftover paints reformulated into a beautiful, matt finish for interior walls and ceilings. Through this, we prevent as much as 60,000 litres of high-quality raw materials from going to waste each year.

### **10 Choose high quality, highly pigmented paints,**

as not only do they provide a rich depth of colour and shades that subtly change in different lights, but they will also require fewer coats for full coverage – ensuring you can complete your project quickly and with minimal disruption.

### **11 Repurpose leftover paint.**

If the finish is suitable for woodwork, consider using it for smaller projects such as painting pieces of furniture, door architraves, the inside of a bookcase or even a window frame. Alternatively, update skirting for an instant refresh.

### **12 Reduce wastage when ordering wallpaper**

by using online calculators to check how many rolls you will need. If in any doubt, get in touch with the brand. It will be able to provide guidance. Returns or additional orders mean expense, as well as lorries on the road and more emissions, so getting the quantity right first time makes a big difference. Look for manufacturers that only use non-toxic pigments and paper made from trees from sustainable forests. Select wallpapers that use paper from FSC- or PEFC-certified sustainable forests. ▶



Arbor sofa in sustainably sourced oak with British wool upholstery, £3,995, Tom Raffield



**JULES HAINES**  
 Founder and director,  
*The Haines Collection*

**15 Repair as soon as you can.** A stitch in time really does save nine! If you find a cushion or other fabric item that is getting a little worn or has a hole, stitch it up immediately. Some areas of your house will encounter more wear than others, so it could be worth rehoming the piece so it sees less traffic and lives a little longer.

**16 Look after the fabrics in your home** to maintain their appearance and longevity. Follow washing instructions and, if possible, avoid direct sunlight, which will fade and degrade the fabric.

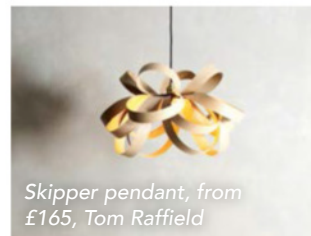


**TOM RAFFIELD**  
 Designer/maker and  
 founder of Tom Raffield

**13 Add sustainably crafted homeware to your space** to create a happy, harmonious home. Pieces made using natural materials and environmentally friendly crafting processes are full of character and personality, adding a unique story to your interior.

**14 Bring the outside in.** From seedling to flourishing houseplant, decorating with nature's forms

will ground your interior while adding a fresh pop of green. Foraging from your own garden and bringing greenery inside to decorate with is an attractive, inexpensive, and easy way to add a sustainable flourish to your home.



Skipper pendant, from £165, Tom Raffield

deteriorate over time, but instead build character.

**18 Try and mend where you can.**

Nowadays, it is an instinctive reflex to buy a replacement when something breaks. However, the merit of learning how to repair something yourself long outlasts the initial thrill of a quick-fix purchase. It is easier than ever to track down spare parts and discover the joys of bringing something back to life.

**19 Make the switch to energy-efficient alternatives.** Something as simple as swapping to LED bulbs prevents squandered electricity.



**CHARLIE BOWLES**  
 Director, Original BTC

**17 Choose durable materials.** Hard-wearing metals that age well, such as weathered bronze, copper or brass, are excellent choices. They require little upkeep, and will not



Cobb rise and fall large pendant, £325, Original BTC



**MARK TREMLETT**  
*Founder, Naturalmat*

**20 Invest in a mattress where the bulk of the materials are made from natural, breathable fibres.**

Synthetic, man-made materials don't wick moisture away from the body or circulate air as well as wool, cotton, natural latex and coir, so they are never as cool or hygienic as natural

options. Natural materials are far more responsive to body temperature changes, maximising your body's ability to cool down and regulate your temperature, which contributes to less sleep disruption.

**21 Choose a mattress that can be repurposed, repaired, recycled, or donated at the end of its life.** Because they get hot and soak up perspiration, synthetic mattresses not only increase the chances of a disturbed night's sleep, but they also don't last as long, contributing to the five million dumped in UK landfills each year. Therefore, it is more cost-effective to buy a mattress that uses natural materials, and a much more environmentally friendly option too.



*The Devon Oak bed, from £3,275, organic mattress made from layers of natural fibres, from £1,200 for a double, both Naturalmat*



**JENNY VAUGHAN & SIMON YOUNG**  
*Founders, RE*

**22 Reclaim furniture.** Old chapel chairs, stripped and repolished, are a functional and enduring classic. Keep an eye out on local selling pages, second-hand shops and auctions. Often made from beech or elm, they make perfect dining, office or occasional bedroom chairs.

**23 Use or buy things made from by-products** or otherwise redundant objects. It's very satisfying.



**DESIGN INSIGHT**



**HENRIETTE VON STOCKHAUSEN**  
*Interior designer and founder of VSP Interiors*

a special quality that you can't otherwise achieve. The fadedness, the variation of the thread, the narrow looms – it is all incredibly charming and, as with antique furnishings, this is a great way of recycling. We buy a lot at auction, and use Suzanis on chairs and ottomans, antique rugs on wing chairs, and lengths of old linens for curtains – it really adds another dimension to an interior, helping achieve a layered look. Plus, finding them is fun in itself, and you'll own a unique piece that no one else will have.

**24 Choose antiques.** They are almost always superior to modern pieces in the way they've been made and the materials used. Taking these high-value pieces and giving them a new lease of life – perhaps by repairing or recovering them if necessary – is one of the most sustainable things you can do. And antiques add a story to an interior, a patina, a feeling of settled comfort rather than shiny newness.

**25 Use vintage textiles,** which are beautifully made and possess

**26 Invest in antiques of the future.** It is expensive, but if you have something handmade using traditional methods and honest, sustainable materials, it will last for generations. ▶

*ABOVE In this room by VSP Interiors, the Lorfords sofa was made using feather, down and horsehair. The ottoman and side table are antiques, the armchair has been covered in antique French linen and most of the cushions and throws were made using antique textiles, including a patchwork quilt and a Turkish rug.*



Create an intriguing gallery wall, as in this room by Benji Lewis Design, using a variety of vintage artworks.



**BENJI LEWIS**  
Interior designer and founder of Benji Lewis Design

## 27 Buy antique and vintage artworks.

Explore flea markets, pop-up galleries, antiques fairs and vintage stores, as well as online platforms, and create a gallery wall by hanging them together. Alternatively, pairing a period item with a modern piece creates interest and character.

**28 Explore options to restore rather than replace,** and think outside the box. When changing a floor finish from carpet to floorboards, for

example, you can turn the old carpet into a surface rug by having it cut to an appropriate size and binding its edges. This is also a good way to rescue a carpet that has a worn section.

## 29 Mix and match individual glasses or plates.

If one piece in an intact set breaks, you stand to be disappointed. Don't throw out the remainder of your set just because one has broken; instead don't be afraid to add in a rogue plate or glass. It will suggest you have confidence in what you're doing.

## 30 Consider recycled window treatments.

Having new curtains and blinds made up in designer fabrics is expensive, but if you source suitable second-hand options you both save money and have the pleasure of knowing that you have rescued good quality textiles from landfill. Both online and bricks-and-mortar stores have selections that are often as good as new at a fraction of the original cost.



Seat cover, *Up The Garden Path* 100 per cent linen in Pumpkin, £64 a metre, Vanessa Arbuthnott



**JESSICA HANLEY**  
Founder, *Piglet in Bed*

**31 Choose natural fabrics wherever possible.** Not only are they more sustainable to process, they are also more breathable next to the skin than synthetic fabrics, and are ideal for

year-round wear and use. What's more, they biodegrade naturally after years of love, whereas synthetic materials – which currently make up 69 per cent of all global fibre production – will remain in landfill for years to come.

## 32 Opt for artisanal design.

Investing in artisanal pieces ensures that the end product has been made with love and a high attention to detail. We collaborate with artisans to broaden our collections and support UK-based suppliers, and these collaborations help to keep traditional skills, such as pottery and weaving, alive and thriving for future generations.



**VANESSA  
ARBUTHNOTT**  
*Designer and founder,  
Vanessa Arbuthnott*

### 33 Transform a room with some fresh fabric.

In the bedroom, for example, you could recover an old headboard, while in the kitchen you might make a statement seat cover for a favourite chair. Environmentally friendly choices would be our organic cotton/linen mix fabrics and 100 per cent linens: all perfect for these projects, being crisp, strong, and long lasting. Trimming

with piping and making ties from scraps would add the perfect finishing touches.

### 34 Make your own lampshade from fabric remnants.

You can buy kits and it really isn't very difficult. No sewing is required, making this an excellent way of using up scraps of fabric. Not only will you feel thrilled with the success of your creativity, but you will also have a lampshade that you can cherish for a long time.

### 35 Opt for linen bedding,

which offers a relaxed, laid-back look with no ironing required. Linen wears well, only getting better with age, and has inherent temperature-regulating qualities which keep you cool during the summer and warm in winter, ensuring you always have the optimum night's sleep.

*ABOVE RIGHT Madras Check Pink throw, £60, and cushion, £55, both made from recycled plastic bottles, Weaver Green*



**TASHA AND  
BARNEY GREEN**

*Directors, Weaver Green*

### 36 Choose soft furnishings made from recycled plastic,

saving the bottles from washing into the oceans or cluttering up landfill. These beautiful woven textiles look and feel just like wool, jute, cotton or linen, but are water- and stain-resistant, machine washable, moth-proof, easy to clean, mould-resistant, UV-stable and hardwearing. Update your hall with a new runner, for example, and it will be easy to keep clean from muddy boot and paw prints. Faux cotton throws are incredibly soft and cosy, and a lovely way of adding an extra layer of warmth while curled up on the sofa, and cushions add a burst of colour and comfort without costing the planet.

### 37 Protect your dining table with a beautiful tablecloth to help make it last a lifetime.

Table linens made from recycled plastic bottles have the look and feel of beautiful French linen, yet are immune to spills – even red wine. They are easy to wash at a low temperature and quick to dry, too. ▶



*Cove Blue washed cotton percale bedding, from £29 for a pair of pillowcases; Warm Blue cotton quilt, from £159; Warm Blue cotton pillow sham, £65 for a pair, all Piglet in Bed*



Sunny Peonies wallpaper in Duck Egg, £85 a roll; Moss Supreme Matt Emulsion, £45 for 2.5l, both Woodchip & Magnolia



**NINA TARNOWSKI**  
*Designer and founder, Woodchip & Magnolia*

**38 Opt for designs that are made to order.** We print all of our wallpapers, murals and fabrics only when the order has been confirmed, meaning minimal wastage is generated and there is no holding of stock. Any offcuts we generate

are reused as fully recyclable packaging and the base for our paint samples, so nothing gets thrown away.

**39 Choose wallpaper that is printed with Greenguard Gold certified ink.**

This means the ink emits the lowest VOC levels, so not only are there no harmful chemicals to breathe in, it is also much kinder to the environment, humans and animals.

**40 Reuse any left-over wallpaper**

– for example as a drawer liner, framed piece of art or even gift wrap. It makes use of otherwise waste paper and saves you purchasing more unnecessary paper.



**OLIVER HEATH**  
*Biophilic design consultant, sustainable architectural and interior designer, and author of Design A Healthy Home.*



**NATASCHA DARTNALL**  
*Interior designer and founder of ND Studios*

**41 Reupholster.** Traditional upholstery is one of the most sustainable crafts in the UK and can offer a new lease of life to otherwise unused older pieces. There are many experts who can help to revamp your worn furniture, and it is also possible to experiment with a simple piece – such as a small bench – at home. There are plenty of tips and tricks available online.



ND Studios selected this antique bobbin stool with an embroidered seat pad to sit neatly under a vintage desk.

**42 Create a mini green wall.**

This is a great way to introduce plants to your home, and is one of the best ways to improve air quality through the plants' ability to improve carbon dioxide and toxins through certain plants' ability to remove toxins and carbon

dioxide whilst producing oxygen and subtle scenting. You can now buy no-fuss, self-contained systems for domestic use: simply install onto your wall, add your chosen plants, then make sure you top up the integral water reservoir system every so often.

FEATURE KATHERINE SORRELL PHOTOGRAPHS P105 (JENNIFER MANNERS PORTRAIT) © ADRIAN BROOKS / IMAGEWISE. P106 (CHARLES BOWLES PORTRAIT) © ION DAY. P107 (HENRIETTE VON STOCKHAUSEN PORTRAIT) © STEVE KELYNACK / (VSP INTERIORS) © SIMON BROWN. P108 (BENJAMIN LEWIS PORTRAIT) © FRANCOIS BRES; (BENJAMIN LEWIS INTERIOR) © MATHIEU DETAINT; (JESSICA HANLEY PORTRAIT) © JACLYN SIMPSON PHOTOGRAPHY. P109 (WEAVER GREEN) © PAUL RYAN-GOFF; (PIGLET IN BED) © DAVID CLEVELAND LTD. P110 (OLIVER HEATH) © RICHARD HANSON; (ND STUDIOS) © HELEN CATHCART; P111 (EDWARD BULMER) © ANDREW CROWLEY; (EDWARD BULMER NATURAL PAINT) © PHOTOPIA PHOTOGRAPHY



**CLARE PASCOE**  
Interior designer and founder of Pascoe Interiors

**43 Source light fittings that can accept low-energy lamps [bulbs]** to ensure your interior is more economic to run. Many LED light fittings these days are sealed units with integral LEDs, which are said to last a ‘lifetime’ – perhaps 50,000 hours. But they can fail – so if you wish light fittings to be sustainable, be sure to buy ones that allow you to change the lamp [bulb] if necessary.

**44 Consider the longevity of a material for the intended application.** Natural materials that have not been highly processed (with dyes, products and so on) are a sustainable choice as they reduce production waste materials being flushed into our environment; but usually you are better off choosing a material that will stand up to the rigours of life – such as porcelain tiles over natural

stone in a bathroom. As for timber flooring, look for a supplier that sources high-quality timber from responsible suppliers and uses hardwearing finishes to colour and protect the flooring.

**45 Choose British wool.** Curtains and blinds hang beautifully and, coupled with wool interlining and a natural fibre lining (such as bamboo or 100 per cent cotton), windows are naturally insulated and able to breathe – particularly valuable for listed buildings where installing double glazing might not be an option. High-density wool carpet is also naturally insulating, and improves acoustics by damping and controlling noise. Choosing one that meets commercial standards is a very sustainable choice in a domestic interior.

**46 Consider cork.** It is a brilliant material to use on walls. In addition to being beautiful and naturally sustainable, it is an excellent acoustic solution to control noise. Granorte has a wide range of interesting walling and flooring products in cork.

**47 Ensure each element of your interior is considered carefully,** so every selection fits the technical criteria and is an item you love and are sure you can happily live with for many years. Live with samples of intended products so that you can see them in different light conditions and experience how your relationship to the material may change. Designing longevity into a scheme and future proofing it creates a truly sustainable interior.”

LEFT This landing by Claire Pascoe Designs features high-quality timber floorboards from Quercus Flooring, responsibly sourced and manufactured to last.



DESIGN INSIGHT



Use layers of harmonious colours that are seen side by side in nature. Walls, Jonquil and Invisible Green; woodwork, Pompadour and Dove, all Edward Bulmer Natural Paint



**EDWARD BULMER**  
Founder of Edward Bulmer Natural Paint, interior designer and environmental campaigner

to making schemes work, but with our natural paints you cannot make a wrong colour choice. As we say, what grows together, goes together!

**49 Look at the paint ingredients.** We believe we are unique in using plant-based ingredients to make our paint with our ground-breaking bio-based binder and we are alone in declaring all our ingredients – what’s in our tins is on our tins. We use natural earth and mineral pigments to make our beautiful colours. This guarantees a sophistication and complexity of colour which cannot be replicated by acrylic paint coloured with azo [synthetic] dyes.

**48 Use paints made from natural earth and mineral pigments.** All our colours are created using the same 12 pigments which have been used by artists for centuries and so they work in tonal harmony. There are ‘rules’ about complementary opposites and the right tonality is key

**50 Look into the benefits to your health, home and our planet** and consider switching to a natural paint...you won’t regret it. You’ll be choosing to make a difference, too. ■

CALLAGHANS OF SHREWSBURY

# A NEW PERSPECTIVE

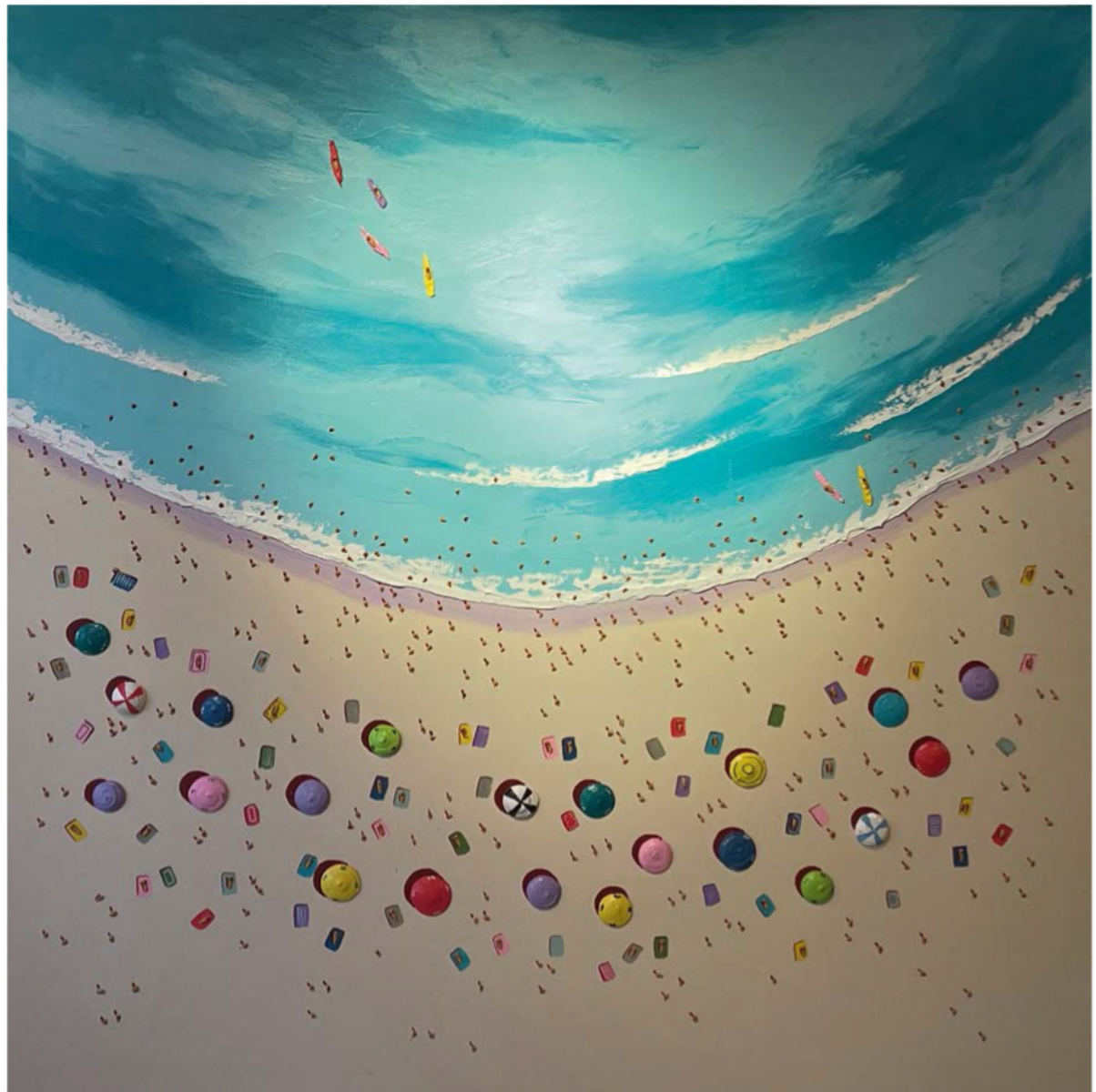
When the European artist Max Todd decided to experiment with creating paintings with a bird's-eye view, it proved to be the making of his career



Many artists' style evolves over time, but when comparing the early works of the European artist Max Todd with his later pieces in his signature bird's-eye style, they could be painted by different painters entirely. During his early career, he preferred to paint rural landscapes and scenery of the romantic genre, but one day, he decided to depart from his traditional style.

Rather than painting things from a conventional perspective, Todd experimented with an aerial, 'bird's-eye' view instead, and the rest, as they say, is history. This light-hearted kind of social commentary, capturing an otherwise unobserved moment in time, also managed to capture the art world's imagination, with Todd's works now on display around the world, from the UK to the US.

The aerial views are peppered with tiny figures, each unique, whether found on the beach or the ski slopes, another favourite setting. Todd creates them with meticulous precision, each with their own identity and personality, which he has thought through down to the finest details. In some of his rare originals, he even details each item of clothing the individuals are wearing. His cast of characters includes family members,



**LEFT** *Across the Valley*, acrylic on canvas, 89cm x 150cm, signed

**RIGHT** *Jolly Holidays*, acrylic on canvas, 119cm x 119cm, signed

friends and models, giving his work a uniquely personal touch. And with each piece containing a range of 400 to 1,800 people in it, depending on the scale of the piece, a design can take anywhere between 50 to 150 hours of painstaking work.

Today, while Todd's pieces can be found worldwide, closer to home, Daniel and Stella Callaghan – who own the prestigious art gallery Callaghans of Shrewsbury – are particular admirers of his work. With their 35-year history of running the gallery, they have garnered a global reputation for their extensive knowledge of European art and artists, specialising in European 19th and 20th-century oils and watercolours. “From our gallery in Shrewsbury, we have sold many works by

Todd all over the world,” explains Daniel. “There’s something about the luminous, colourful and captivating compositions that immediately draws you in.”

Born in Spain in 1959, Todd studied painting at the School of Fine Arts before moving to live near the sea, where he discovered his love of marine subjects. Taking inspiration from the coast, he uses bright blue and sunshine yellow tones in many of his beach-inspired paintings. Within each of his works, Todd applies splashes of colour directly from the paint tubes with extraordinary precision, using a palette knife to thickly apply the acrylic to add depth to his compositions. This also creates shadows beneath each object, adding to the effect. It is this use of

mixed media to create a 3D dimension that makes Todd's paintings so unusual. “The layering of paint is striking and adds yet another dimension to Todd's work,” explains Stella. “And his subject matter also makes his pieces feel more personal, drawing his inspiration from places, memories and experiences.”

Above all else, it is clear to see how much Todd enjoys what he does. “He is always more fun than provocative, with his combination of optical play, unique materials and shading making his paintings the kind of pieces you could gaze upon for hours,” says Daniel. Which surely is the joy of art? ■

[callaghan-finepaintings.com](http://callaghan-finepaintings.com)

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# QUINTESSENTIALLY

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



## SITTING PRETTY

If looking to add more of a celebratory sense of style to Christmas or New Year's Eve tablescapes, a handmade foliage posy tied to the back of a chair is an effective idea. Simply gather a few stems of foliage and berries, fasten with a ribbon and tie on a couple of baubles, one higher than the other, to decorate the back of a chair. The idea could be repeated with seasonal foliage for year-round celebrations. *Chester Midnight Blue spindle back chair, £120 each (sold as a pair), Cotswold Company. For similar baubles see Snow Drop baubles, clear crackle, £18 for a set of four, Nkuku*



Wreath, £75; Portobello collection dinnerware, from £10; Portobello Scalloped oval serving platter, £65; Halden champagne flutes, £50 for a set of four; Ceramic cake stand, £65; Footed serving bowl, £60; Glass candlesticks, from £35; Glass cake stand, £38; Rustic Linen napkins, £45 for four; Rustic Linen runner, £55, and all other items, The White Company

# What to do in JANUARY

Savour the run-up to the festive season by indulging in creative endeavours to enhance the experience for all concerned



**CELEBRATE...** *with  
generously laden  
tables for get-togethers*

**E**njoy the extended holiday and all its opportunities for seasonal gatherings. Whether a Christmas Day family reunion, a New Year's Eve party with friends, or an informal meeting of neighbours in the days in between, there is no better way to welcome guests than with a splendid selection of festive treats. Set a buffet-style table with delicious food, mince pies piled high and a selection of fruit and nuts for everyone to enjoy as they please. Serving bowls, platters and cake stands in classic white and elegant glass accessories are worth investing in; their timeless appeal makes them suitable for any occasion, festive or otherwise. Use tall branches of winter greenery and slender dinner candles to add layers of interest, interwoven with twinkly lights and decorations. ▶



*Make... edible treats to  
give away as presents*

**H**andmade chutneys, chocolates, and biscuits are always warmly received at Christmas when presented in a small box, bag or decorative jar. Celebrated Australian food editor and stylist Donna Hay is well known for conjuring up ideas that taste good and look good too. In her latest book, *Christmas Feasts and Treats*, she presents a whole chapter dedicated to biscuits and treats, from black-sea-salt-and-chocolate macaroons to an entire gingerbread village. Why not make these chewy caramels with salted peanuts and give them to guests, remembering to save a few for the cook to enjoy too?

## CHEWY CARAMELS WITH SALTED PEANUTS

(Makes 50)

### INGREDIENTS

420g salted peanuts  
1.1kg white granulated sugar  
1.125 litres single cream  
350g golden syrup  
100g unsalted butter, chopped

### METHOD:

- Line a 20cm x 30cm baking tray with non-stick baking paper+. Sprinkle the base with 210g of the peanuts and set aside.
- Place the sugar, cream, golden syrup and butter in a large saucepan over a high heat and stir with a metal spoon until the butter and sugar have melted. Reduce the heat to medium and cook, stirring, for 20–25 minutes or until the temperature reaches 122°C on a sugar thermometer.
- Working quickly, pour the caramel into the tin and carefully sprinkle with the remaining 210g of peanuts. Allow to cool completely at room temperature for 3–4 hours. Refrigerate for 25–30 minutes or until firm.
- Turn the caramel out onto a board and, using a large sharp knife, cut it into pieces++. Wrap each caramel in brown wax paper, twisting the ends to seal it. Keep refrigerated and bring to room temperature to serve.

**TIP:** Store the caramels, wrapped in non-stick baking paper, in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

- + It is best to work quickly but carefully when making caramel – line the tin and measure the ingredients before beginning.
- ++ If the caramel becomes too soft to cut, simply return it to the refrigerator for 5 minutes.



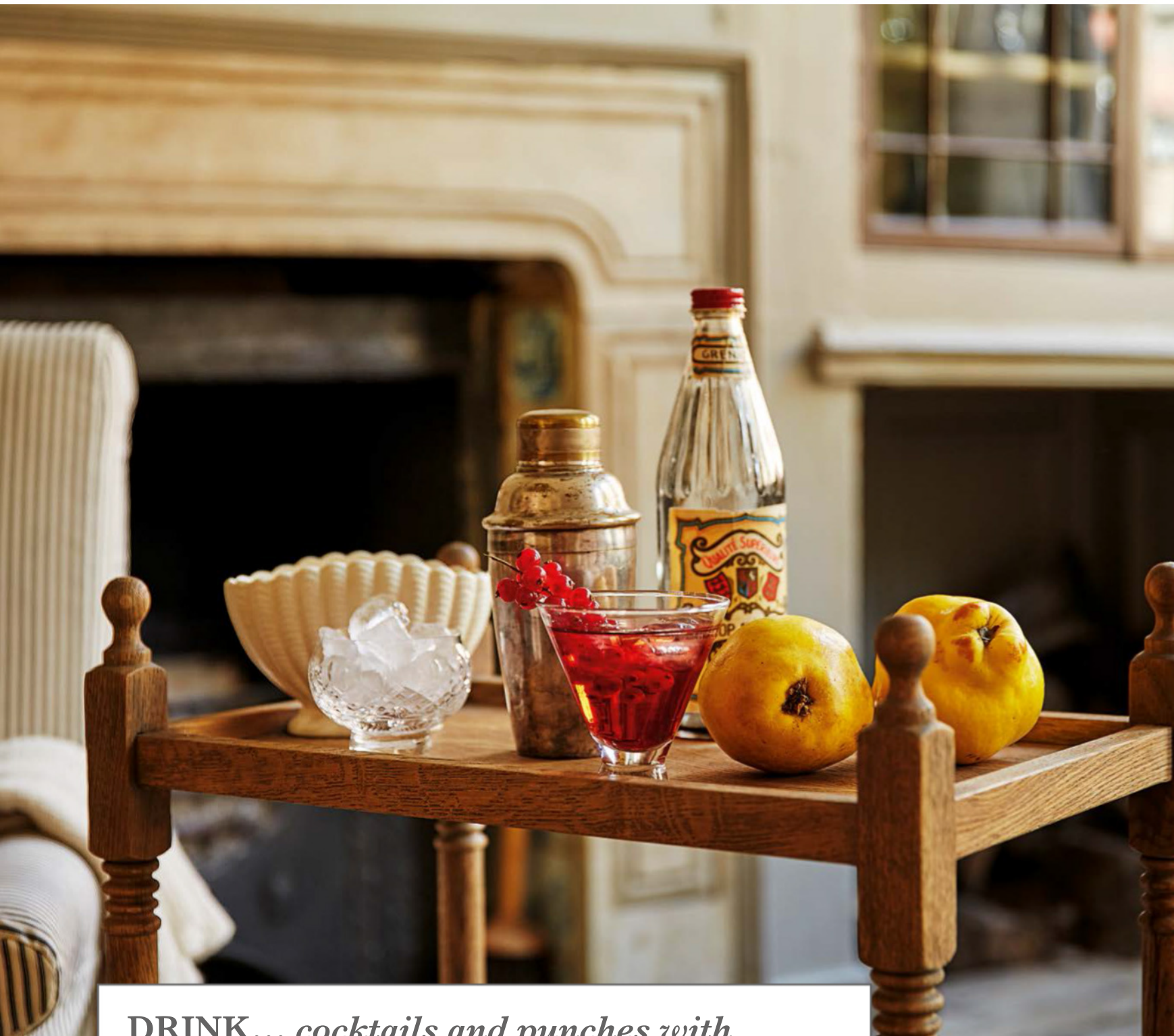
*Christmas Feasts and Treats* by Donna Hay, published by Fourth Estate, £25. *Donna Hay Christmas* is now streaming on Disney+



**UPDATE...** *simple packaging into pretty personalised place settings with room for a tiny gift*

A simple parcel tag, mini peg or clip and a little creativity is all that is needed to transform a small kraft paper bag into a charming, personalised place setting with room for a little gift inside. Just handwrite or stamp the name of the guest on the tag and attach a sprig of foliage or a little sparkle for the finishing touch. These work well as alternatives to crackers for casual get-togethers anytime over the festive period, and also for a New Year's Eve banquet. Suggestions for what to fill them with include luxury chocolate truffles, a miniature liqueur, a square of handmade fudge or caramels, or even a party popper or two.

Ivory kraft block bottom bags pack of 12, from £4.75; classic buff manila tags, £2.25 for 20; natural wooden mini pegs, £2.49 for 45, all The Danes ▶



## **DRINK...** *cocktails and punches with berries, fruits and herbs*

**A**dd an extra twist to drinks this Christmas and New Year with seasonal berries, fruits and herbs. 'Tis the season to be jolly after all, so experiment with new flavour combinations and enjoy raising a toast with friends and family. Favourites such as rosemary, basil, mint and tarragon will add a lovely herbaceous note to gin and vodka-based recipes, and fruits such as kumquats and quince, or berries such as

cranberries or redcurrants, can be made into a syrup as the base for a most delicious mojito cocktail. Just add a tablespoon of syrup to 30ml of white rum or vodka, fresh mint leaves, and crushed ice. Top up with sparkling water and serve fresh from an elegant drinks trolley that can be wheeled into position whether entertaining guests in the dining room or by the side of a favourite armchair for an early evening fireside tittle.

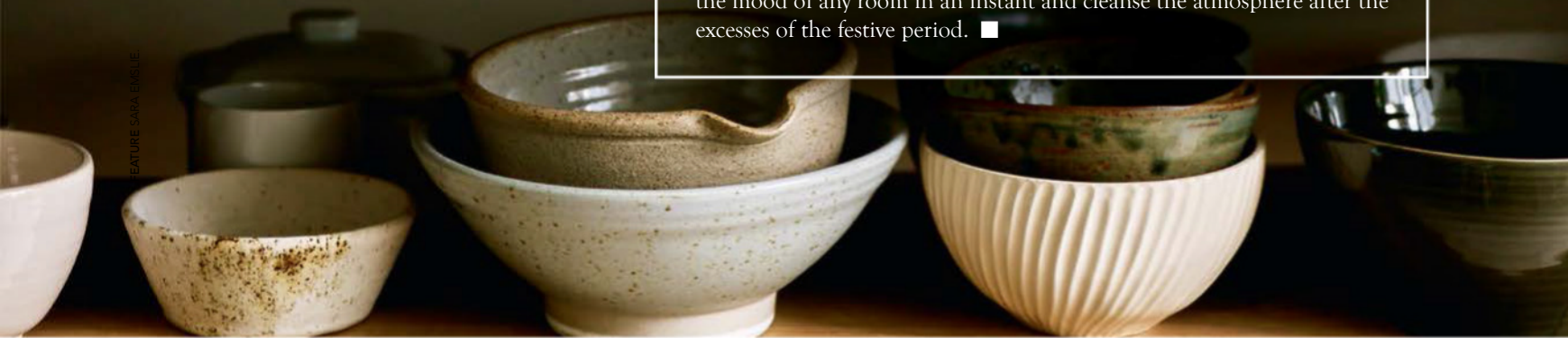
*Stanton oak drinks trolley, £449; Stemless Martini glass, £29 for a set of four, both Rowen & Wren*



## GATHER... *festive fragrances*

**C**reate an oasis of scent to nourish, nurture and feed the soul by adding winter herbs such as rosemary, thyme and sage to floral arrangements to fill a room with warm, woody scent. Alternatively, branches of pine will bring a powerful aroma reminiscent of the forest. Eucalyptus is highly fragrant and renowned for its purifying benefits – hang a posy of herbs and eucalyptus in the shower or at the side of the bath and allow the steam to release the natural scented oils. Remember too the appeal of scented candles. They are lovely as gifts to both give and receive, and highly prized during the dark winter days that follow Christmas. The flickering flame and fragrance will enrich the mood of any room in an instant and cleanse the atmosphere after the excesses of the festive period. ■

*Cypress and  
Eucalyptus candle,  
£30, Plum & Ashby*





THIS IMAGE *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe* theme from Christmas 2013 was especially atmospheric. OPPOSITE PAGE Set amidst 35,000 acres, Chatsworth House in Derbyshire is a majestic sight – even more so in the snow.

# *Chatsworth* AT CHRISTMAS

The Duke and Duchess of Devonshire invite all to share in the festive magic at their divinely decorated family home





Stepping into the splendour of Chatsworth House is always a glorious experience, but at Christmas time it is truly enchanting. Nestled in the Derbyshire Dales, and home to the Cavendish family, every year this majestic 17th-century treasure house is filled with visitors who come to enjoy a spectacular festive experience.

Exquisitely decorated by Chatsworth staff and local craftspeople, every room follows a carefully selected yuletide theme, and the results are simply breathtaking. Now open for the 21st consecutive year, it is a much-anticipated seasonal highlight for locals and tourists.

The Duke of Devonshire says: "This season we're celebrating a Nordic Christmas at Chatsworth. In the house, decorations inspired by nature are displayed alongside items from the Devonshire Collections, including Nordic gems and crystals, and more personal pieces such as items of winter clothing worn by my father, the 11th Duke of Devonshire, on his expeditions into the wild. The Nordic theme continues outside with illuminations which will guide you along some of our favourite walks through the garden."

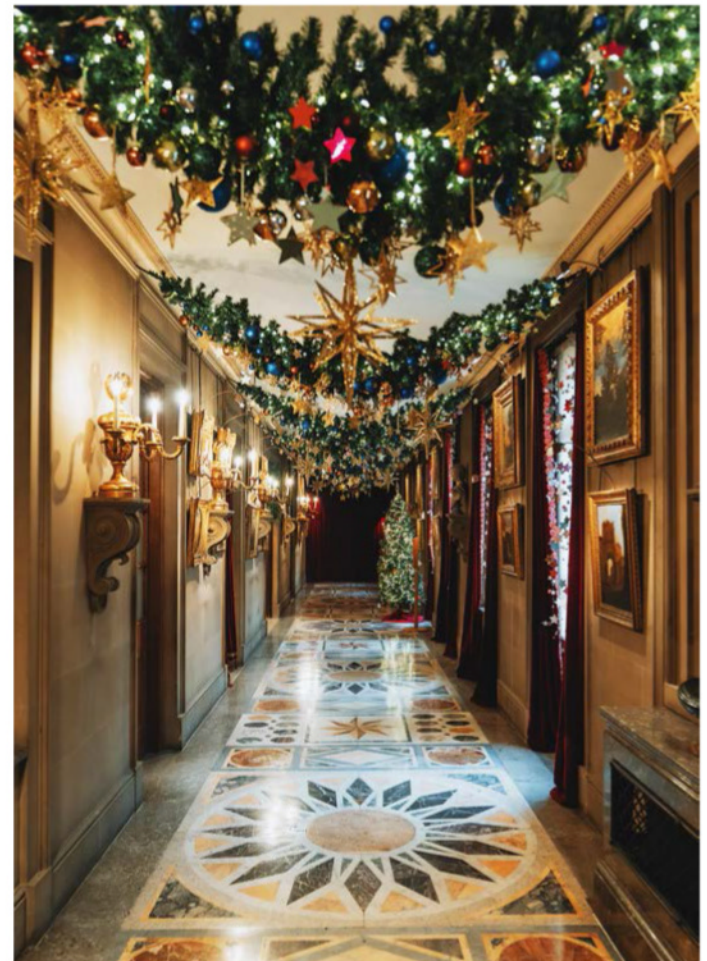
### ENGAGING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

It takes around 14 months of careful planning under the watchful eye of Susie Stokoe, head of textiles at Chatsworth House, to stage a Chatsworth Christmas experience. Along with Lady Burlington and a ▶

**ABOVE** In the Library, a lavish Christmas tree stands proudly upon the highly cherished bespoke 19th-century Axminster carpet.

**RIGHT** Glittering star-strewn garlands decked the entire length of the North Sub Corridor at Christmas in 2020.

**OPPOSITE PAGE** This year a 24ft-high spruce adorned with hundreds of baubles creates a spectacular centrepiece in the Grand Painted Hall.





core design team, potential themes are discussed and loosely researched before being given the final go-ahead four months later. "It's important to think through each theme and work out how it can be developed across the 24 spaces that make up the linear visitor route," explains Susie. "Each year we try to contrast with the previous display and reflect the social mood. This could touch on nostalgia, humour or tradition, but whatever theme we settle on, our aim is to wow visitors and invite them to share in the warmth, comfort and charm of this family home."

### LOCAL PRIDE & TRADITION

Christmas openings at Chatsworth originated in 2001 during the foot-and-mouth crisis which brought economic hardship to the local area. Initially an idea of the Cavendish family to boost community spirits and the local economy, as well as provide a fun and welcome distraction, it quickly became a much-loved tradition. Today it remains central to many family celebrations, with generations old and new returning to make fresh memories each year.

This year sees the welcome return of interactive elements including Wish Trees (on which visitors can pin a hand-written Christmas wish), live storytelling and music. A giant snowball that has rolled into the Great Chamber will provide the backdrop for an extra-memorable festive family photograph.

Much of the magic of putting these spectacular room displays together stems from the joy the in-house team takes in working together. Susie and her colleagues, together with members of the Cavendish family, put their intimate knowledge of the house and its treasured contents to good use and turn their imaginative designs into breathtaking reality. "There's a real sense of pride within the wider Chatsworth family to outdo themselves each year," Susie says. "Plus it has become a seasonal finale to the estate's busy events calendar too."

### BEHIND-THE-SCENES MAGIC

Decorating such treasured and magnificent rooms calls for extravagant thinking, meticulous planning and a steely nerve. Lead Christmas designer Susie oversees the project and has to negotiate delicate tasks such as navigating 30 real Christmas trees – each measuring up to 24 feet tall – through the furnished house. A cherry-picker is needed to dress each tree, and the constant jeopardy of hanging glass and shatterproof baubles on tree branches far above an unforgiving marble floor is continually challenging. Around 35,000 fairy lights, 18,5000 baubles and more than ▶



**ABOVE** This year, inspired by Norwegian fairytale *The White Bear*, the Great Dining Room is richly dressed and surrounded by a delightful woodland scene.

**BELOW** Last year, to celebrate 20 years of Christmas at Chatsworth, past themes were revisited and included this Deck The Halls display in the Great Chamber.





**ABOVE** Susie Stokoe is head of textiles at Chatsworth House and masterminds the breathtaking Christmas displays each year, working across departments, commissioning installations and planning logistics for an event eagerly anticipated by the staff and family alike.



**ABOVE** Built as part of the 6th Duke's renovation of Chatsworth, in 2018, the Sculpture Gallery and its marble figures were lit by thousands of fairy lights and shimmering baubles.

**LEFT** In 2021 a long-held dream of Susie Stokoe saw the Inner Court at Chatsworth transformed into Narnia, complete with paper snow falling to

the ground around Barry Flanagan's *Leaping Hare* sculpture.

**BELOW** Baroque in style, the Chapel at Chatsworth is always a breathtaking spectacle. In 2018, a Cinderella pumpkin carriage conveyed the magical fairy tale theme of *Once Upon A Time* and remains many visitors' favourite memory to date.





200 metres of lights decorate the trees along the route.

This year, the Sculpture Gallery has been transformed into a winter walk complete with a layered natural soundtrack. “I wanted to recreate the feeling of awe you experience when walking beneath ancient Nordic pines,” says Susie, “so last year we ordered Yorkshire-grown Christmas trees and asked for all the lower branches to be removed up to a height of six feet. This gave the trees time to heal and to form a comfortable canopy for visitors to walk below.” With dappled light falling through the branches and naturally enhanced fragrances of mellow pine and conifer, the experience is truly enchanting.

### CRAFTSMANSHIP & SUSTAINABILITY

Susie and the Chatsworth team take great pride in using fine craftsmanship and locally sourced and biodegradable materials. A large stock of baubles and decorations has been amassed over the years, ready to be supplemented and reused when needed.

Fresh greenery is cut and brought in from the vast estate, with most of the work dressing the house carried out by the highly skilled team of staff. One challenge this year was finding an environmentally friendly material to create a giant carved ‘ice’ wall in the Oak Room. “Polystyrene was the obvious choice, but had to be avoided as it is not biodegradable,” says Susie, who, of course, solved the problem.

Elsewhere materials such as salt dough gingerbread and foliage crowns and arches dress key areas, while 4,000 paper straws have been lovingly turned into giant Finnish himmeli (mobiles of delicate geometric shapes) and hung in the Green Satin Room.



Choosing paper for decorative purposes does not always come without its challenges, though, as Susie recalls: “Last year we realised a long-term dream of transforming the Inner Courtyard into a Winter Wonderland complete with falling snow. We chose to use ultra-fine paper snow – which looked fantastic, until it was accidentally walked on by a delivery team and their footprints had to be painstakingly erased. We also had the issue of real snow falling on fake paper snow to contend with, which led to further emergency repairs.” All the hard work is worth it, though, as Chatsworth truly is a festive spectacle.

*Deep Midwinter: A Nordic Christmas at Chatsworth runs until 8 January 2023. [chatsworth.org](https://chatsworth.org)* ■

**TOP** The Great Dining Room, with its crimson silk-covered walls, lavishly trimmed curtains and gilt finishes, is the epitome of Christmas and a truly sumptuous sight.

**ABOVE** Framed by two ornate Christmas trees, the view from the Sculpture Gallery provides a tantalising glimpse into the Great Dining Room.

# COMING NEXT MONTH



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### Where and with whom do you live?

In the Cotswolds with my husband, Anthony, and our seven dogs. It was, above all, the house that my husband and I were attracted to – the history of the building and the beauty and slightly unusual features of some of the architecture.

### Tell us about your home

The current structure and architecture of the house date from the 18th century, when it was designed by John Davenport for the then-owner Warren Hastings. One of the features I love about the house is that it has several fireplaces. I'm always drawn to any room with a fireplace in it – I love the smell of wood burning and the sound of the crackling flames; to me, the comfort and cosiness of a fireplace are what can help make a house a home.

### How would you describe your decorating style?

It's quite traditional in many ways, but also quite eclectic; I'm attracted to considered design. I love the fabric prints from the 1980s – for example, Colefax and Fowler designs were a favourite – but I also love things that have a more modern feel, that are simpler and pared back. Texture and shape are very important to me. I love the texture of natural materials, so whenever I'm thinking about a room, those natural textures and colours will inform how I decorate a space.

### What are your most treasured possessions?

My dogs and my family photographs. I still keep photo albums and love them for the memories they hold and the moments they can recapture and bring to life.

### Where does your passion for mindful living originate?

I think it's simply innate in me. I've always loved being in nature and feel this profound respect for it, as well as a desire to protect it. And I grew up at a time we were naturally more mindful. We looked after our landscapes and respected our soils and wildlife. We valued and took care of things because they were precious, and we didn't want to waste anything.

### How is your life at home, informed by living consciously?

The way we cook and eat at home – growing our own fruit and vegetables and



avoiding waste – is an inherent part of the way I live. I practice meditation every day, which grounds me and instantly puts my mind in the present. A regular practice makes us conscious of our actions and reactions, and reminds us all to live in the moment and be grateful for what we have.

### How do you entertain at Christmas?

I love entertaining, especially at Christmas. I love to pull out all the stops and make the decorations, food and drink really special. There are always lots of bottles of Léoube sparkling wine open, and a balance of delicious, indulgent and very seasonal food. I think a good cheeseboard is an essential part of any dinner or lunch party.

So much about entertaining is making sure everyone feels relaxed and has fun. It's the atmosphere you create. I'm a big fan of playlists to set a mood. And I have grandchildren, so making sure they are taken care of and can enjoy an occasion as much as the grown-ups is an essential consideration when I plan an event.

### How will you decorate?

Enthusiastically. I love decorating the house. I love getting the tree up and having

poinsettias and other nods to the season through the flowers and branches we have. But the table is always the focus of my attention. I love watching people's faces light up when they walk into a room and see a festive table, so I'll spend a lot of time thinking about the colours and what I want to use from the garden to decorate it. This Christmas I'll be using Daylesford's green Beehive tablecloth, which is block-printed by hand.

### What are you most looking forward to this festive season?

Time with family. It's been a very busy year so I'm just really looking forward to having time to relax at home and see my children and grandchildren. Taking lots of long walks, too, and settling down with a good book by the fire.

### Finally, what should no English home be without?

A beautiful tablecloth or two – a linen can instantly lift a table and set a tone or mood for a meal, which is important to me. ■

[daylesford.com](http://daylesford.com)

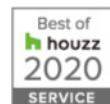
A photograph of a wooden sauna and hot tub at night. The sauna is on the left, with its door open, revealing wooden benches and a stone heater. The hot tub is on the right, with steam rising from it. The scene is illuminated by warm lights, and there are green plants in the background.

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