The
ENGLISH HOME

GARDENS SPECIAL

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May 2023 | Issue 219 | £4.99 | UK Edition



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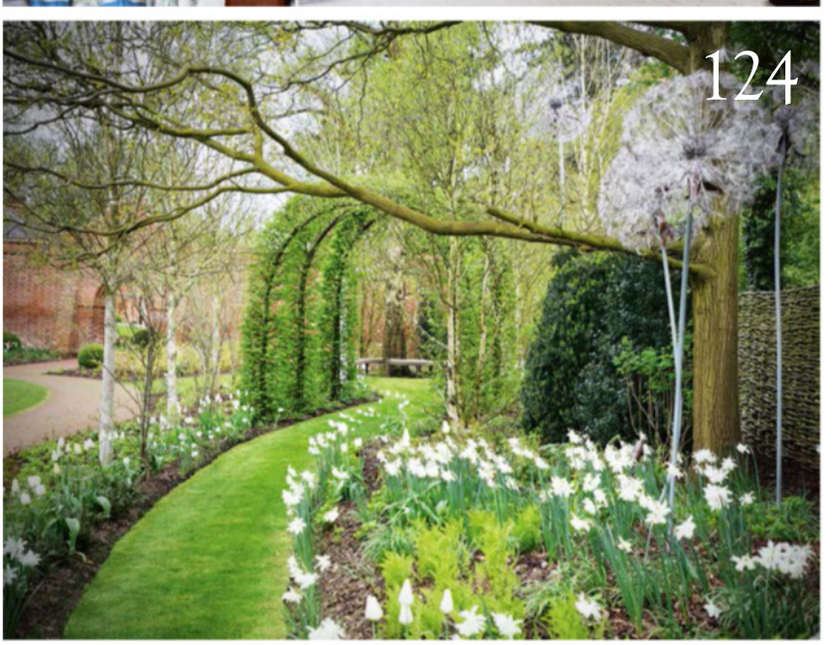

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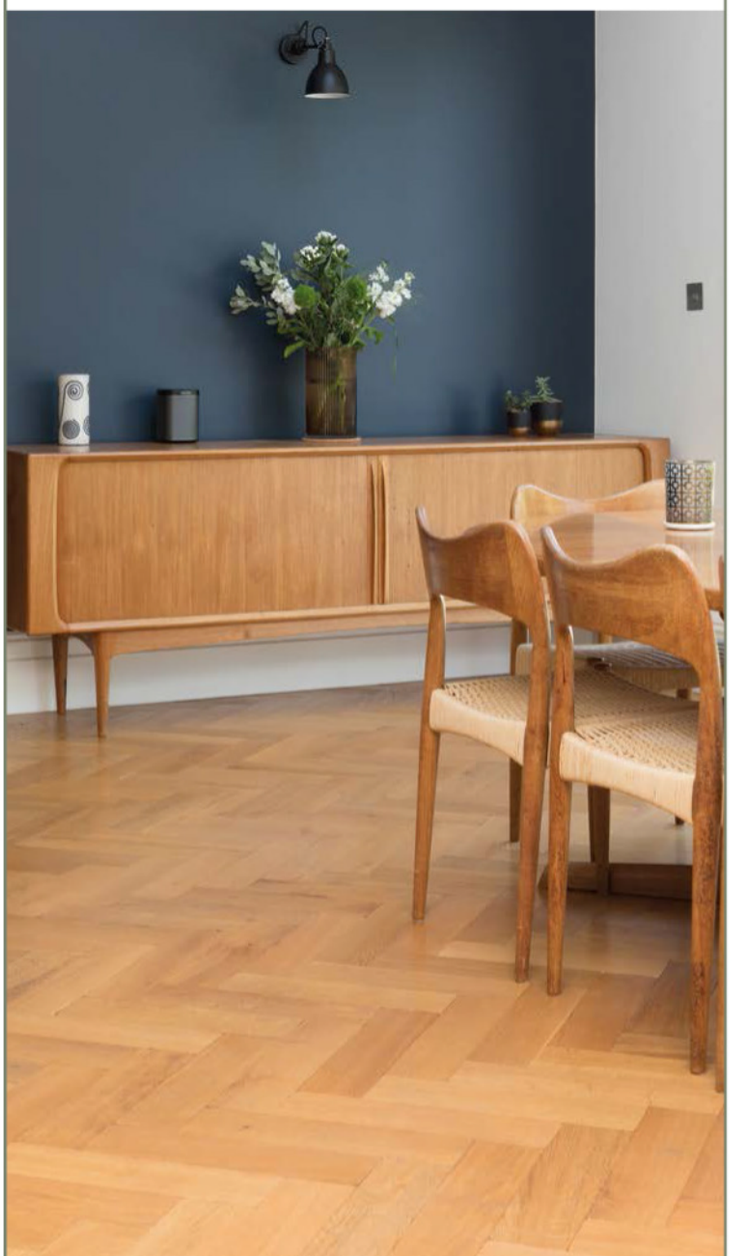

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Discover how stylist Selina Lake created a contemporary cottage garden on page 90.

A letter from home



It's at this time of year that we start to think of making the most of the 'room outdoors' in our English homes – the garden. Whether to savour the flowers we planted last year or spend time relaxing and entertaining al fresco, enjoying some fresh air and a quiet moment away from the bustle of our daily lives is balm for the soul. Whatever size your exterior plot might be, this issue is full of inspiration for taking full advantage of it in the summer months ahead. We look at the latest design ideas and emerging themes from landscape and gardening experts on page 124; stylist Selina Lake shows us how she has created a contemporary take on a classic cottage garden on page 90; and there are buys to make even the smallest gardens or patios feel special on page 28.

This issue brings plenty of inspiration for interiors, too. On page 80 we explore decorating with the colour pink – the first instalment of a brand-new series exploring the history of specific colours and patterns and how to use them in our homes today. Elsewhere, we've consulted leading interior designers to find out where, how and why they shop for antiques to create layered rooms full of history, craftsmanship and personality. It makes for compelling reading and contains several new shopping destinations to discover. And our decorating feature shows the enduring appeal of blurring the boundaries between inside and out with botanical fabric and wallpaper patterns (page 72).

Whether you are looking to update interiors or for ideas to spruce up your outside space, we hope you'll enjoy our Gardens Special as you relax, hopefully in a spot in the sunshine.

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor



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NOTEBOOK

Our monthly edit of news, shopping inspiration and inside information



SPOTLIGHT ON...

Bedroom's Crowning Glory

Rambling roses and delicate intertwining foliage adorn two new headboards by artist Natasha Hulse collaborating with bespoke furnishing studio Lorfords Contemporary. Inspired by the Cotswolds countryside, Meadow *(pictured)* and Rose feature appliqué artwork, new silhouettes and are handcrafted in England using eco-conscious materials such as vintage cloth hand-dyed using natural materials and solid beech wood frames from FSC-certified sources. *lorfords.com*





Trim of Dreams

Maddux Creative x Samuel & Sons

Neoclassical architecture inspired a divine new passementerie collaboration between design duo Scott Maddux and Jo le Gleud of Maddux Creative and Samuel & Sons – Gloriette.

Time-honoured techniques of layered hand-printing on textural grounds, hand-embroidery and fringing bring to life patterns evoking principles such as Palladian symmetry, order and proportions, and Florentine Pietra Dura vivid mosaic work.

Jo says: "I wanted to create a collection of passementerie which celebrated both the simple geometric forms of neoclassical architecture while honouring the detailed joyous forms of classical motifs. Working on this collection allowed me to use my hands again and to focus on sculpting, colouring, texture and materiality."

Of Samuel & Sons, Jo says: "We are kindred spirits with our shared commitment to the preservation of hand-craft, dedication to design and pursuit of innovation. They manage to straddle marrying traditional techniques alongside contemporary and innovative design principals. This creative collaboration is intended to inspire – capturing the essence of neoclassicism while celebrating passementerie."

Maddux Creative interior design studio was founded by Scott and Jo in 2011 with a vision to create stunning interiors with a timeless quality that promote escapism and fantasy.

Samuel & Sons is a family business derived from a linen store established by Michael Cohen in New York City's garment district in the 1940s. Since 1945 it has focused solely on trim, and is now run by the third generation of the Cohen family.

madduxcreative.com; samuelandsons.com

Decorative Decadence

East London Parasol Company's new collection

Dazzled by colourful decorative parasols used in religious celebrations in India – far more fabulous than the plain green or white versions she remembered from England – Lucy Ferguson sensed a business opportunity.

She funded her first production run with very little capital and launched East London Parasol Company in 2015. Today it is thriving, its hand-crafted parasols in rich patterns and vibrant colours, plus bases, frilled cushions, napkins and furniture made by craftspeople in Jaipur, Bali and the UK. Lucy says: "My aim was to make something full of joy which would put a smile on people's faces and make them feel fabulous. I wanted to inspire people to embrace colour and theatricality." *eastlondonparasols.com*



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Artisans Abound: London Craft Week

International craft showcase

Craftspeople from across the globe will gather in the capital for London Craft Week. Now in its ninth year, with events across London from Monday 8 to Sunday 14 May, it will showcase the best of craftsmanship and creativity from around the world, spotlighting celebrated and emerging artists, makers and designers spanning craft, art, design, luxury, fashion and accessories.

Through workshops, pop-ups, immersive experiences and exhibitions, visitors can discover treasured heritage techniques, the latest developments in material innovation and the history behind some of the world's most intricate and beautiful objects.

Highlights this year include events exploring the craft stories behind the Coronation and the tradition of Royal patronage, including a workshop and demonstration led by the Royal Mint's hand-engraver, and behind-the-scenes atelier tours of Royal Warrant holders.

Marvel at intricate works by artist-makers including Francisca Onumah and Max Bainbridge at the exhibition *Material Beings* at Cromwell Place – which will also host the first UK showcase of work by South Korean weaver and Loewe Craft Prize Winner, Dahye Jeong.

Quilts: A Material Culture at Batsford Gallery will be showing creations by the likes of French-Canadian quilt-maker and textile artist Catherine-Marie Longtin.

Gareth Neal will open up his design and craft workshop and studio to give visitors a glimpse behind the scenes as part of the Open Studios programme.

Old Spitalfields Market will host a community embroidery project in collaboration with Stitch-School, inviting the public to join together to participate in creating a piece of communal embroidery over six days.

Demonstrations will include Chanel's Métiers d'Arts ateliers such as jeweller Goossens and milliner Maison Michel. And Edward Barnsley Workshop will unveil its new Easy Chair collaboration with Connolly, made from English oak in a contemporary iteration of a 1950s sketch by Edward Barnsley. *londoncraftweek.com*







TOP LEFT Catherine-Marie Longtin's quilts
TOP RIGHT London community embroidery initiative Stitch-School
TOP MIDDLE The new Easy Chair by Edward Barnsley Workshop and Connolly
MIDDLE LEFT Metalsmith Francisca Onumah
MIDDLE RIGHT Gareth Neal with The Hack Chair
RIGHT Max Bainbridge with his Land Jars


INCHYRA



Gardeners' Heaven

The unmissable Chelsea Flower Show

Mingling floral fragrances will fill the air as visitors gaze in wonder and gather inspiration at the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show. Regarded by many as the best garden event in the world, attracting 170,000 visitors each year, it will run from Tuesday 23 to Saturday 27 May in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea in London.

The restorative power of gardens and gardening to transform our health, our well-being and the environment will take centre stage as the main theme, beautifully exemplified by the 12 Show Gardens.

Emotional rejuvenation abounds in the Show Garden Chris Bradshaw has designed for cancer charity Myeloma UK *(above right)*, with a 'jewel garden' that captures the eternal optimism of spring. And a restful wheelchair-accessible garden for spinal



injury patients, designed by Charlotte Harris and Hugo Bugg for charity Horatio's Garden will be relocated to a Sheffield hospital after Chelsea.

Over 70 specialist nurseries will fill The Great Pavilion with colour and scent, chic brands like David Harber, Alitex and Hartley Botanic will showcase new launches, and our sister magazine *The English Garden* will be at Stand EAE522 on Eastern Avenue. *rhs.org.uk*

Majestic Makeover

The King's New Sandringham Eco-Garden

His Majesty King Charles III has for decades been a visionary ahead of his time – his pioneering views about architecture, gardening and the environment which were once jeered are now cheered.

Opening in May, his new climate-friendly Topiary Garden in the grounds of Sandringham House in Norfolk will be both decorative and eco-friendly. Transformed from an acre of lawn, once the site of a formal parterre garden and used for growing crops during the Second World War's Dig For Victory campaign, the new garden features 5,139 yew trees and over 4,280 plants and bulbs. Carefully chosen to provide seasonal colour, they will attract pollinators and provide them with new habitats, and naturalistic planting will boost biodiversity.

The garden reuses the original topsoil and turf, and a maze of new paths will enable visitors to fully explore the garden. *sandringhamestate.co.uk*



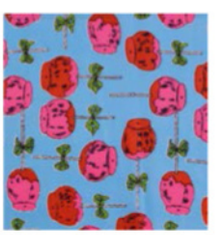
Diary



World-class interior designers will create impressive, immersive and inspiring full-size rooms for WOW!house at Design Centre Chelsea Harbour in London from 5 June to 6 July. *dcch.co.uk*



Ahead of this year's Coronation, new exhibition *A Right Royal Spectacle* at Brighton's Royal Pavilion looks back at the scandalous Coronation of George IV in 1821. From 11 March to 10 September. *brightonmuseums.org.uk*



Before he became a Pop Art icon, Andy Warhol designed textiles. London's Fashion & Textile Museum will host the first exhibition devoted to his commercial textile designs, 31 March to 10 September. *fashiontextilemuseum.org*

FEATURE SARAH FEELEY **PHOTOGRAPHS** © P15 © JAMES BEDFORD. P16 (MADDUX) © CHRISTOPHER HORWOOD; (LUCY) © PHILIP VOLKERS. P18 (TOP LEFT) © LUCINDA NEWTON-DUNN; (TOP RIGHT) STITCH-SCHOOL THE HARLEM/BRIXTON FESTIVAL 2022; (CHAIR CUTOUT) © MICHEL FOCARD DE FONTEFIGUIERES; (MIDDLE LEFT) © MARC BARKER; (MIDDLE RIGHT) © JAMES CHAMPION; (BOTTOM) © COURTESY OF ARTIST MAX BAINBRIDGE. P20 (TOP) © RHS/OLIVER DIXON, (WATERCOLOUR) BY FREEHANDLINES; (ECO-GARDEN) © SANDRINGHAM ESTATE; DIARY (MIDDLE) © RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, BRIGHTON & HOVE LIBRARIES, (BOTTOM) TEXTILE OF CANDY APPLES, SILK BY STEHLI SILKS © 2022 THE ANDY WARHOL FOUNDATION FOR THE VISUAL ARTS, INC.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DESIGN DISCOVERIES

Bring momentum to late spring with bold styles and tactile layers

SCALING THE WALLS

Barneby Gates' new wallpapers are inspired by harlequin prints reinterpreted in a diamond trellis motif. This simple design answers the call for an elegant backdrop to quietly complement items on display, such as pictures and decorative objects. The brand's other new paper, Quilted Harlequin offers a bolder print.

Diamond Trellis wallpaper, available in red or green, £120 a roll, Barneby Gates



RAISE A GLASS

The gold and green Ikat design on these wine glasses is inspired by traditional Indonesian textiles and adds a unique touch to elevate small gatherings and weekend suppers.

Green set of four ikat-print wine glasses, £130, Les Ottomans at Matches Fashion



REFRESHINGLY FLORAL

Whether displayed on a kitchen shelf or favoured for a restorative mid-morning cup of tea, these vibrantly designed floral teacups and side plates are sure to raise a smile. Each piece of glazed stoneware has a textured finish that is as unique in aesthetic as each individual natural flower.

Lilypad Floral mugs, £14 each; Lilypad Floral sideplates, finish will vary, £16 each, Anthropologie



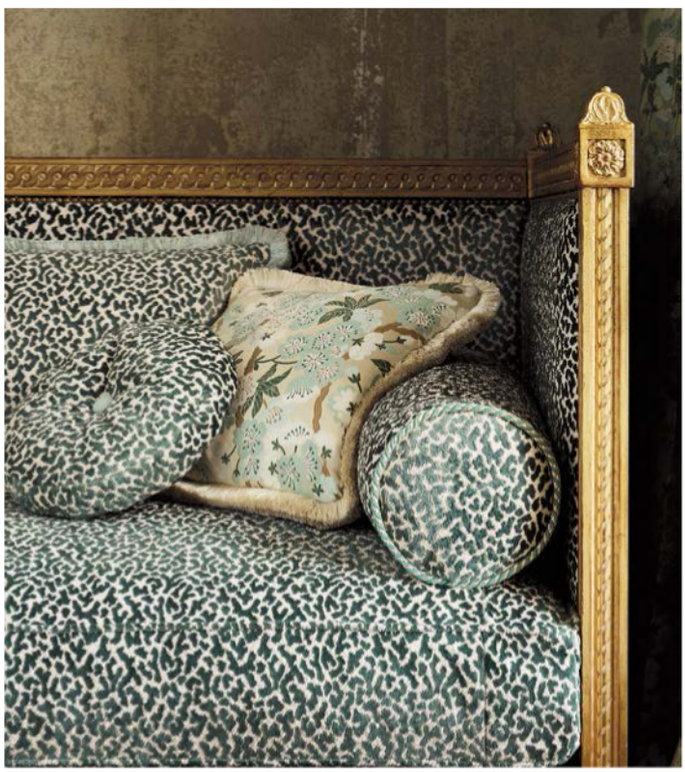


DRAPED WITH COLOUR

A vibrant fabric can be the ideal starting point for a scheme. Opt for a print with a wide range of tones to allow plenty of scope to echo various tones in a room's soft furnishings. This intricately embroidered curtain fabric features 10 colours in its exotic flowers and leaves, inspired by those seen at London's Great Exhibition of 1851. *Curtains, Shalimar, Red/Green, £160 a metre, and all other fabrics, Shalimar collection, James Hare*

WILD VELVET

The raised pattern on the upholstery of this daybed beckons to be touched. Its organic design mimics animal print and adds a touch of opulence to a classic lustrous velvet.
Daybed and cushions, Tobago, Foret, £92 a metre; cushion, Fiorella, Celadon, £148 a metre, both Manuel Canovas







SERVING SUNSHINE

Set the mood with smart everyday tableware that anticipates the balmy days ahead. The Eshani collection has a subtle coastal flavour with its indigo colourway and hand-painted spirals, which replicating the swirling forms and hues of deep blue waves.
Eshani ceramic dinner plate and pasta bowl, Indigo, £22.50 each; Aarushu Seagrass placemats, £45 for a set of four; Aarushu napkin rings, £18 for a set of four, all Nkuku

VERSATILE VOILES

Interior Designer Octavia Dickinson discovered a fragment of hand-drawn 19th-century French print in an old textile collection and has reimagined the design in a linen voile. The delicate pattern can be used for curtains, lampshades (*seen here*) and blinds.
Lampshade, Edie voile, Cherry, £200; Edie voile, Cherry fabric, £142 a metre; headboard, Otis, Pink, £190 a metre, Octavia Dickinson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ALL WORKED OUT

If mulling over how to create a hidden workstation that fits with a period-style reception room yet has modern functionality, an enclosed design can offer an all-round solution. This Georgian-inspired dresser has a false drawer that conceals a pull-out work surface, it also has lockable drawers and a filing drawer. To chime in with other decorative pieces, select a matching paint shade.

Chichester four-foot workstation in Saffron, £4,450, also available in three-foot size, Neptune

INHERENTLY RUGGED

Hunting for natural fibre carpets and rugs? Jacaranda's Babri range of broadlooms and rugs celebrates undyed yarns in loop piles that are a randomly sheered to create a spontaneous texture. Available in six neutral tones, the handmade weave is created on traditional wooden looms using 50 per cent wool and 50 per cent Tencel.

Babri broadloom, £113 a square metre; Babri 2m x 3m stock rugs, from £1,155, Jacaranda



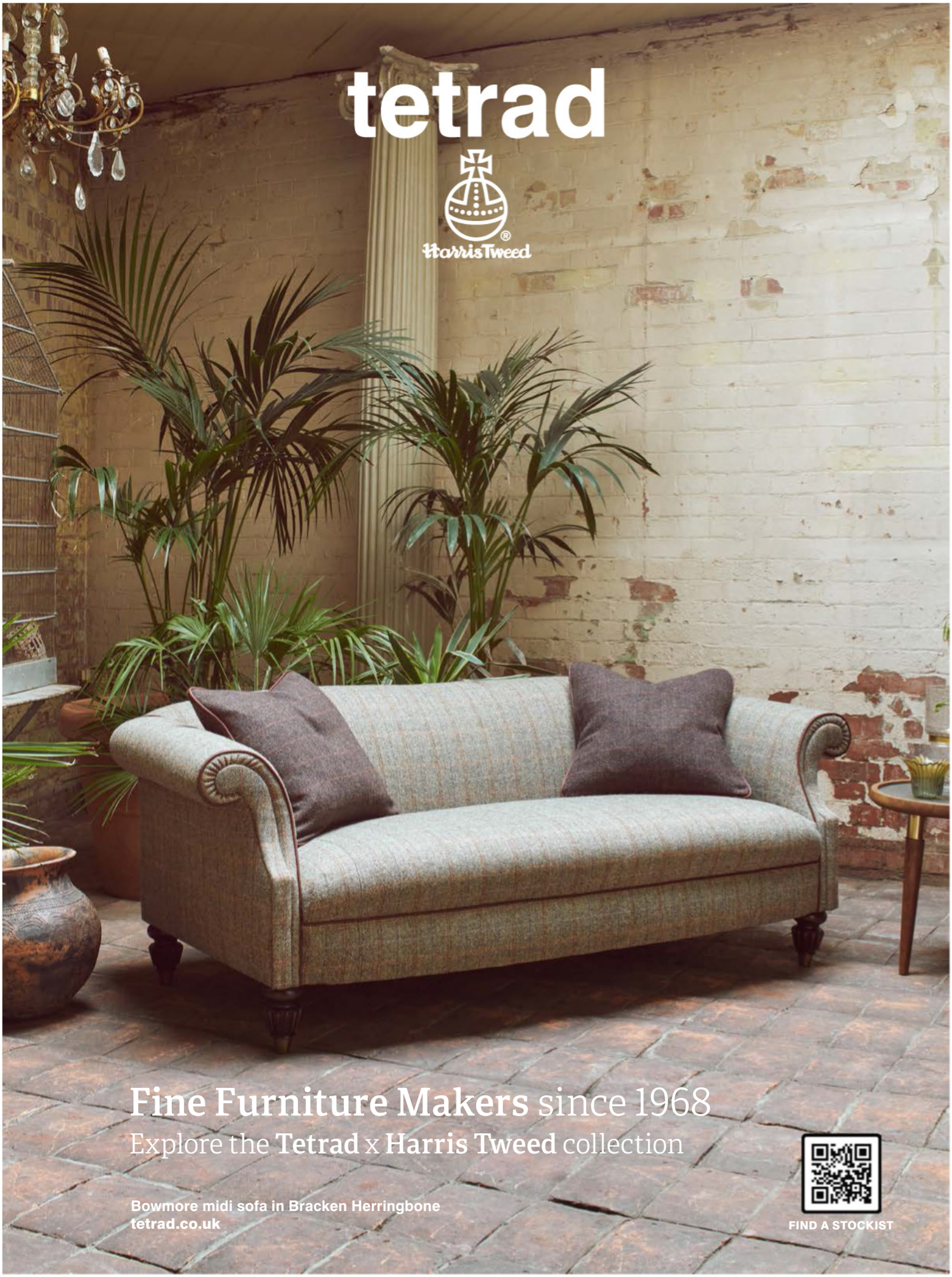


BLANKET COVERAGE

As warmer weather makes outdoor living part of daily life, a throw in a soft and durable texture is a beneficial transitional piece for al fresco dining on cooler days and to add a cosy layer to early picnics. This colourful example is made from recycled plastic bottles, and, in the spirit of its reusable origins, its large proportions make it suitable for indoor use, too, bringing year-round colour and warmth to sofas, beds and occasional chairs.

Darjeeling Caspian throw, 2m x 1.1m, £75, Weaver Green ■

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPHS (BARNEBY GATES) © BEN PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY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FIND A STOCKIST

PATIO HAVEN

Enhance a courtyard, balcony or terrace with chic furniture and accessories to make tending to plants and relaxing with friends all the more pleasurable

Outdoor vertical gold metal wall plant stand with planters, £149.99, Ivyline

Bamboo garden sofa, £695; Bamboo garden armchair, £325, both with an upholstered seat cushion, Home Barn



Sydra side table, £195, Oka



Ernest rechargeable table lamp, £120 plus shade, Pooky



Nine litre watering can, £32.95, Sarah Raven

Grace diamond spade, £65, Garden Glory



Lattice Back garden armchair, £7,782, Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler





Cuzcita Spice outdoor cushion, £75, William Yeoward at Designers Guild



Ancient Collection frostproof garden plant bowl, £29.99, Gardenesque



Redwood Lap Forest Retreat 8x5 shed in Natural Cream, £5,734.99, Forest



Freya balcony set, Sage Green, £229, Dobbies Garden Centres

Border in Microseal Smooth Masonry Paint, Morning Sky, £35 for 5l, Sandtex



Latchmere trough, £140, Garden Trading

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPH SARAH RAVEN © JONATHAN BUCKLEY


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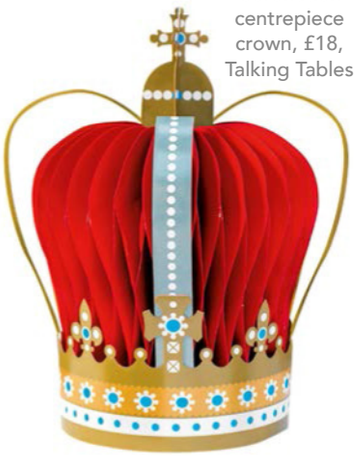
Right Royal Coronation centrepiece crown, £18, Talking Tables



King Charles III Coronation ½ pint mug, £23; Three Cheers for King Charles III small mug, £17, both Emma Bridgewater





Three Cheers for King Charles III four-mug teapot, £80, Emma Bridgewater



The King's Swan decoration, £10, Dog & Dome

Coronation macarons, box of five, £25, Emma Dodi Cakes



FIT FOR A KING

There will be fanfares aplenty when King Charles III is crowned in May. Celebrate the occasion with coronation keepsakes and street party essentials



King Charles III Coronation mug, £21.50, Victoria Eggs



Coronation Party cushion in Duck Egg Blue, £149, Jan Constantine

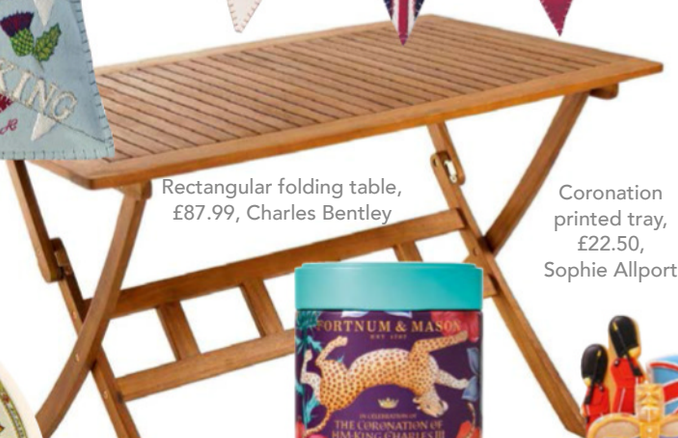


Coronation bunting, £125, Jan Constantine



King Charles III Commemorative Decoupage plate, £65, Bridie Hall at Pentreath & Hall

Rectangular folding table, £87.99, Charles Bentley



Coronation printed tray, £22.50, Sophie Allport



Emma Bridgewater Royal Celebration tray, £9.95, Annabel James





Coronation musical biscuit tin, £30; Coronation coffee, £18.95, both Fortnum & Mason



King Charles III Coronation biscuit tin, £58, Biscuiteers

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPHS (VICTORIA EGGS) YESHEN VENEMA

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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

MAKE A SPLASH

Natural Swimming Pools has become a name synonymous with filtered pools across the UK and Europe since 2001, and the demand for these 'natural' pools (which cost a similar amount to traditional chlorinated swimming pools) is on the rise. The company's team of skilled builders, landscapers and plant specialists provide a complete planning, construction and aftercare service, tailoring every aspect of a design to personal preferences, even building the pools indoors. One of the reasons these types of pools prove so popular is that they are a year-round garden feature, as, unlike the chlorinated versions, they do not need to be covered during the winter months. Natural Swimming Pools will be at RHS Chelsea Flower Show from 23–27 May 2023 displaying the latest technology and pool designs.
naturalswimmingpools.com



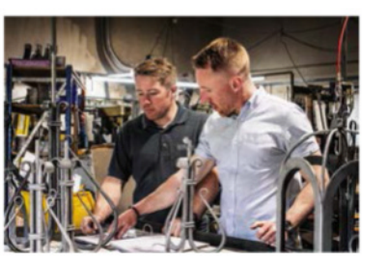
LUXURIOUS LOUNGING



Since Peter Bridgman founded his eponymous award-winning company 45 years ago, it has managed to remain at the forefront of design for luxury garden and home furniture as well as lighting and accessories. For three generations now the Bridgman family has launched everything from rattan garden furniture to fully waterproof cushions, using cutting-edge technology to stay ahead of the trends. And following the success of their outdoor enterprises, they have moved indoors too with a range of dining tables and sofas as well as lighting and accessories. This season sees the launch of the Malvern modular sofa, a beautiful new range of outdoor solar lights and the Bloom fabric in chenille, which, with its velvet-like softness, makes the perfect choice for indoor lounging.
bridgman.co.uk

STRIKING IRON

Nigel Tyas Ironwork has been keeping traditional blacksmith skills alive in the UK for over 20 years, forging everything from chandeliers and curtain poles to fire irons, doors and windows at its workshop in rural Yorkshire. Using an anvil, hammers, tongs and jigs, the skilled team works the metal into unique homeware. This summer sees the brand launching a new range of outdoor products like iron log stores at the Great Yorkshire Show, Harrogate.
nigeltyas.co.uk





JUMP IN

With 30 years experience in the bedroom retail industry between them, when sisters Molly and Harriet decided to launch the Secret Linen Store in 2013, they set out to design luxury bedding at fair prices, travelling the world to find the best suppliers possible. Today all the bed linen is sustainably sourced and manufactured in the UK or Portugal and the brand is working hard to ensure it is all packaged in paper and that plastic buttons are replaced with recycled plastic by the end of the year. with the brand now extending its ranges to include organic cotton. This spring sees the launch of the joyful Buttercup 100% linen range. *secretlinenstore.com*

LOOK OUT FOR...



The award-winning Cormar Carpet Company has been making carpets from the same two Lancashire mills since 1956, a fact the British, family-run business is understandably proud of. Offering a huge variety, from easy-clean to deep-pile, stair runners to contemporary styles, the brand's latest addition to the Wool Twist collection, is the Pembroke range. Made from 80% Pure New Wool, 10% Polypropylene and 10% Tuftbond, it is a resilient weave, making it ideal for heavy traffic areas, and with 18 different shades, there is something for every home. *cormarcarpets.co.uk*

6 OF THE BEST TRINKET DISHES



1 Forget-Me-Not blue trinket dish, £9.50, *oliverbonas.com*

2 Panthère de Cartier small porcelain trinket trays, £250 for a set of two, *harrods.com*

3 Nesting ceramic dishes in Sunset Pink, £75 for a set of three, *monicavinader.com*

4 Splatter Coquillage dish in Pink and Blue, £28, *sharland-england.com*

5 Mother of Pearl ring dish, £12, *monsoon.co.uk*

6 Hand-painted trinket dish, £9.50, *ibbidirect.co.uk*

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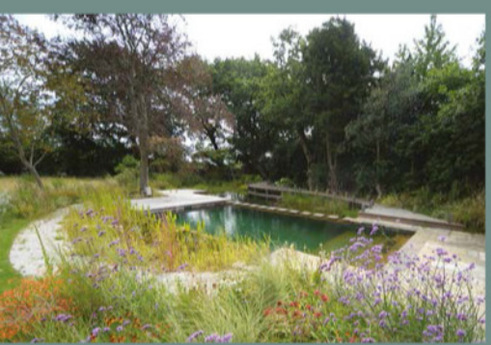

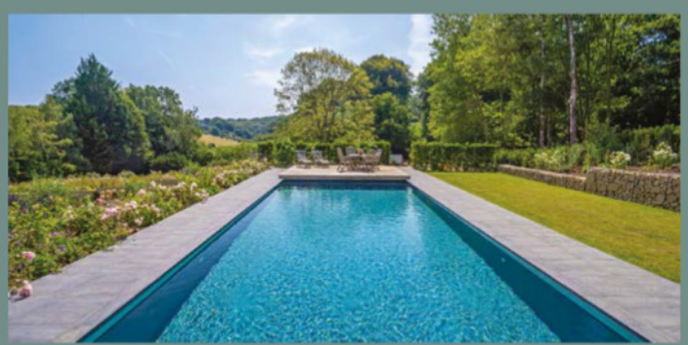



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The orangery-style extension was added in 2008 to house a new kitchen and dining room. When the couple moved in, the kitchen was tiny with a cooker that did not work. "Our architect called in conservatory company Town & Country who built the lantern, windows and doors; the walls and foundations were built by our builder," explains Christabel.

TIMELESS APPEAL

Restoring an old vicarage and giving it the garden setting it deserved has been a voyage of discovery for Christabel and Jasper Boersma

FEATURE SARA BIRD
PHOTOGRAPHY DAN DUCHARS





The original kitchen extended just to the edge of where the Aga sits now. The kitchen cabinetry was built by a local joiner and is painted in Blue Gray by Farrow & Ball. The sink came from a local salvage yard and the tap came from Belgian company Taps & Baths.

'I never tire of the view of the front of the house as you come into the village'

ABOVE The kitchen dining table was bought at Crate & Barrell in 2001 when the couple lived in New York. Christabel lightened the top and painted the base. RIGHT Christabel landscaped the grounds herself and runs a garden design business, Bella Bloom Gardens. She also lets the house for location shoots via *theoldviclocation.co.uk*

Like many families planning the move out of London, Christabel and Jasper Boersma found themselves playing the waiting game. "It was 2005 and our daughters Mia, Phoebe and Isabella were all under three at the time. We had already completed the tour of the counties around London, before deciding to move close to my parents, who are very hands-on grandparents, in Berkhamsted," explains Christabel. "We had seen a lot of houses and made offers that for one reason or another fell through, but the moment the details for this house came through, I called Jasper at work and told him he needed to take the day off – we had to see it."

Christabel's instinct was right. The house, a Grade II listed former vicarage in a sought-after Buckinghamshire village, garnered plenty of







'I love colour – I'm just not sure I need my house to be full of colour and drama. I prefer to add that through paintings and accessories'

ABOVE RIGHT The gardener's lobby is a new addition. A vase from Neptune and a horse from The National Gallery Shop sit on top of the chest from Home & Colonial. The mirror is from Mis en Demeure and the light is Jim Lawrence.
ABOVE RIGHT A console table by Gimoni from Maison in Richmond stands beneath a painting by Helen Simmonds.

attention. "We saw the roses at the front and the Portland stone flags in the entrance hall and we knew this was finally it," she says. "With every room we saw, we loved it more and more and made an offer that day."

The six-bedroom, brick-built house dates from the 16th century with later additions, including a sizeable renovation in the 1840s turned what was once a tiny cottage into a striking vicarage complete with a coach house. "We had been wowed by the estate agent's pictures and could see the potential for it to be our forever home," says Christabel, "but the location is also good. It is in the middle of a village with good amenities including a primary school, a library, a florist's, a cafe, plus a train station to get Jasper to London."

Despite the house needing extensive renovations, the family lived in it for around 18 months while they consulted architects and made plans; they went on to rent a house nearby for the next 14 months while work was carried out. "Everything needed doing," explains Christabel. "We rewired, replumbed, did the roof and restored all the windows. We changed the layout in a few places. The main house originally had six bedrooms and we took one of those to be our bathroom, turning a bathroom into a dressing room. We also added the orangery-style kitchen extension in 2008, and completely relandscaped the grounds."

With rooms here so much larger than those in their previous home in Clapham, Christabel worked with an interior designer for the first round of decorating. "We've redecorated some rooms in the years since,



ABOVE The morning room gets fabulous light early in the day. The walls are lined with Timba Organic linen in Coconut from Malabar Fabrics. The footstool is bespoke by Su Chases Interiors and covered in fabric by Mulberry Home.
LEFT The mirrors in the snug came from one of Christabel's favourite shops, Returned To Glory. "It's an amazing treasure trove of formerly loved homeware and and all proceeds go to the local hospice," she says. The wallpaper is Library Panel by Cole & Son.



'We all love the fact that there is such a variety of building styles and periods here and that the house has evolved over a long time'

ABOVE The principal bedroom features Ringwold wallpaper by Farrow & Ball and carpet in Wool Tipple by Alternative Flooring. The pink chair came from Augustus Brandt while the curtains are in Lainage Craie no 7 by Dominique Kieffer. The bed came from The French House.

but I've stuck to the original neutral palette. I love colour and my garden is very colourful – I'm just not sure I need my house to be full of colour and drama," she says. "I prefer to add that through paintings and accessories, but I've definitely grown in decorating confidence living here."

Christabel cites The Newt in Somerset as a great inspiration: "It's simple but the standard of the finish is exceptional and it's not ostentatious in any way. I've learnt the importance of employing the best decorators you can afford. Quite simply, when we've paid more, we've got better quality. When you're walking in that room every day and seeing where things have not been done well, it gets to you. It's your home isn't it? It's worth it." A lot of the pieces Christabel buys are vintage or antique. "They look best in the house – I think I've got the measure of the place these days," she laughs.

Outdoors, Christabel has used her extensive gardening know-how to landscape the grounds, which are just under an acre and include a wooded area, a generous lawn, a pool area with planted borders and Christabel's cutting garden and greenhouse.

The old coach house has also been renovated. "It would have been where the vicar kept his coach and horse and part of it was for keeping pigs too," says Christabel. "During the renovations we discovered all these drawings on the walls made by soldiers billeted here during the First World War. They were drawings of men and the bi-planes they may have flown or might have seen flying over the village. We've preserved them. The ones in the garden shed are still on show, and in the coach house we've covered them over with plasterboard so they are safe beneath for the next person to discover." The coach house now has a ground-floor entertaining space, wet room, and



In the guest bedroom, the timber and wattle and daub wall that would have been part of the original 16th-century cottage has been restored. The bed from John Lewis & Partners is topped with a throw and cushions from Zara Home. The armchair and chest of drawers are both from Home & Colonial in Berkhamsted.





kitchenette, with changing space for the pool, plus an upstairs bedroom.

"We uncovered a lot of things during the renovations," says Christabel. "We found an icehouse, a well, some original flagstones. We pared the house back to its bones – in one of the guest rooms, we restored a timber and wattle and daub wall, and it was a great pleasure for us to do that. Those things are there to be restored, ready to be loved again and that's an aspect of the house we really love.

"Home is all about the people you share it with and my family and friends really do bring this house to life," she says. "We love entertaining and we all love the fact that there is such a variety of building styles and periods here. One minute it is Georgian England, the next we are in 'olde worlde' England, then go into the kitchen and it is the 21st century. We love that the house has evolved, grown and adapted over a long period of time and we're honoured to be continuing that tradition." ■

ABOVE The Mediterranean-style seating area outside the dining room is the latest addition, completed in 2021. The couple imported the furniture from The Netherlands – it is where Jasper is from.

LEFT The house dates from the 16th century. It was once a small cottage but was substantially rebuilt around 1840 to make it a vicarage. "Up in the loft, we can still see the beams of the roof of the original cottage," says Christabel.



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NATURAL HISTORY

A luminous Arts and Crafts-style home is a showcase for fabrics and wallpapers highlighting the decorative qualities of flora and fauna

FEATURE AMANDA HARLING PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL

ABOVE The house was skillfully extended by the previous owner, in keeping with the original 1930s design.
RIGHT In the entrance hall, a ceiling lampshade from Cox & Cox and a Habitat rattan console add a contemporary note. The black-and-white painted floor is contrasted by the natural beams and the staircase painted in Farrow & Ball's Hague Blue. The chest of drawers is by Oka while the patterned lampshade is from Eloise Home.







'It has a distinct Arts and Crafts style, and feels light, spacious and airy'

ABOVE The sitting room is painted in Fired Earth's vibrant Bamiyan Blue. Cushions from Eloise Home, Fine Cell Work and Vintage Bird. The painting on the chimney breast is by Caroline de Rothschild of Palais des Vaches gallery.

LEFT The previous owner converted the conservatory to become the kitchen. Walls in Setting Plaster offset cabinetry painted in School House White, both Farrow & Ball.

When Suki Showering decided to move home in 2019 she concentrated her search on Hove, the slightly more tranquil residential area adjoining the lively coastal resort of Brighton. "I was born in Hove and lived here until I was 11 and had many happy memories of spending days by the sea, or going for long walks across the South Downs. Whilst Hove has plenty to offer, the bright lights of Brighton are just down the road so I knew I'd never be short of things to do and see. I looked on the internet to see what was on the market and made arrangements to view several properties." With three grown-up children and a growing phalanx of grandchildren, Suki required spacious accommodation for their weekend visits. "This was one of the first houses I saw. It had six bedrooms as well as a generous garden but it felt like a house in the country, although the beach is just across the road and it's a five minute walk to the shops. While the estate agent was showing me around, I'd noticed framed



In the dining room, the ivory painted floorboards and flowing design of the Pumpkin wallpaper from Eloise Home accentuates the light and airy look. Suki sourced the furniture locally, with the painted bench coming from Franklins in Portslade while the table and folding chairs came from Three Angels in Hove, and the bamboo mirror was a buy from No 1 in Lewes. The goose was painted by Eloise, aged nine.



The garden room, papered in Eloise Home's striped Climbing Clematis, becomes a relaxing retreat on busy family weekends. The sofa from Sofa.com is teamed with a rattan coffee table from Birdie Fortescue, while the vintage folding chair is from Three Angels in Hove.

'I look forward to my expeditions – Hastings is a treasure trove of quirky, characterful shops and galleries'





photographs of somebody I'd met whilst doing my masters degree. It turned out that the house was indeed hers, so later that same evening I gave her a call and said I'd love to buy the house if we could complete the deal within five weeks as I had to be out of my flat. Five weeks later I moved in."

Part of the property's appeal was that Suki's friend had modernised and extended it sensitively without destroying the character of the detached 1930s property. "Unusually for a house of that period, it had a distinct Arts and Crafts style, with a beamed sitting room and hall, but it felt light, spacious and airy, with doors into the garden from both the dining room and kitchen," Suke explains. "The sitting room, with its wood-burning stove at one end, is open to the adjoining kitchen, giving the main living area a contemporary open-plan look which I liked."

Having found her Sussex home, Suki set about sourcing decorative pieces in antique shops and galleries from one end of the county to the other. "It is a beautiful county and the towns are without doubt some of the most picturesque, so I look forward to my expeditions," she says. "Hastings is a treasure trove of quirky, characterful shops and galleries. My favourite is Merchant 57 and I have something from that shop in nearly every room. If I'm in Hastings, it's only another few miles to Rye, where I carry on to see what's new in Ferry Road Stores."

Suki's daughter Eloise is a designer of wallpapers and fabrics, so, of course, designs from the Eloise Home collections have been incorporated into the decorative scheme. "Some parts of the house, such as the hall with the striking black-and-white painted floor, have remained largely unchanged," Suki says. "The walls of the kitchen were pale pink when I moved in and I simply repainted them in the same colour because it suited the room so well. Similarly, the blue sitting room and the study next door have stayed the same, but Eloise's Pinecone fabric adds pattern and interest to the sofas in both rooms. What had been a games room for my friend's sons is now my dining room, with walls papered in a striking design of Eloise's called Pumpkin. My talented daughter designed it especially for the room and it's now part of her collection. I've always made a

ABOVE LEFT Eloise and her Tibetan terrier Stanley enjoying time in the garden with Suki. To see Eloise's range of designs, visit *eloisehome.com*

ABOVE RIGHT The wallpaper design Shell Grotto in Clay was inspired by the long walks Eloise took along the beach during lockdown. The rug is from Habitat and the chest is from Oka. The Plymouth knitted cushion is by Jo Cranston.



'I've always made a feature of colour and pattern in my homes'

feature of colour and pattern in my homes, which is maybe how both have come to play such an important part in Eloise's life."

Eloise recalls spending hours mixing paints to make vibrant colours when she was a child – a skill set put to good use in her designs today. "After gaining a masters in art curation at Chelsea College of Art, I worked for furniture design company Bohinc Studio," she says. " When lockdown came along, I seized the opportunity to create a collection of designs of fabrics and wallpapers. Stanley my Tibetan terrier and I came down here, where I worked on the collection in the garden room. It's full-on running my own business but I wouldn't want to be doing anything else, except maybe getting started on the next collection – there's no shortage of natural history here to provide inspiration."

Suki truly has found a home to suit her life and that of her family, with interiors full of character and surroundings which spark creative endeavours, as well as providing a welcoming retreat for all. ■



ABOVE A vintage painted Indian desk from Jugs Furniture in Hove is teamed with a Louis Ghost chair by Kartell in the main bedroom. The de Le Cuona blanket at the foot of the Antoinette bed from Loaf is combined with a pair of cushions from Libery. The armchair is by George Smith.

RIGHT An ornate mirror from Spencer Swaffer in Arundel adds interest to the bathroom.



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Modern CLASSIC

This grand family home has evolved over generations, and Massi and Oliver Smith are its latest custodians

WORDS KATHERINE SORRELL
PHOTOGRAPHS ANYA RICE
STYLING MARISA DALY

Built by Georgians, extended by Victorians and ravaged by fire then restored in the 20th century, Massi and Oliver Smith's elegant home, in the High Weald of West Sussex, has certainly witnessed a change or two over the years. Originally constructed as a rectory in the Queen Anne style, it is set in 60 acres of grounds and is Grade II listed, with a stone terrace bordered with balustrades (from the original Sir John Soane-designed Bank of England in the City) that were added in the 1920s. Somewhat surprisingly, the pair of bow windows that allow sunshine to pour into the kitchen and dining room were a change made in the 1960s – prior to the listing – though they are so well blended with the architecture that they appear to have always been there.

Inside, classical proportions and refined plasterwork are the backdrop to gracious furnishings, many of which have been in situ for 30 years or more. This phase of the story began in the 1960s when Oliver's grandparents bought the house from his great-aunt. When his parents subsequently took over the house, they continued to improve it, adding more antique pieces and a superb

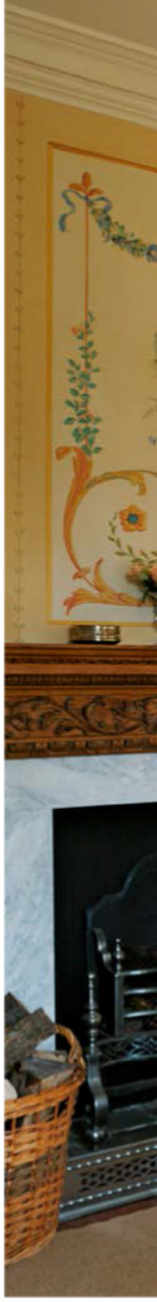


The sofas and chairs in the drawing room are a mixture of originals from Howard & Sons and more recent reproductions, upholstered in fabrics from Veere Grenney, GP & J Baker, Lewis & Wood and Schumacher. Most trimmings are from Samuel & Sons.









'The process of doing the house helped me refine my taste and appreciate the history behind old houses'

ABOVE LEFT For a depth of colour, the walls in the hall were glazed with two colours of paint by specialist decorators. The light is by Vaughan Designs and the rug by Tim Page.
ABOVE RIGHT Massi in the dining room, with its delicately hand-painted walls by artist Marcus May.

collection of paintings depicting distant and some close ancestors. Devastatingly, in 1995 a fire destroyed the attic and roof while the family was away on holiday, and the resulting water damage was extensive. A silver lining, however, was the opportunity to modernise, and so, as well as redecorating throughout, Oliver's parents converted three bedrooms into bathrooms. The house now comprises 10 bedrooms and eight bathrooms on the first and second floors, with a library, sitting room, drawing room, kitchen, dining room and nursery on the ground floor. On the lower ground floor are a laundry, billiard room and wine cellar, plus an unmodernised section known as the hunting-boot room.

"Olly and I moved in with our two young sons three years ago," says Massi. "The house had been decorated beautifully, in a classic style that doesn't date – I'm lucky that my in-laws have such good taste – and, as well as the artworks, we inherited some wonderful window treatments, rugs, chandeliers and furniture. Nevertheless, parts of the house required a little updating, and we needed to make it our own." As well as restoring the exterior shutters, the couple undertook the huge but worthwhile task of replacing the 1930s boilers. For help with decorating the more formal rooms, they engaged local interior designer Lisa Bradburn, whose guidance they found invaluable. "We added our own twist to most of the rooms, with the aim of continuing the work that Olly's parents, and before them his grandparents, had done, while making the house work for a modern family," says Massi.

A great inspiration was a picture of the yellow drawing room at Ven House, by Jasper Conran, which



ABOVE The murals in the dining room depict houses associated with Oliver's family. The napkins on the table are from So Souk, a small British business, and the chargers are from Decoralist.

LEFT The main part of the Grade II-listed house originates from 1760. Modelled in the Queen Anne style, it has some Victorian additions, notably the drawing room. The two bow windows were added in the 1960s.





ABOVE To complement the vintage Cole & Son wallpaper, Massi chose a sofa and armchairs from Robert Langford. The cushions on the armchairs are in Tendril Vine by Soane Britain.
RIGHT The kitchen was fitted in the 1990s and only needed "sprucing up" by Massi. The doors on the top half of the dresser were removed, and it was repainted in Oval Blue by Farrow & Ball, with new handles from John Lewis & Partners. The blind fabric is from Schumacher.





'The downstairs is designed with colours that flow from one room to the next, as the library, sitting room and drawing room are connected enfilade'

featured a relatively sparse, symmetrical arrangement of upholstered furniture among bold walls and large oil paintings. "I love traditional English and American interiors, not forgetting my Italian background, of course," says Massi. "Colefax and Fowler, and Mario Buatta were definite influences. The process of doing the house helped me refine my taste and appreciate the history behind old houses. I would never have imagined that I would fall so much in love with interiors and interior design – to the extent that I now have an Instagram account dedicated to the house. I've also fallen in love with the English garden and with gardening in general."

When choosing pieces, Massi and Oliver bought at auction and via online antiques stores (Relic Interiors is a favourite), as well as from companies including Birdie Fortescue, David Seyfried, Soane Britain, Holland & Sherry, Robert Langford and Oka. They were also keen to support smaller brands such as Katy Takla, which makes cushions using designer remnants, and So Souk, which sells artisan homeware. On occasion, they came across a hidden gem hidden somewhere in the house. A two-seater sofa in the library, for example, was a 40-year-old family piece, found languishing in a store room and which Massi had reupholstered.

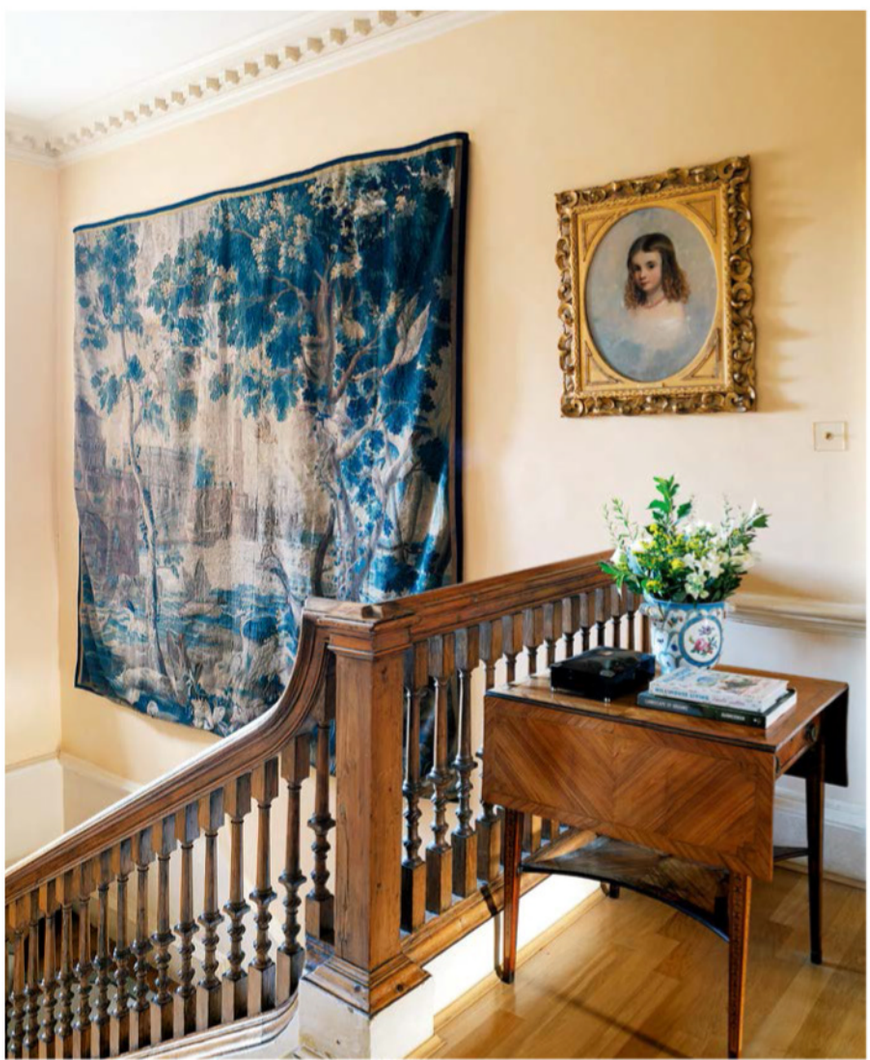
While the newly updated library, filled with books from generations of the family, is Massi's favourite room, the undoubted showstoppers are the sitting room, with its hand-blocked, red Cole & Son wallpaper, and the drawing room, which features a glorious arched window and an enormous glass chandelier. "When the house caught fire," says Massi, "my husband's great-aunt was issued with a hard hat and bravely came into the burning building to save the chandelier, winching it down from the floor above."

Massi thoroughly enjoyed the process of re-covering the sofas and armchairs in these two grand rooms and finding fabrics for the cushions. "I wanted the drawing room to feel as cosy and light as possible, while remaining a more formal room," she says. "In

ABOVE Books old and new fill the restored breakfront bookcase in the library. Massi bought the bergère sofa for £50 at auction and had it reupholstered by Mister Smith in Brighton, adding cushions in fabrics from Holland & Sherry, Fermoie and Lisa Fine Textiles.



OPPOSITE Hung with fabric by Colefax and Fowler, the four-poster bed in the principal bedroom is a family piece, complemented by wallpaper from Zoffany. The cushions are from Katy Takla and Soane Britain. RIGHT Wool throws by Birdie Fortescue and cushions by Katy Takla complement toile de Jouy wallpaper from Charles Burger in a twin guest bedroom. BELOW The large antique tapestry is another beautiful piece that came with the house when Massi and Oliver moved in.



'It's a relaxing and cosy family home, very much a home full of heirlooms'

the north-facing sitting room, however, I wanted to embrace a darker feel. Olly's mother chose the wallpaper in the 1990s and we designed the room around it, using complementary shades of green and dark red. The whole downstairs is designed with colours that flow from one room to the next, as the library, sitting room and drawing room are connected enfilade. I love this feature of Georgian architecture: the symmetry of the doors and how each room fits perfectly next to the others, creating the illusion of more space and light."

The initial renovations took about a year, and the plan now is to make a few minor tweaks to the dining room, kitchen and Massi's bathroom, while continuing to update in general. "We will never really finish, as there is always something new to do," says Massi. "I want to keep adding to the house in the hope that one day one of my children will live here with his family. It's a relaxing and cosy family home, very much a home full of heirlooms. Every generation has added its own mark, and we continue to do the same." ■




THE NEW NEW THING
MICHAEL LEWIS
D-DAY



PERFECTLY COMPOSED

Lily Woods enlisted the help of decorator Daniel Slowik to carefully curate and reinvigorate her collection of antique pieces and update the English country style of her London home

FEATURE ARABELLA MEZGER
PHOTOGRAPHY BOZ GAGOVSKI

In the elegant drawing room, the sofa has been re-covered in Collobrieres-Croisé in Eglantine by Pierre Frey. The vintage kilim and the Cockpen coffee table from Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler provide a contemporary touch to the otherwise classic style of the room.





'I grew up with the American equivalent of English country style and I've always loved it'

Lily Woods, who was born and brought up outside Philadelphia and moved to London in the 1980s, has been an avid antiques collector since her early twenties. She laughs that she bought her late-Victorian terraced house "mainly because the four-poster bed fitted". Ever since seeing the window displays of Colefax and Fowler's Fulham Road store, she fell in love with the English style. "I grew up with the American equivalent of English country style and I've always loved it."

Downsizing from a house three streets away and feeling daunted by the prospect of which furniture to take and how to update her current look, Lily enlisted the help of long-term friend and antiques aficionado, Daniel Slowik. "It was through Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler that I first got to know Daniel. I used to have clients near its shop when it was in Brook Street and on my way back to the office I would stop in and sit in the Yellow Room," she says, referring to Nancy Lancaster's iconic drawing room. "It couldn't have been a nicer place and I frankly spent most of my pay cheque on antiques there. It's always a bit daunting when you're downsizing – what to use, what not to use. I didn't want it to look old-fashioned, but I wanted it still to have the English style," she says.

Having worked first in the antiques department and then as a decorator at Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler, Daniel is well-versed in creating the gracious, well-mannered yet stimulating rooms his predecessors were known for. He now runs his own studio and continues to be "bowled over by the incredibly original schemes of John Fowler. He used really bold colours and had an extraordinary attention to detail. I've learnt a lot from that."

Daniel describes Lily's house as a "miniature country house in London" that has been updated by "paring

ABOVE The existing kitchen cabinetry was given a new lease of life and repainted in Farrow & Ball's Old White for the drawers and cupboards and Railings for the island.
LEFT A Nouvelle stair runner by Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler based on a French geometric design was woven especially for the project. It is set off beautifully by the walls in Farrow & Ball's Setting Plaster and an Apollo lantern by Hector Finch.
OPPOSITE The light, airy dining area looks out onto a pleasing exterior setting by London–based plantsman and garden designer Alexander Hoyle.





'The best way of recycling is using antique pieces, which is the antithesis of unsustainable disposable manufacture'

it back and adding modern elements". Formerly made with swags and tails, the curtains now hanging in the principal bedroom came from Lily's former home and have been simplified and hung from a pole to sharpen the look.

The drawing room, with its deep sense of ease and comfort, has surprising components: a pop of vibrant orange trim on the olive-green curtains, which picks up on the pinky tones of the sofa, for example. Seating has been re-covered in a mixture of luxurious plains and florals like Colefax and Fowler's Honeysuckle to "lighten the whole scheme up", and a bold antique kilim has been added to give a "more modern and colourful impression". "We've been quite conservative in some ways, but I think the drawing room works because it has the odd flash of colour," says Daniel.

Both Lily and Daniel are inspired by couturiers – books on John Galliano and Christian Dior are part of Lily's collection – it is unsurprising then, that trims, sumptuous passementerie, skirted chairs and carefully considered hardware feature strongly. None are far removed from the dressmaker's toolkit. Understanding how furniture and fabrics are designed and made up is integral to Daniel's work and allows him to revive furnishings in tailored and often surprising ways. "I'm keen on beautiful workmanship because it stands the test of time," he explains. "The drawing room sofa was of a high quality, but it was covered in a rhubarb and custard-coloured chintz that suited the old home but not this one. We stripped it, refilled the cushions, and tightened up the upholstery using a rough Pierre Frey linen, trimmed with green to pick up on the curtains. It now feels much more modern."

Daniel is an advocate for repurposing and upcycling. "There is a hideous waste around furniture. The best way of recycling is using antique pieces, which is the





ABOVE RIGHT The fabric on the 18th-century provincial chair in the principal bedroom is a faux horsehair called Arlo by George Spencer Designs. Both the lamp and table were sourced by Daniel from the Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler antiques department.

LEFT & BELOW RIGHT The drapes on the four-poster bed and the window dressings in the principal bedroom are in Colefax and Fowler's Maybury in Blue/Green and came with Lily from her previous home. The 19th-century quilt is an antique find and the skirted chair is covered in Lewis & Wood's Oaksey Linen in Clay.





It's a bit daunting downsizing – what to use, what not to use. I didn't want it to look old-fashioned, but I wanted it still to have the English style'

antithesis of unsustainable disposable manufacture." The house is filled with ample evidence of this. "Pretty much everything in the drawing room is reused from the other house," says Lily. The existing kitchen cabinets were reconditioned and painted in Farrow & Ball's Railings and Old White, and the handles were replaced with reeded knobs to add a layer of texture.

Daniel worked with the original layout of the house, making very few structural changes. "The double drawing room, which had a wall that had been knocked through before, was very unresolved, so we designed an arch between the two rooms which was more substantial and had proper architectural detail and beading," he explains. The bookcases were designed bespoke to fit Lily's collection of books, the old fireplace was replaced with one that is more sympathetic to the style of the building, and antique doorknobs replaced the pre-existing ones.

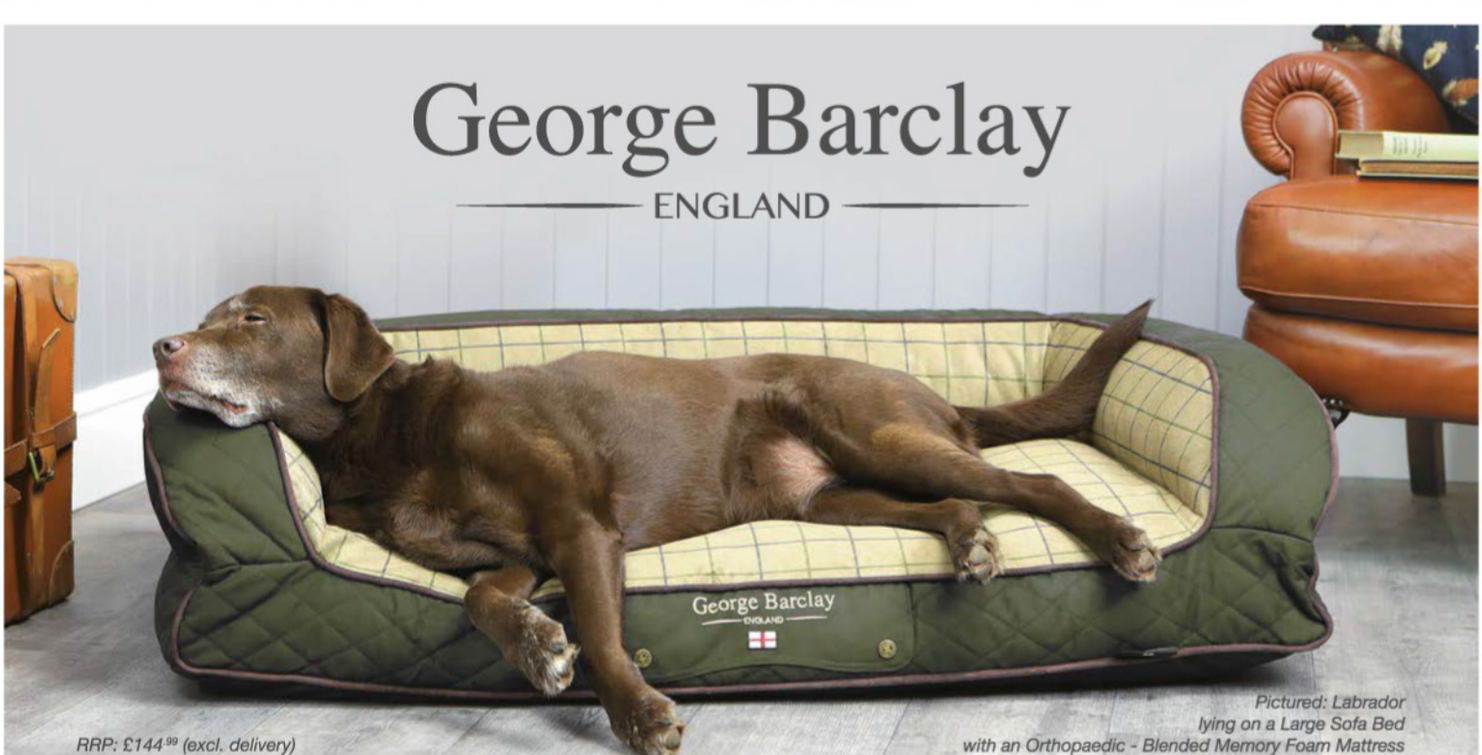
With delicate florals and whimsical bed hangings, Lily's bedroom is perfectly peaceful. "I love my bedroom," she says. "We used very muddy colours and it's so calm and still. When we first painted it, I thought 'this isn't going to work, it's beige'. But somehow when the curtains went up, it turned into a lovely mauve colour." Scale and proportion are other components of Daniel's approach and here he felt that "overscaling was important to make the room look bigger". There is something captivating, almost magical about the oversized four-poster bed, as if stepping through the looking glass into a land far away from the hubbub of London outside.

It is fitting that Lily and Daniel's friendship began through her visits to the Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler shop. They have followed in the footsteps of the design duo's decorative style and passion for renewing and reworking items, understanding their construction and craftsmanship, and expressing the personality of the owner, which this home beautifully does. ■

ABOVE LEFT The curtains and walls in Lily's feminine dressing room are in Snow Tree in Cream by Colefax and Fowler. The antique chair has been recovered in Claremont's Matelas de Laine in Khaki.

LEFT The charming guest bedroom is papered in the delicate Sudbury Park pattern while the screen and valance of the antique bed are in the discontinued Climbing Geranium, both by Colefax and Fowler.





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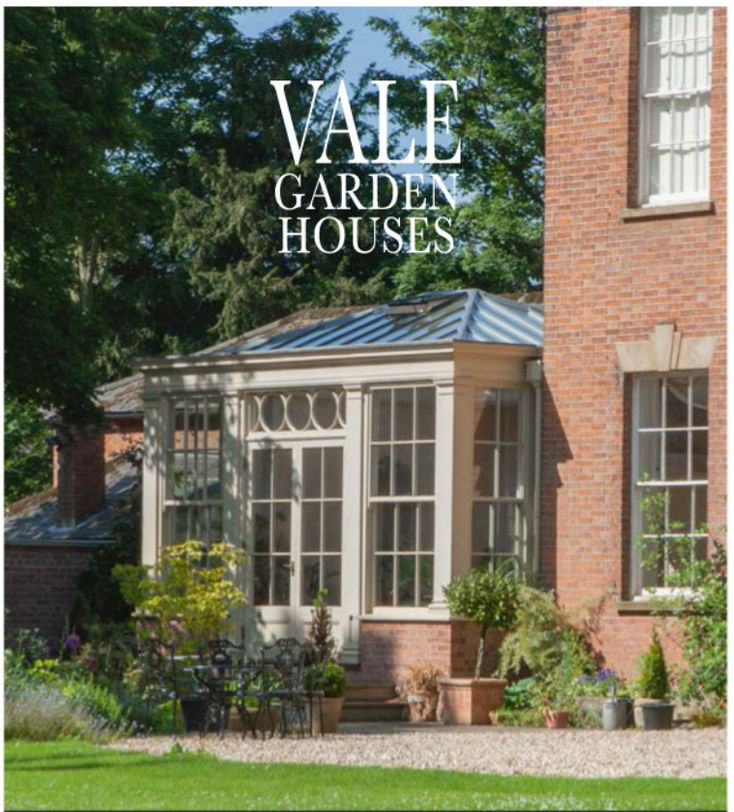

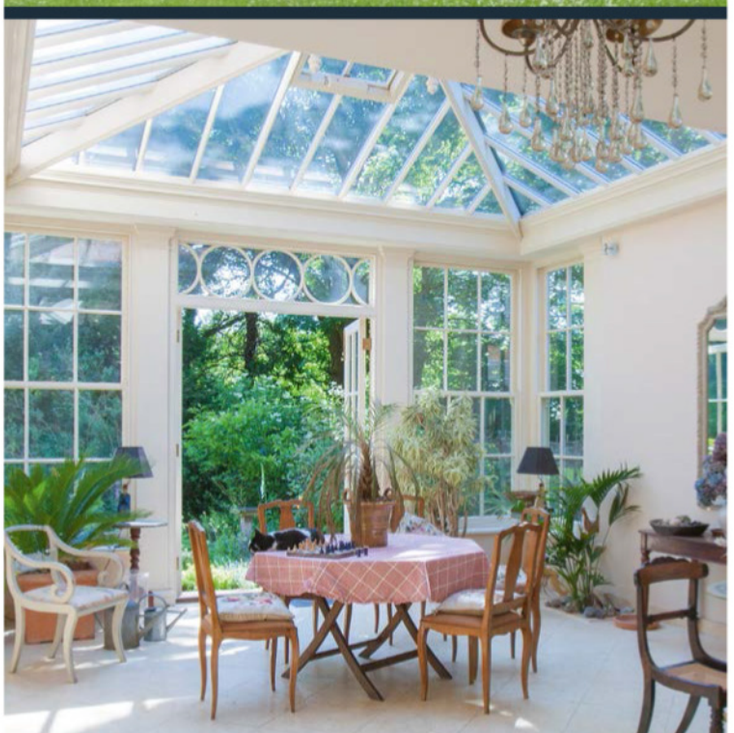

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Make a small room highly desirable with clever design. A false wall encloses a bed in its own private nook, with curtains adding extra luxury. What might have looked cramped, is chic and considered.

Curtains, Envs Garden, Blush/Jade, £85 a metre and all fabrics, Sanderson

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN





Nature's design

Emulate the calm, organic beauty of a lovingly tended garden with botanical and floral patterns that bring the wonder of the outdoors in

The intricate and captivating beauty of flowers, plants, trees and leaves have long inspired designs for interiors. The desire to capture the natural spectacle of plants in textiles and wallcoverings means there are always plenty of enchanting botanical designs to choose from. The wealth of inspiration in the garden and beyond that there is a huge variety of interpretations from which to choose. From painterly, artistic depictions which take a more abstract approach to detailed studies that capture each tiny element, to immersive scenic wallpapers that transport to Eden-like vistas, to big rhythmic repeats that capture the impact of flowers in full bloom, to daintier smaller-scale designs that quietly bring a welcome prettiness.

Colour, too, can be seen from across the spectrum, from the rosiest red to the sunniest yellow and sweetest violet; however, it is green that naturally has the greatest synergy in these motifs. Almost eternally popular, it has such a calming effect and can be layered in different hues, as well as paired successfully with many colours – just as it is in nature, making it a versatile and useful base colour for a scheme.

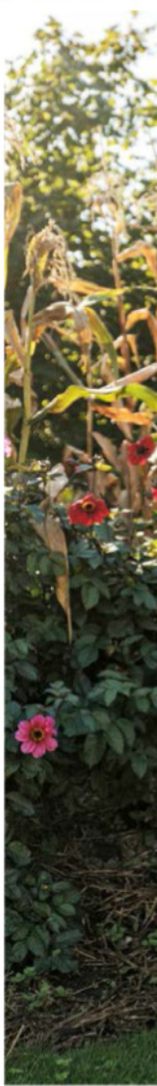
Here we have brought together favourite new designs that celebrate the world beyond the window, with flowers, plants and trees from gardens, meadows and forests, as well as a few exotic flavours for a touch of variety. The beauty of such patterns is that they can be layered together, united within the botanical theme, and the joy is that they will bloom all year long.

ABOVE Balance bold florals with orderly stripe, trellis and geometric prints. *From left: Greek Key; Ziggy Stripe; Lace Ferns; Hills, all £135 a metre, Parker & Jules*

OPPOSITE The Forest Collection features leafy motifs in gentle hues. *Selection of cushions and quilts in fabrics from £62 a metre, all Vanessa Arbuthnott*











STYLE NOTES

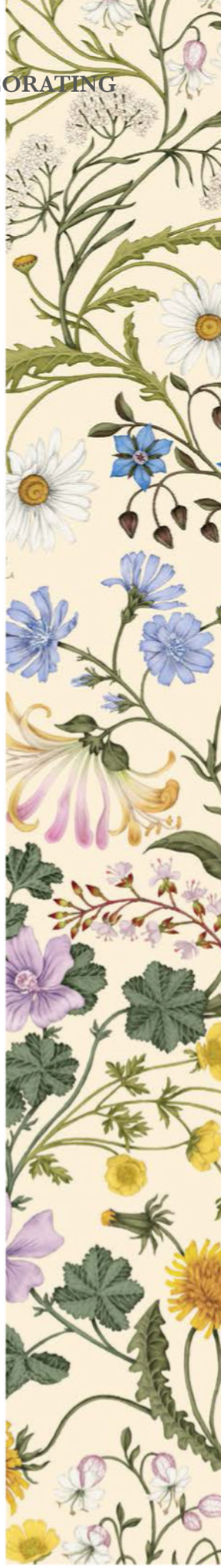
- Organic, flowing designs will bring a natural, gentle feel and work well for large-scale designs.
- Rhythmical repeats such as hand-blocked designs will have a stronger impact on a smaller scale.
- Both types of design work well with a stripe, check or perhaps a trellis design to add structure and variation to a scheme.

FAR LEFT Each hand-painted scene in this striking panelling design depicts the glorious flowers of an English country garden, with hollyhocks, alliums poppies and hydrangeas in the vignettes. *Artus wallpaper, Forest, £59 a roll; Artus fabric, Forest, £50 a metre, Clarke & Clarke at Sanderson Design Group*

ABOVE LEFT Featuring wildflowers found in Indonesia, this light cotton brings a gentle taste of the tropics in soft colours. *Tanimbar, Spice, £225 a metre, McLaurin & Piercy at George Spencer Designs*

LEFT Molly Mahon's new Bloom collection offers hand-block prints that celebrate dahlias, along with Indian influences, complementary stripes and checks and a fun vase design, all in her signature palette of cheerful brights. *Bloom cushions, from £98, Molly Mahon*

RIGHT From the British Biophilia collection, The Lost Garden is a beautiful example of artist Stephanie Le Cocq's work. Designs celebrate her love of the natural world with detailed studies in a range of colours. *The Lost Garden, Ecru, £185 a roll, Studio Le Cocq*









LEFT Botanicals can work well on neutral, earthy colours that allow the organic pattern to shine. *Cinque Terre, various colours, £190 a metre, George Spencer Designs*

ABOVE & BELOW Harlequin's new launches feature an array of biophilic designs. We love Fayola's (*above*) flowing tendrils inispired by maidenhair fern and wild clover. *Colour 4, Harlequin at Sanderson Design Group*

FAR LEFT Stylised blooms in crewel work make this a striking piece for upholstery. *Mandevilla Embroidery, £492 a metre, Uncommon Threads, Schumacher*

STYLE NOTES

- Seek designs that showcase the natural beauty of flowers and plants – whether through artistic, detailed depictions, pared-back works that graphically showcase form and shape, or colourful celebrations of blooms.
- Greens will always be a natural choice for botanicals but mix in colours found in the garden, such as pinks, oranges, yellows and earthy hues.
- Be brave with bold scales – the softness of furling leaves, blossoming petals and trailing vines will ease the drama of large designs.





The delicate beauty of leaves and flowers allows them to be used in a bold way without feeling obtrusive. This exaggerated scale of a Warner Textile Archive design offers just the right impact for a dynamic yet calm space for work.
Roller blinds from £205, shown here, Thackery, by Carey, Warner Textile Archive at Surface View







ABOVE LEFT & RIGHT The Arboretum collection from Sanderson offers a connection to the restorative beauty of the English countryside with pretty woodland designs.
Selection from the Arboretum collection, Sanderson

LEFT This exotic and rather enchanting embroidery is full of intricate detail.
Palmaria, Emeraude, £135 a metre, Manuel Canovas at Colefax and Fowler

RIGHT From small-scale geometric-style patterns to blowsier motifs, the Carnival collection by Sarah Vanrenen offers an array of colourful botanical designs.
From top: Vetch, Mustard; Indiennes, Green; Curly Sue, Pink, all from the Carnival collection, £190 a roll, Sarah Vanrenen ■







FEATURE KATY MCLEAN



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In this pretty kitchen by Salvesen Graham, soft pink tones on cabinetry by Plain English are grounded by a forest green hue on the island and delicate leaf motif tiles from Balineum. OPPOSITE In this country kitchen scheme, the woodwork is picked out in Edward Bulmer Natural Paint's Pompadour, while the walls are painted in flattering Jonquil.



PINK

Creative Combinations

In a new series celebrating the evolution of colour and pattern, we explore how trends and historical influences have shaped British interiors, starting with a perennial favourite – pink

Though pink is a hue that softly underpins many schemes, its fortunes have fluctuated over the years. In the Middle Ages, for instance, it was thought of as an aristocratic colour, associated with luxury, nobility and religious art. It is thought its name was coined in the 17th century, in reference to the ruffled edges of the flowers known as pinks. By the mid-1800s, it was a colour prized by both men and women sartorially, perhaps because of cochineal, the precious natural dye from which it derives. During the post-war years, it became side-lined as an overly feminine and sometimes sugary tone.

However, its warmth and positivity, from barely-there plaster-coloured walls, to eye-catching cerise hues, have once again gained traction more recently. This year, colour specialist Pantone crowned vivid Viva Magenta its colour of 2023. A bold, deep pink, this pulsating tone is expressive of a new signal of strength as well as representing an adventurous and rebellious spirit. As a result, pink – in all its incarnations – is now firmly back in the spotlight.







ABOVE LEFT Renowned Spanish designer Jaime Parladé has paried mint green shutters with a lobster pink exterior, finished with indoor-outdoor cushions by Studio Beleta.

ABOVE RIGHT Both the bath and the walls have been given a cohesive treatment in this eaves room by Yellow London. A fabric blind featuring a botanic pattern on a soft pink background adds depth and tranquillity.

LEFT In this sitting room by Eyre Interiors, Edward Bulmer Natural Paint's Jonquil on the walls and joinery is juxtaposed with bold green and blue for a classic look with a contemporary twist.

Well-grounded

This flattering tone is associated not just with interiors but also with architecture – from the pink-infused limewashed homes of Suffolk to the blush brickwork seen in Toulouse, known as 'La Ville Rose'. Reminiscent of both the rising sun and the clay of the earth, it has a deep affinity with nature, therefore sitting baeautifully on the landscape. Although it is now considered a more gender-neutral tone, pink is still associated with romance, playfulness and optimism. "However, I think there is a general misconception that this colour is reserved only for feminine settings, children's rooms, or all over the walls," says interior designer Pia Pelkonen. "But for me, it works particularly well as an accent to warm up a cooler scheme, such as by pairing it with pastel blue or green, or introducing it as a softer contrast to moodier colours like charcoal grey. It also works well with pattern or texture – pink walls with white bouclé looks very chic."

These days, pink can be added to any room in the house for a sense of understated elegance. "I see it as the new neutral," says interior designer Marina Byers of Dargie Lewis. "I like to add it to almost any scheme, whether a cosy sitting room, hallway or an accent of deep pink in an otherwise 'masculine'



'Pink works particularly well as an accent to warm up a cooler scheme, such as by pairing it wth blue or green'

Pia Pelkonen, Interior Designer

In this scheme by Pia Design, soft pink tones are underpinned by an overscaled scalloped headboard in teal velvet for a grounding contrast.







ABOVE In this drawing room by Susie Atkinson, alcove inners painted in a gentle oyster pink add depth and warmth while providing a natural backdrop to a graphic artwork by Daisy Cook.
FAR LEFT Pink decorative trims add a playful touch to this whimsical child's bedroom by Laura Stephens, while the introduction of delicate patterns in soft green ensures that the look is not overly saccharine.
LEFT A bright magenta, Mylands' FTT-006, creates an architectural and decorative feature out of the built-in joinery

'Think of using a bold pink as you would a highlighter – on the back of a door as a surprise in an otherwise gentle scheme, or on window frames or as a modern decorative border'

Emma Stevenson, Interior Designer

study. I particularly like introducing pink to schemes where the walls are moodier – dark green and blues go very well with raspberry tones of pink for an extra lift."

This is a colour that benefits from being used creatively. Consider it for kitchen and bathroom cabinetry too. "It's a shade that feels increasingly cosy as daylight fades and the lamps go on," says Imperfect Interiors' Beth Dadswell. "Try adding it to a freestanding bath, tongue and groove panelling or a vanity unit, opting for 'dirtier' tones which have more depth and are less saccharine."

The right light

As with any colour, the orientation of a room will dictate which shade to use. "If east or north-facing, avoid a soft or blueish pink as it will look insipid by the afternoon," advises stylist Fiona de Lys, colour consultant for Edward Bulmer Natural Paint. "Opt for bold and warm, instead. For kitchens and south-facing spaces, firm favourites tend to be delicate plaster pinks, such as Edward Bulmer Natural Paint's Lilac Pink, because they won't distract from the light and space or the heroes of the room, including kitchen cabinetry, island or tiles. Deeper pinks, such as Morris & Co's Rose Cockle, are more sensory and therefore good for bathrooms and dining rooms. If you have tall ceilings with architectural detailing, try a lighter shade of pink or a buff within the trim, mixed with another colour."

Consider what kind of artificial lighting to layer on during evenings and winter days. For example, cooler lighting (3000K or above) can wash out the warmth of the shade, whereas warmer colour temperatures (between 2600–3000K) bring out the vibrancy of pink. In many cases, windowless spaces cope particularly well with brighter shades. "In a compact scheme, pink feels welcoming and glamorous," says Pelkonen. "You can be braver in cloakrooms and I do also love a pink bathroom, either using bright pink subway tiles or patterned encaustic tiles for a really strong impact, or unglazed terracotta tiles or polished plaster for a softer, earthier palette."

Artistic revival

Incorporating this colour in a fresh way is as important as choosing the right tone. "Since the screening of period dramas and films with a more contemporary edge, there has been a growing confidence in the use of vibrant colour combinations," says de Lys. "Think *Bridgerton* and those dynamic, bright colours across ceiling and walls. In fact, this can be interpreted as a revival of the neoclassical Adam Period, rather than a new fad. It's about bright pink mixed with



RIGHT In this bedroom scheme by Dargie Lewis, plaster-coloured grasscloth wallpaper by Nobilis, soft neutrals and warming woven elements are neatly contrasted by woodwork in Farrow & Ball's Calke Green.



BELOW A pantry by Neptune painted in its Rhubarb paint is complemented by chequerboard flooring in a spirited reinterpretation of classic British style.

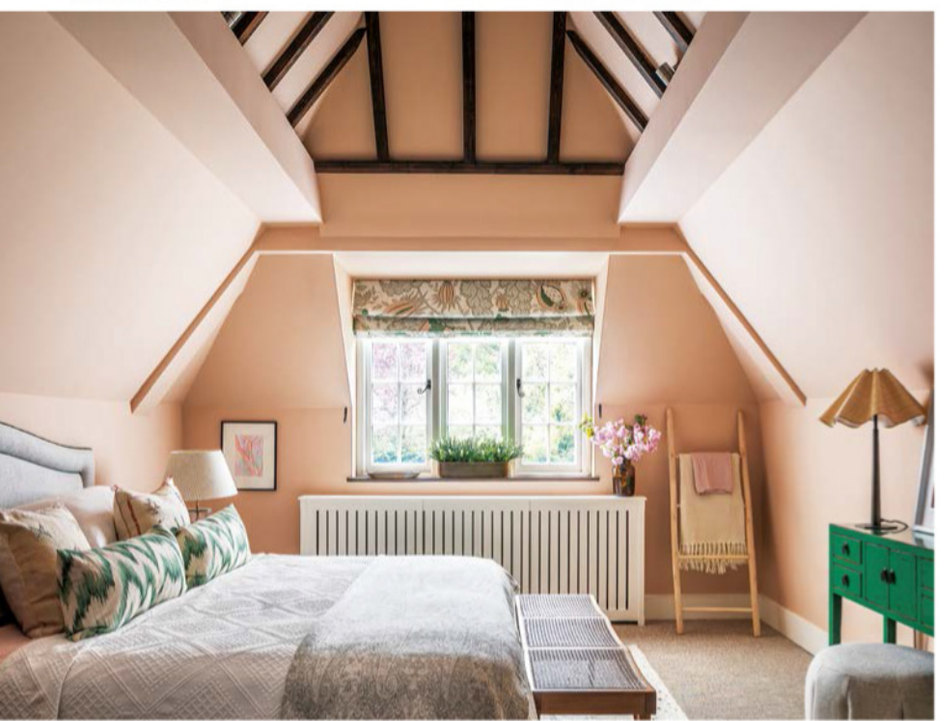




ABOVE A wide-striped wall treatment painted in Nicaragua and Wash Stop by Edward Bulmer Natural Paint adds a sense of drama and scale to this sitting room designed for Oka.

LEFT Dramatic pink florals enliven a cloakroom designed by Laura Stephens.

BELOW Original beams are softly contemporised by Farrow & Ball's Setting Plaster in this eaves bedroom scheme by Alice Leigh Design, emboldened by forest green accents.



'Stripes are not overtly saccharine and for the same reason, I also enjoy using pink leopard print fabric, which feels edgy and fun'

Laura Stephens, Interior Designer

green, sky blue, lemon, lilac and red-brown terracotta. Combining pink in this way means that you are balancing it with colours that evoke another emotion to either heighten or ground it."

If painting walls and woodwork feels like a step too far, incorporate this tone via picture frames, fabrics, framed mirrors or unexpected detailing. "Think of using a bold pink as you would a highlighter," suggests interior designer Emma Stevenson. "It works on the back of a door as a surprise in an otherwise gentle scheme, or on window frames or as a modern decorative border."

Joinery is another good place to work the look. "A saturated approach to kitchen cabinetry is very contemporary," says Kitchen Makers' Ben Burbidge, whose Haddon design in English Red injects instant warmth and freshness. "But it doesn't have to be all or nothing. You can pair neutrals with stand-out flourishes, such as a statement painted island, or soft-toned lowers with magenta upper cabinetry to create a beautifully balanced finish."

For contemporary styles, try forgoing paint and opting for a simple plaster finish. "Raw walls have a beautiful texture and inject a subtle, earthy wash of colour to your home – perfect for fans of industrial interiors and equally for those making over a period house," says interior designer Roby Baldan. "They provide a wonderful canvas for brighter colours to shine too, from pastels to bold pops of neon, while being cost-effective and chemical-free."

Stripes are another method of introducing this tone in an unfussy way. "They are not overtly saccharine and for the same reason, I also enjoy using pink leopard-print fabric, which feels edgy and fun," says interior designer Laura Stephens. "I often introduce a little black or dark brown to a pink scheme too. That might be via a black-and-white striped fabric, a dark brown piece of furniture or even a black ceramic lamp base. I recently designed an en-suite bathroom in a deep terracotta pink. We wrapped it over the ceiling and used aqua tiles and a jade colourway on the blinds for a chic and contemporary feel."

For a truly timeless palette, pink holds well with greens or earth colours. Bring clay, terracotta and other natural elements into decor via vessels, flooring, tiles, baskets and rugs for a relaxed, grounding feel. The result will be schemes that feel perennially inviting. A reminder of why this colour was prized – even before it was given a name – in Homer's *Odyssey*, which, in 800BC, fittingly celebrated morning's 'rosy-fingered dawn'. ■

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE **PHOTOGRAPHS** (SALVESEN GRAHAM) © SIMON BROWN; (ALICE LEIGH DESIGN & DARGIE LEWIS DESIGN) © JONATHAN BOND; (YELLOW LONDON) © RACHAEL SMITH; (BEATA HEUMAN) © SIMON UPTON; (SARAH BROWN INTERIORS) © ANNA BATCHELOR

ABOVE In this girls' bedroom scheme by Beata Heuman, bold red stripes, classic florals and delicate greens combine to create a playful but sophisticated look.

RIGHT Powder blue bookshelves in Edward Bulmer Natural Paint's Garter Blue create a bold contrast to the soft pink tones in this scheme by Sarah Brown Interiors. The walls are painted in Clove, also by Edward Bulmer Natural Paint.

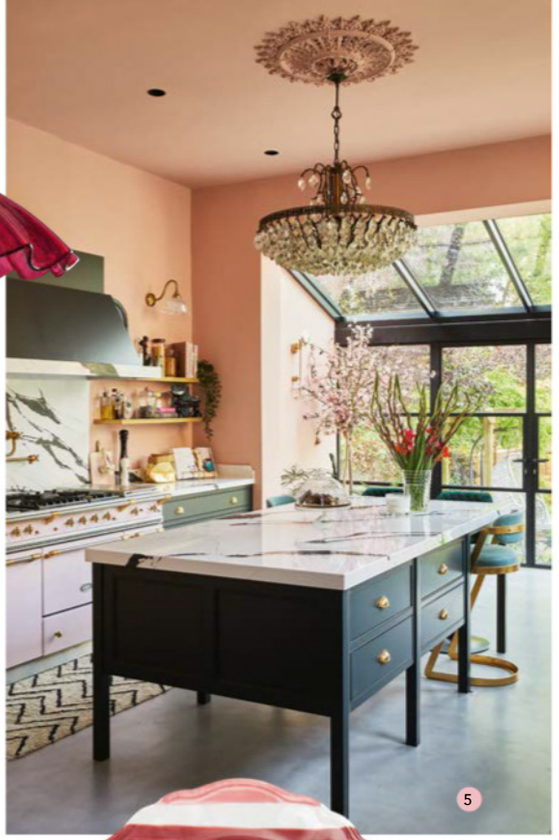












PINK

Rosy outlook

Look anew at pink, from dramatic pops of raspberry to calming pastel prints, this alluring shade is abundant in modern beauty

















1 Aosta medium sofa in colour T258, from £1,905, Ercol 2 Frilly Cranberry Light, £360, deVOL 3 Victoria paint colour, £50 for 2.5l of Matt Emulsion, Warner House 4 Vivid Geranium paint, £50 for 2.5l of Eco Emulsion, Warner House 5 Bespoke kitchen from £25,000, The Main Company; Lacanche Classic Citeaux stove in Rose Quartz, £9,980, Rangecookers; walls in Get Plastered, £52.99 for 2.5l Eggshell, Dowsing & Reynolds 6 Aller Dorset x Bettina Ceramica striped dinner plate, £28 each, Aller Dorset 7 Island Breeze large cupboard in Farrow & Ball's Cinder Rose, £775, Painted Furniture Company 8 Kendal herringbone merino wool blankets in Rose Pink, Fuchsia and Soft Pink, £160 each, The Fine Cotton Company 9 Cecily woven scalloped wool runner, £95, Oliver Bonas 10 Hoxton 7 Tall Pedestal stove in Flamingo Pink, from £2,906.80 (without pedestal), pedestal, £221.17, Arada 11 Mekar upholstered trunk, £1,750, Oka 12 ChouChou tablecloth in Dusty Rose, from £75, Shenouk 13 Hand-painted large bowl, Pink/White, £350, Nina Campbell 14 Lyra Stripe Blush cushion, £29, Cotswold Company

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE **PHOTOGRAPHS** THE MAIN COMPANY © CHRIS SNOOK; THE FINE COTTON COMPANY © MIKE STEVENSON

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A stylist's RETREAT

Renowned for styling beautiful interiors and gardens, Selina Lake tells how she has transformed her own formerly unloved urban exterior into an English cottage garden idyll

STYLING SELINA LAKE PHOTOGRAPHS RACHEL WARNE

Walking into Selina Lake's town garden, her commitment to creating a country cottage theme immediately becomes apparent with its abundance of blowsy fragrant blooms including roses, foxgloves and peonies. It is very much inspired by classic English gardens and their bountiful rose arches, lush lawns and plenitude of native plants, shrubs and trees. But this is a garden with a modern twist – Selina, together with her husband Dave, has used black as an accent colour to stain the decking, shed and even sun loungers. "I like to use black as it's a great tone for blending into the background against all the different greens," she says. "I also think it adds a contemporary take on cottage garden style. I first got the idea to use black accents in the garden when I visited gardens and events in Scandinavia – I loved the style mix and wanted to recreate it in my own garden."

When Selina and Dave first moved into their home, the garden was completely overgrown, full of rubbish and had been unloved for years, so they got to work clearing the rubbish and tackling the weeds. Underneath it all, they discovered they had inherited a tired deck area, a generously sized patio, and an old shed – albeit with a missing door and a leaking roof.

The garden is south-facing, and at 6m x 60m, long and thin, yet it does not feel narrow as Dave's eye for design led the couple to separate it into different 'garden rooms'. They decided to utilise the existing structural pieces and, with their design and styling skills, worked together to achieve the overall look and feel they craved. The separate 'rooms' include an outdoor sitting room-style area, a two-tier lawn flanked by floral borders, a patio dining space, a wildlife garden and a vegetable garden near the shed.

ABOVE A recycled rusty metal trolley provides perfect storage for Selina's collection of garden props, while its top makes a styling opportunity for displaying flowers and plants in vintage enamel pots and zinc containers.

OPPOSITE Selina's flower-filled shed's rustic wooden interior has been softened with vintage botanical prints pinned to the walls.



Selina Lake is an interior and garden stylist and author of 11 best-selling books, including *Garden Style*, *Shed Style* and *Outdoor Living* (all published by Ryland Peters & Small). She has styled show gardens at RHS Hampton Court Flower Festival and decorative stands at RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

Selina lives in Guildford, Surrey, with her husband Dave, who is a graphic designer. They have lived here for nine years and have transformed their plot from an abandoned, overgrown mess into a beautiful cottage garden-style garden.

Dave took on the task of designing the layout of the garden, incorporating existing features they wanted to preserve, while Selina added her styling touch, creating outdoor living areas and turning the old shed they inherited into a floral haven.

"I love to bring a styling element to the garden, I make little displays inspired by the season and have an array of vintage props which I often buy at vintage fairs and flea markets," Selina says. She uses vintage metal French bistro tables to house her displays, which often include an arrangement of beautiful seasonal blooms.



Dave got to work repairing the tired decking, fixing all the broken boards, then Selina used Cuprinol Black Ash decking stain to give the old wood a new lease of life. The couple invested in a garden sofa set to furnish this area, added a string of festoon lights from overhead and started to train the inherited, established wisteria to grow across the line to create a botanical canopy. Throughout April and into May they are treated to thousands of soft lilac-scented tumbling flowers, and once the flowers are spent, they have a mass of fresh green leaves for the rest of the summer. "It's a sheltered spot and a real suntrap in the summer – it's great having an extra place to chill out," says Selina.

The garden lacked a lawn area before, so Dave laid fresh turf and created the two-tiered lawn with a step made using an oak sleeper. Once this was done, Selina planted flower borders all around and positioned a pair of wooden sun loungers, which she also stained black, on the new lawn in a sunny spot.

Along one side of the garden, the boundary is set by a series of wooden posts that gently blur the view to the neighbour's garden and which Selina uses as a backdrop to the floral and plant

ABOVE The couple have trained the wisteria to grow along a string of festoon lights above this outdoor seating area. The vintage 'Selina Terrace' road sign was a lucky find at Sunbury Antiques Market.
RIGHT The metal arch was sourced from Garden Trading and the highly scented 'Albertine' rose – a moving in present from a friend – has been a joy for the couple to watch grow and cover the metal frame.







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

A three-tiered plant stand displays a collection of planters, galvanised tubs and a lantern.

Sourced at a local brocante fair the zinc tub is planted with wildlife friendly plants including salvias, apricot foxgloves, poppies and lupins. Beyond a simple black bistro set positioned under a wisteria provides a shaded spot to sit for a coffee break.

Foxglove spires and a gorgeous pink rose planted alongside lavender creates a cottage-garden-style border. For a similar rose try 'Nathalie Nypels' from David Austin Roses.

An oak stool from Garden Trading offers another surface for displaying Selina's cut-flower arrangements.





'I've always been intrigued by sheds. I love the smell of them, and the bits and bobs waiting to be used'

displays she creates utilising a charming rustic stool and vintage plant stand. Indulging in adding her creative stylist's touch to this area, she combines an ever-changing collection of galvanised metal pots and trugs housing plants, and recycled glass bottles filled with wildflowers.

The patio and dining areas are concealed from view by bushes and trees, and the tables and chairs are made from recycled plastic and metal, as Selina tries only to buy vintage, antique, second-hand, sustainable or recycled items for both home and garden. Elsewhere in the garden, for example, is a weathered metal trolley – one of the neighbours was throwing it out and Selina saw an opportunity for somewhere interesting to store her collection of pots and curios. These surfaces make the perfect spots for Selina to create her ever-changing seasonal displays – like 'tablescapes' or 'moments' in the garden with freshly cut flowers.

The wildlife garden the couple have created is one of Selina's favourite spaces. It is easy to see why, for, upon entering this part of their garden, the amount of birdsong and butterflies found here is striking. Dave has created a container pond for wildlife out of an old zinc tub sourced from a flea market, and there is a mini meadow area with bluebells growing in early spring, giving way to a mass of sunny yellow wild buttercups later on. This lovely little area lends itself to another dining spot. "I love styling the table in the mini meadow for al fresco lunches; sitting here under our apple tree, surrounded by wildflowers and insects, makes us feel like we have a country garden instead of an urban plot," Selina explains.

The couple were keen to create an allotment-style vegetable garden featuring the shed, which had a new door built for it and its roof fixed by Dave while Selina gave its exterior a new look with her trusty black wood stain. Directly in front of the new-look shed, they planted a vibrant herbaceous border filled with some of Dave's favourite plants – lavenders and Mexican daisies – and Selina's – foxgloves, lupins and salvias. They have also built two raised beds from old scaffolding planks where they grow strawberries, beans, cucumbers, root vegetables and plenty of herbs. The area is framed by a rose arch which covers a loose-slate path that leads to the shed at the bottom of the garden. To the front of this is a circular patio, where a vintage metal bistro set makes a perfect spot for taking coffee breaks when working on the 'allotment'.

The interior of the shed shows off Selina's styling flair and feels well-used and loved. "I've always been intrigued by sheds and greenhouses. I love the smell of them, all the bits and bobs waiting to be used in the garden and of course the styling opportunities," she says. Its rustic charm comes from the old wood walls, a wall cabinet that the couple found discarded in the garden the day they moved in and an old dresser base which was left by the previous owner. Selina uses the shed mainly for arranging flowers, storing her collection of vintage glass vases, and simply pottering in. It is certainly a little hidden gem at the bottom of this interesting garden which comes into its own when in full bloom and is full of English charm and unexpected spaces. ■



ABOVE The bright hues of the cottage-garden plants in the herbaceous border look striking against the black-stained shed. Roses are mixed with self-seeded foxgloves while orange geums add an extra dash of vibrant colour to the display.

Treasure HUNTING

Interior designers reveal their secrets to finding, displaying and combining antiques to bring character and interest to schemes



MAX ROLLITT

Interior designer, antiques dealer & furniture maker

When creating a scheme do you have specific items in mind, and what do you do if you can't find them?
I always approach a room first by sketching a furniture layout. At this point I'm mostly thinking about how the room will be used and proportions of scale, but sometimes a particular style or shape will come to mind. This gives me my 'shopping list', as such, while the rest of the scheme takes shape. I'm rarely wedded to anything too specific because the joy of antiques is not knowing what you'll find – this does require time, flexibility, and imagination, though.

Why is it better to try and find that perfect antique piece, rather than a reproduction or new piece?
There is absolutely a time and a place for both, but what's special about antiques is the story they bring with them; they've lived a life already. Most often we've only got clues – in the form of marks, patination or old repairs – with which to weave that story, but it's one that will always be rooted in humanity. Antiques were also designed and made to be repairable, so they sit naturally within the circular economy. This principle, of making things that can be repaired, is one that I've carried through to the Max Rollitt Bespoke range [above]. It's important to preserve traditional skills and make will stand the test of time.



How do you display an ever-growing collection?
As our lives evolve, so should our homes, in order to keep up with our changing needs and circumstances. I'd advocate making the most of what you've got at any given time – use it, display it, enjoy it for what it is, and then celebrate it again when you've found the next piece of the puzzle.







GUY GOODFELLOW

Guy Goodfellow Interiors & Architectural Design

Can you recommend any particular periods or styles?
Good, simple Georgian and early Victorian furniture can be remarkably good value. French furniture like Louis XVI chests of drawers and elegant elbow chairs can also be affordable, particularly if you're happy with early 20th-century copies. The feeling of age and charm that comes from a piece of only 100 years old is amazing. A wonderful term, 'Hollywood Regency', is applied to furniture in the English style made in the Twenties through to the Sixties and which can be useable and good value. French Provincial works very well in English country interiors. A specialist in this field is Brownrigg in Tetbury, and Hugh Leuchars. While being eminently suitable, it creates an unexpected feel to English interiors, adding a little glamour without pretention.

How do you successfully mix periods, styles and contemporary pieces?
It is important to mix styles and periods to avoid your home looking like a museum for a catalogue sweep! Contemporary pieces or mid-century classics give an edge to your interior. Not just for the sake of it, though; the best of every decade survives and can be beautiful; the dross of each decade should be avoided.

Where are your favourite shops for antiques hunting?
Guinevere on the King's Road offers extraordinary inspiration. Also along the King's Road, Julia Boston has glamourous, very high quality pieces. Another great resource is The Decorative Art Fair, Battersea for fun, collectable items, very well presented, with a range of pricing. The stands are well curated enabling the collector to get a feeling how each item could be used or displayed.





CHARU GANDHI

Founder & director, Elicyon

What has been your favourite ever antique find?
The mid-century studio screen in the reception room [below] of the Westminster Penthouse at The Broadway was such a special find. We used it to help detract from the large structural column in the corner of the room and it adds lots of personality to the space. I particularly like its handcrafted look, as it is a lovely contrast against the modern architecture.

Where are your favourite shops for antique hunting?
When it comes to sourcing antiques, Tetbury in Gloucestershire is a fantastic place for finding unique pieces. The entire high street is filled with wonderful shops at both ends of the scale. My personal favourites are Brownrigg and Lorfords, the latter of which we used a lot for our recently completed project at The Broadway in Westminster, where some of the antiques for the Westminster Penthouse [below] helped to create an air of heritage in what is otherwise a very contemporary space.

Should one buy antiques that might need repairs and restoration?
Yes. We frequently repair or restore antique pieces for projects when we find furniture that could use a little updating. We particularly like finding antique and vintage chairs that have a great shape to them. Then we select the new fabrics and trims that will give them a new lease of life, which is a really enjoyable part of the process. Working with upholsterers is great and they can do wonders by restoring pieces that were once old and tired.







FLORA SOAMES

Founder, Flora Soames

Where are your favourite shops for antique hunting?
The Decorative Collective is a great online first stop where established British dealers display their stock. There is a comprehensive catalogue and when you've got gaps to fill, it's a great place to get your eye in, as well as to buy. The Decorative Art Fair in London is much the same. I also use my local antique dealer, Patrick Macintosh in Sherborne, as a go-to for more robust pieces.

If you have a specific item in mind, do you keep searching or can you compromise?
In some scenarios there is a very specific fit in terms of period and/or aesthetic. In these instances, the process of finding the right thing is a rewarding one. With an open mind, hopefully you can find the right thing and, with a bit of leeway one way or another, that means it never feels like a compromise.

Other than for investment or value, why else do you buy antiques?
Every antique has a story to tell and, more often than not, has been painstakingly made by someone with a specific skill. As a country with a rich heritage in craftsmanship, this is something we should champion in restoring and living with antiques, as much as commissioning bespoke British crafted pieces today.









ANNABELLE HOLLAND

Creative director, Anbôise

Other than value or investment, why else do you buy antiques?
There are so many reasons for using antiques, the fact that they can be valuable perhaps being the least important in my opinion. Antiques often have their own unique history and story to tell, so you can add a sense of character which is hard to achieve if you just use modern furniture. Using antiques is also a way of preserving cultural heritage, and family history, if using heirlooms. When you buy antique furniture, you are preserving a piece of history.

Are antiques a sustainable decorating choice?
Antiques are absolutely a sustainable and eco-friendly option. Antiques were crafted to last and often made with high-quality materials. This means that, unlike a lot of modern, mass-produced furniture, they can withstand the test of time and continue to be used for many years without needing to be replaced.

How do you combine old with new?
Incorporating antiques into contemporary interiors is central to our style at Anbôise. In my opinion, the key is to strike a balance between old and new. A room that is too heavy on antiques can feel rather severe, while a space that only has modern furniture can feel cold and characterless. The best way to achieve a balance is by using antiques as accent pieces. Antique textiles such as tapestries, and in particular rugs, are also a very effective way to incorporate antiques into contemporary interior design.



JOANNA WOOD
Founder, Joanna Wood

Where are your favourite shops for antiques hunting?
I love the sale room. We keep a good eye on auctions like Dreweatts in Newbury and Bonhams. Auctions and sales are great for affordable but useable pieces from a wide spectrum of periods and styles. We have just launched JW Antiques as part of the Joanna Wood shop. Everything is sourced by my daughter Hattie and I from all over the country, and lots of the pieces have been given the loving restorative touch. [Chairs shown bottom right are restored pieces from JW Antiques.]

When can antiques be repurposed for modern life?
We often alter, adjust, restore, change or paint antique pieces of furniture. We've adjusted chests of drawers to be vanity units in bathrooms and altered side tables to become cloakroom units. Building a chest into a wardrobe for storage; using an armoire as a bar or TV cabinet, considering these sorts of adjustments is a good way of shopping for antiques and provides you with a unique piece of furniture that you might not have been able to budget for otherwise. Only last week, I bought two console tables. We've cut them down and painted them to create 'new' tables and they're about to have custom marble tops fitted that will look a million dollars.

Do you have any other tips for 'upcycling' antiques?
I'm never scared of repairs or restoration. It's a clever way of shopping for antiques as so many people are too nervous of restoring furniture. We are always painting, polishing, reupholstering and repairing. There are so many lovely things out there so it's always good to restore, renew and recycle. Some of my favourite transformations are:

1. An antique bureau turned into a bookcase in a principal bedroom.
2. An antique chest chopped in half and made into a cloakroom unit with a custom marble top, with an antique mirror above.
3. A pair of matching antique washstands with new marble, and mirrors with concealed medicine cabinets above.
4. An antique chest of drawers restored and polished for hallway storage in a cottage.

Do you have particular pieces you always look out for?
The best finds are the unexpected ones, so I (try to) always have an open mind when I go shopping.







VANESSA MACDONALD

Creative director, Melissa Wyndham

Is it ok to mix styles and periods of antiques and how do you do so successfully?
Absolutely. We mix periods of antiques all the time and very often incorporate contemporary pieces too. Using antiques all from the same period is far too prescriptive, you have to mix periods to create interest. I love the combination of an antique table, a contemporary lamp, a modern British picture, a mixture of prints and plains and an antique carpet. It's classic yet current. This is easily achieved in a dining room where you could use a painted, modern table, a set of 18th-century English chairs, a contemporary cupboard and an antique French or Italian pendant light.

Where are your favourite shops for antiques hunting?
Tarquin Bilgen has great taste, and his selection of both old and new lamps is wonderful. Adam Calvert Bentley always has something unusual that still looks at home in a country house. Dean Antiques – Dean has a great eye and his chests of drawers and cupboards are particularly good. Robert Stephenson Carpets has the best selection of antique and Swedish carpets.

What is your favourite ever antique find?
A set of 12 George II painted elbow chairs of Chinese inspiration with latticework backs and infills to under the arms, made for King's Nympton, Devon in 1754 (the original invoice still exists). We bought them for the dining room of our New York project and they came from Edward Hurst [as seen below].





WILL FISHER

Founder, Jamb

Are there any specific pieces, periods or styles you always look out for?
I have always loved the combination of a marble-topped console table with a beautifully scaled mirror above. It's like a set piece that never gets dull. It allows you to not only collect objects to carefully assemble on top of the table but scatter them between the legs on the floor below.

What is your favourite ever antique find?
That's a super hard question as I love all my children equally! It's a fascinating subject, I have things I regret not buying over the years, and even *they* create a sense of loss. My favourite item at the moment has to be our Palladian table, once owned by Hugh Hefner. It encompasses everything I love about English furniture of that period. Elegant yet masculine, standing on exquisitely carved paw feet centred by a lion's mask. Not only is the gilded and painted finish exquisite but it retains an original 18th-century Breche violette marble top that is to die for.

Should one buy pieces in need of repair or restoration?
Leave it to those who know would be my advice. Restoration is fraught with danger. One can easily buy a romantic wreck and end up with a sanitised, soulless box.

Other than for investment or value, why buy antiques?
Antiques add a quiet ambiance to a room. Choose things with charm and surface. Interiors need items with history; things handled; things treasured, but not necessarily for their value. It's extraordinary the joy simple things can bring.





SAMANTHA TODHUNTER

Founder, Samantha Todhunter Design

Where are your favourite shops for antiques hunting?
Hitchcox antiques at Warpsgrove in Chalgrove, a series of warehouses exploding with amazing things; you can often find an amazing bargain here and it's just fun to wander through the corrugated iron hangars through furniture perilously piled up to the roof.

How do you display a collection?
A collection by its very nature is always evolving, so if you were to wait until you think it's complete you would probably be dead. For example, I love collecting Fulham pottery and Constance Spry, and I don't keep them all in the same place – some are on the dressing table, some in the China cupboard, some come out at dinners. I constantly use them in different ways, so the collection is always on show in one way or another, rather than displayed as an entire collection per se to get the most enjoyment out of them.

How can one successfully mix old and new?
I think that creating a room that is interesting and layered means that styles and periods must be mixed up, otherwise you end up with a museum-like interior, which can be wonderful, but I don't think people naturally live that way. Life throws all sorts of things at you – your grandmother's Georgian footstool and your aunt's 1970s dining table get mixed in with contemporary pieces and it all works together – it's part of who we are. Our approach to this philosophy is to try not to predictably mix furniture, so, for example, we would have an antique crescent console, but sitting underneath that we would put our leopard x-frame stool [as above]. While you might not think it, it just works, and it gives the antiques relevance, and the more contemporary stools gravitas.





SUZIE ATKINSON

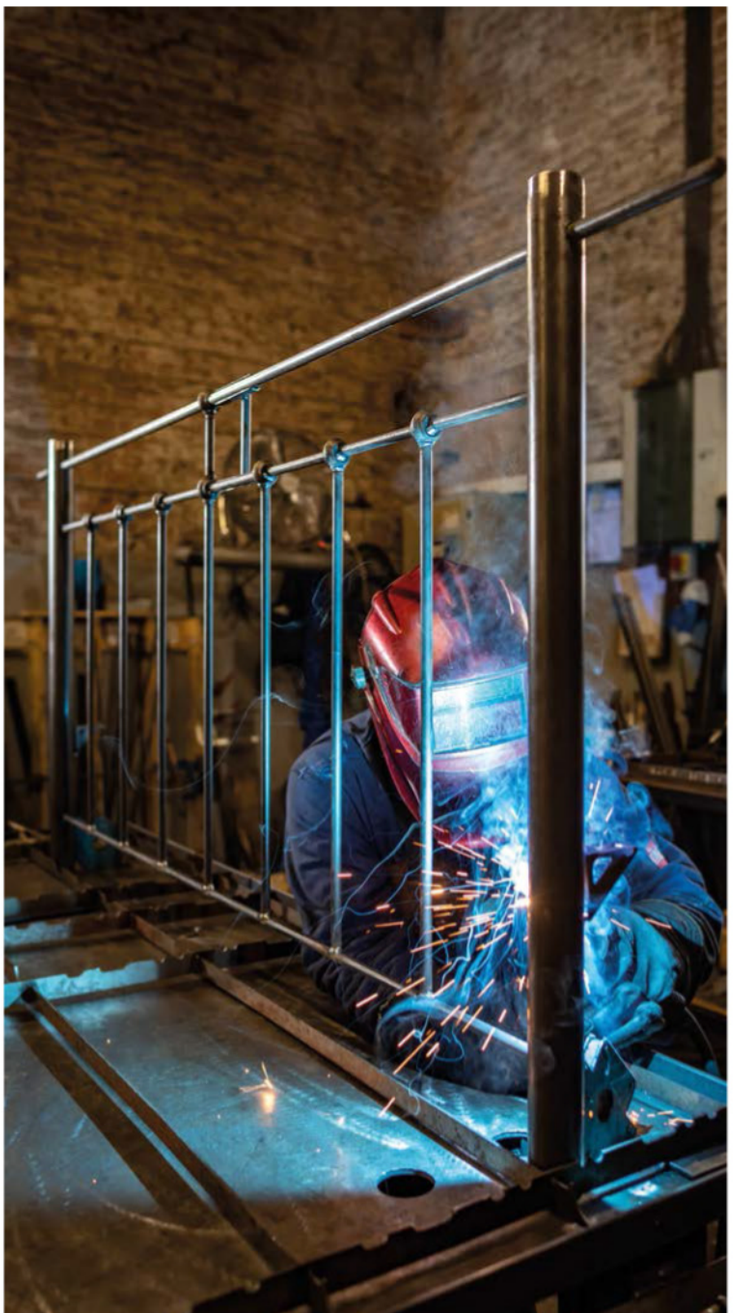
Founder, Studio Atkinson

What do you do if there is something specific you need, but can't find?
It is always hard looking and finding a very specific item – I try to be open-minded and not get to fixated on exactly what I am looking for. Having a standout piece in a room is important, and if it is not exactly what you were looking for, it can often set other, and new, ideas off for the space. I always think having a few special antique pieces adds interest and character to a space.

Do you collect anything in particular?
I tend to buy things that I like when I see them and then store them until the appropriate project comes up. I think building a collection of things is fun – I have gathered, over the years, collections of antique wooden-block hat moulds, shells, papier-mâché items, Howard & Sons upholstery, jugs.

How can antiques be repurposed for modern life?
I often change the use of a piece of furniture – antique kitchen tables, for example, are often small and with a drawer, so they work well as desks or dressing tables. I have often used large old leather and wooden trunks as coffee tables or bedside tables, or ironwork garden tables in a bathroom, corner or hallway. We repurpose large old candlesticks into lamp bases. It's fun looking at things and seeing how they can be used differently. ■

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN **PHOTOGRAPHS** MAX ROLLITT - PORTRAIT © ALUN CALLENDER; SITTING ROOM © TOM MANNION. GUY GOODFELLOW - PORTRAIT © ROBERT BARBER; SITTING ROOM © SIMON UPTON. VANESSA MCDONALD – DINING ROOM © BRITTANY AMBRIDGE. WILL FISHER © SIMON UPTON. SAMANTHA TODHUNTER - PORTRAIT & LIFESTYLE © JONATHAN BOND PHOTOGRAPHY



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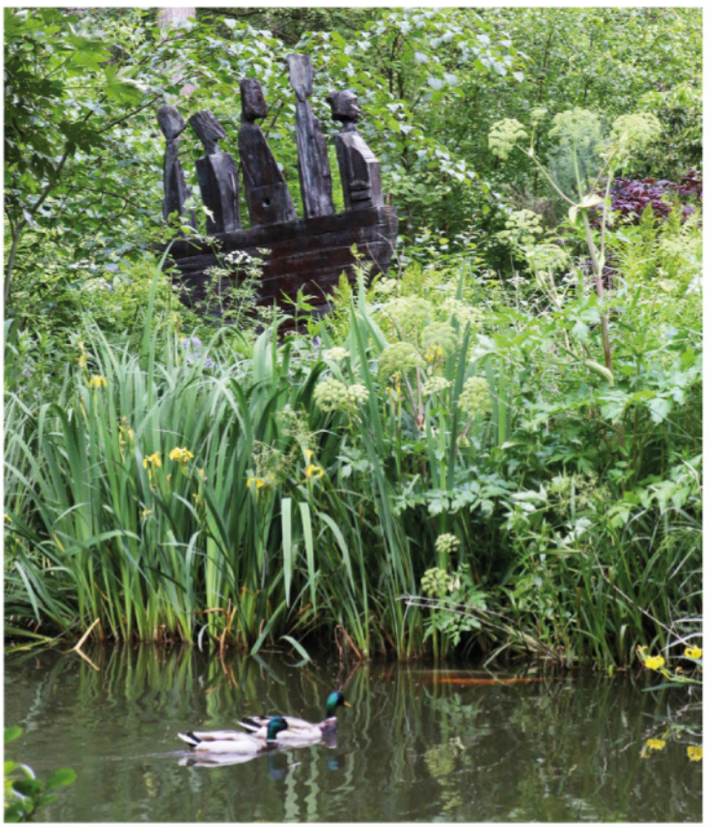







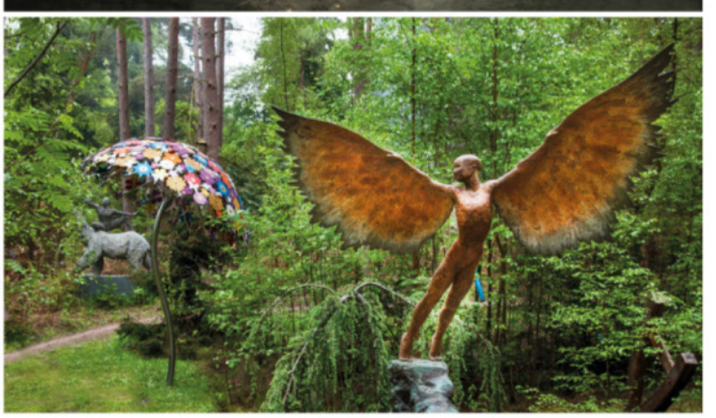

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On Solid GROUND

Practical and enduring hard flooring remains a staple of the English home, thanks to its characterful charm, timeless versatility and increasingly eco-friendly credentials

Aesthetically pleasing and often sustainable, today's hard-flooring choices range from resilient stone and tactile timber to handcrafted tiles, reclaimed surfaces and manmade alternatives. The right material can create an important backdrop to interiors, old and new, by effortlessly blending both form and function. Moreover, a capacity to reflect a property's unique style and character – through well-considered textures, patterns and finishes – makes these solid surfaces a perennial choice when it comes to the classic home.

Herringbone and chevron laying patterns add decorative appeal to timber flooring.
Prime Grade Oak chevron flooring, from £145 a square metre, Trunk

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Hard-flooring favourites and even modern-day alternatives offer longevity and style, and, when sourced responsibly, should also have minimal environmental impact.

Reclaimed ceramics, encaustics, terracotta, stone and timber are the ultimate waste-free eco-option when looking for authenticity or rarer items. "There really is nothing more atmospheric than a wonderful antique floor rescued from an old building, renovated and relaid in a new location," says Jason Cherrington, director at Lapicida. "Look for dealers that are signed up to the Salvo Code in order to guarantee provenance," cautions Sara Morel, chief executive officer at Salvo. Be generous when calculating wastage, as stock may be limited and ordering more of the same may not be possible.

For those preferring to buy new stone or timber flooring, the origins of quarried stone and the extraction practices can be checked via the Ethical Stone Register, and timber, advises Peter Keane, director of The Natural Wood Floor Company, should be FSC or PEFC-certified to ensure it is sourced from sustainably managed forests. Likewise, fast-growing and renewable cork or bamboo flooring can prove an excellent ethical alternative.

Favouring British or European suppliers should also help reduce any product's carbon footprint. As will sourcing from companies involved in sustainable manufacturing, or selecting low-impact, handcrafted ceramic, encaustic or terracotta tiles, made using naturally sourced, sustainable materials.



ABOVE RIGHT Using reclaimed timber can give a space a truly bespoke look. *Reclaimed Weathered Barn Oak flooring, from £144.50 a sqm, The Main Company*

RIGHT Home-grown FSC timber is highly sustainable. *Galion English Oak hard wax oiled planks, £POA, Ted Todd*

BELOW Made from recycled stone, these floor tiles have a tumbled finish for to lend a worn surface texture. *Reform tiles, £250 a square metre, Ca'Pietra*







CLASSIC GOOD LOOKS

Variance in texture, hue and patina helps accentuate the classic patterning used in timber and stone.

In the case of stone, size and style can be exploited through the use of ready-made laying patterns that create informal, relaxed designs and contrasting textures. When seeking formal finishes, opt for designs that echo classic chequerboards or wood-associated herringbone or basketweaves. To up the ante, choose book-matched marbles and grandiose inlays or borders. Although, Cherrington cautions, "Fitting stone is a specialist job, especially if the floor incorporates patterns or design features."

In terms of wood, "Parquet remains as popular as ever, with many opting for herringbone and chevrons," says Natalie Mudd, creative director at The Wood Flooring Co. Decorative Parquet de Versailles can provide a more ornate look, along with intricate marquetry. Cross-cut blocks can also be laid cut edge up for an equally striking finish.

For lovers of colour and pattern, Victorian encaustics and geometrics feature in many an urban hallway. Craven Dunnill Jackson crafts authentic, archived encaustics, and it is also worth considering Original Style's Victorian geometrics. For a maintenance-free option, see Amtico's replicas. Time-honoured mosaics present a decorative alternative to tiles, and are routinely fashioned from stone, ceramic, porcelain or glass. Buy prepared sheets for easy installation.

ABOVE Popular herringbone and chevron laying patterns add decorative appeal to timber. *Dark Oak Quintessential parquet engineered block flooring, £87.32 a square metre, also available in matching plank, Broadleaf Timber*

RIGHT Popularised in the 19th century, geometric tiles can create infinite patterns. *Lindisfarne with Melbourne Victorian Geometric floor tiles, £262.55 a square metre, Original Style*







NATURAL SELECTION

Characterful stone and timber have been the traditionalist's choice for centuries and when professionally installed and correctly sealed, only improve with age.

When it comes to naturally resilient stone flooring, limestone is the current stone of choice, closely followed by marble, plus travertine or slate. Whilst, in terms of format, John Forde, founder of Beswick Stone advocates, "large flagstones for those wishing to reinstate original character." Look to calibrated, honed or polished stone to instil sophisticated formality. Or specify, "tumbled or riven finishes that accentuate shape and surface for a more aged pastoral patina," says Mandarin Stone's Louisa Morgan.

Where additional comfort is required underfoot, oak flooring remains a popular all-rounder; but do consider other hardwoods, such as beech or ash, and don't dismiss softer pine. Whatever the choice, solid boards are the authentic option here, and can be sanded and re-finished as required. However, engineered floors may prove more practical, "as their multi-layer core guarantees a robust and stable surface," says Keane. Who also recommends, "prime grades for a sophisticated knot-free finish and natural grades for a more relaxed, traditional aesthetic." Robert Walsh, owner of Ted Todd, also champions the rise of, "visible signs of handcrafting, such as saw marks and random distressing, along with brushed finishes that highlight the grain." While Natalie Mudd, creative director at The Wood Flooring Company, prefers "oil or wax finishes over more durable matt lacquer, for a natural aesthetic."



ABOVE LEFT High quality porcelain tiles replicate timber or stone authentically. *Elements Wood Fume Plank porcelain tiles, £82.80 a square metre, Lapicida*

ABOVE A worn textured surface evokes the timeless quality of a centuries-old stone floor. *Worn Grey Limestone tiles, from £49.50 a square metre, Floors of Stone. The Real Shaker kitchen, from £18,000, deVOL*

LEFT Engineered oak provides a durable and resilient surface. *Oak clear lacquered engineered boards, £78.50 a square metre, The Natural Wood Floor Company*



EXPERT SOURCEBOOK

- "Robust European white oak can prove a superior choice for flooring and is mainly grown in France, Germany or England, where it is often referred to as English oak," explains The Natural Wood Floor Company's Peter Keane.
- "Classic English limestone includes Cotswold, York, Bath and Lincoln stone," says Joss Thomas, founder and designer of Indigenous, "while French stone is a good alternative, offering a wider variety of finishes for that reclaimed look."
- When selecting marble, Jason Cherrington at Lapicida champions, "Italy, Spain and Portugal – as all have a long history when it comes to quarrying and processing exquisite tiles and slabs."
- "Drawing on age-old regional expertise and baked in the sun, artisans in Portugal and Spain have been making encaustic, cement and terracotta tiles for generations," says Colin Roby-Welford, creative director at Fired Earth
- According to Isabel Fernandez, director of Quorn Stone, "Timber and stone-effect porcelains have come a long way in recent years, and designs produced in Italy and Spain are now second to none."

LEFT The latest bold graphics on ceramics and encaustics offer geometric arrangements from symmetrical stripes to random forms. *Alalpardo porcelain tiles, £74.70 a square metre, Bert & May at Fired Earth*

BELOW Flamboyant reclaimed or handmade Mediterranean encaustic designs are a less formal alternative to classic Victorian laying patterns. *Reclaimed Spanish encaustic tiles, around £200 a square metre, Maitland & Poate*



MODERN OUTLOOK

For those looking to character boards, a host of specialist finishes are on offer – with the latest firing, fuming and baking all imparting a distinctive dark, rich colouring and texture. By contrast, rectified, precision-cut, semi-precious stone or faux tiles imbue a sophisticated, decorative aesthetic, along with an almost seamless finish. Whereas seekers of supreme practicality, may wish to consider concrete, resin or terrazzo poured floors, which work surprisingly well in more serviceable areas of older homes.

When it comes to pattern, Cherrington points to bespoke services, such as Lapicida's, "For the creation of unique stone designs, that can embrace everything from historic inlay and mosaic crafts to hi-tech laser and water jet cutting." Similarly, three-dimensional-effect timber parquetry may appear modernist, but still has roots in the past. For those preferring colour, Keane suggests, "Adding coloured oils or lacquer to unsealed wood blocks." Highly ornate Moroccan or Mediterranean encaustics bring instant personality and depth to the home, as do bold geometrics.

Finally, don't just consider finishes in isolation. Decorative tiles, for example, can be applied as a rug, inserted within contrasting designs or materials. Furthermore, tiles or timber can successfully defy convention and be used across both walls and floors.

FEATURE PAULA WOODS PHOTOGRAPHS P105 © GEORGE KOROSSY. P106 (THE MAIN COMPANY) © CHRIS SNOOK

HEATED DEBATE

Choosing flooring that can be teamed with underfloor heating will not only ensure warmth underfoot, but guarantees compatibility with renewables, such as ground or air source heat pumps and solar photovoltaic panels. It is also worth noting that a lack of radiators allows more flexibility of layout.

Stone, terracotta, porcelain and ceramic are all natural companions to underfloor heating due to their high heat conductivity and excellent heat retention. "Stone tiles tend to be thicker, so they may take a little longer to heat up, but will retain the temperature for longer," points out Isabel Fernandez, director of Quorn Stone. Hamish Smith, managing and creative director at Artisan of Devizes, highlights marble as, "One of the best natural stones for thermal conductivity."

Contrary to popular belief, many engineered and some solid timber floors can also be used with underfloor heating (check before buying). "Installing a heating probe that measures the floor's surface temperature and limits it to 27°C can help protect timber finishes and prevent warping," suggests Paul Simmonds of heating specialist Wunda. Due to acclimatisation over centuries, reclaimed timber is a robust, authentic alternative. ■



ABOVE RIGHT Softer underfoot than their period counterparts, these individually cut and bevelled vinyl tiles have been specifically designed to work with underfloor heating systems. *Décor Classic Goldstone luxury vinyl tiles, from £142.99 a square metre, Amtico*

RIGHT Thermal efficiency along with extensive variations in colour and veining makes marble a classic choice for bathrooms. *Di Scacchi tumbled marble floor tiles in Bluestone and Calacatta, from £50.57 a square metre; Tangier Ava Blue ceramic wall tiles, £54.53 a square metre, both Mandarin Stone*

Due to its added stability, engineered timber is often very well suited to underfloor heating. *Handcrafted Cellar Oak with natural oil finish, £66.14 a square metre, The Wood Flooring Co*





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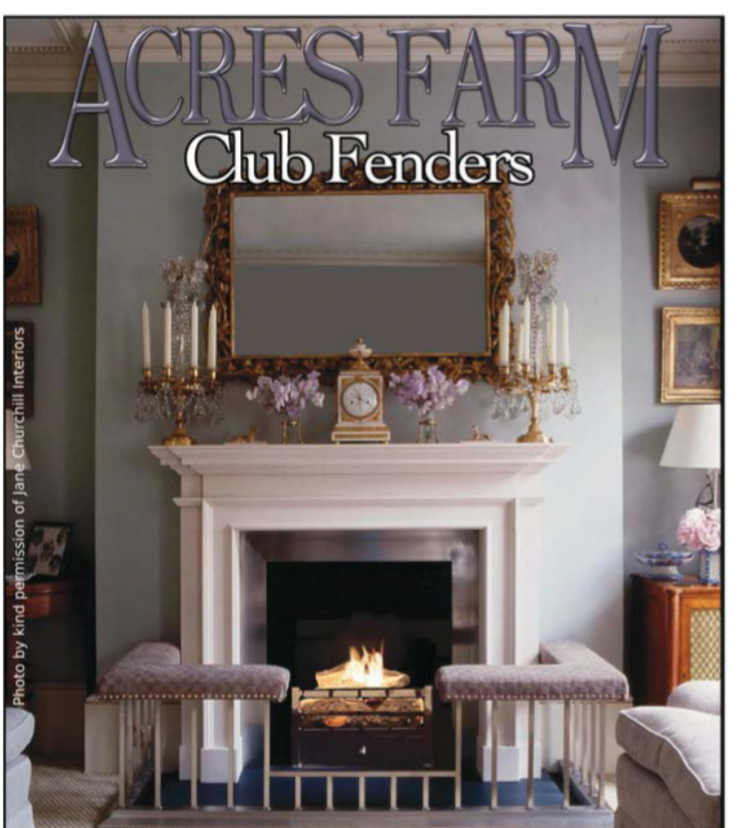

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guardsmanhotel.com

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CALLAGHANS OF SHREWSBURY

A FRENCH AFFAIR

How the French Impressionist Marcel Dyf – despite little formal training – managed to capture all the beauty his homeland had to offer in landscapes and still life





ABOVE *Fleurs de Jardin*, oil on canvas, 56cm x 46cm, signed
ABOVE RIGHT *Summer Bouquet*, oil on canvas, 58cm x 71cm, signed

Impressionism and Post-Impressionism are fêted as two of the most influential and important movements in modern art history, and with their use of looser brush strokes and lighter colours, were to have a huge influence on the celebrated French artist Marcel Dyf (1899–1985).

Huge admirers of Dyf and experts in this period of art are Stella and Daniel Callaghan, who, during the 35 years of running their gallery, Callaghans of Shrewsbury, have garnered a reputation for specialising in and their knowledge of European 19th and 20th-century art. "Dyf's paintings are full of texture and thick impasto, indicating each and every brushstroke and detail," says Daniel. "His paintings are exceptional in their array of colours and composition, certainly a style to suit any interior."

Best known for his delicate landscapes and still life paintings, Dyf grew up in Paris but spent his childhood holidays in Normandy. The artistic climate to which he was exposed in Paris and Normandy was crucial during his youth, particularly the innovative ideas and new thinking born of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist movements. Swept up in the atmosphere, Dyf decided in his early twenties to give up his career in engineering and become an artist. He moved to Arles in 1922 to pursue his calling and kept a studio there until 1942. He had little formal artistic training but owed much of his inspiration to the great masters of the past such as Rembrandt, Vermeer and Tiepolo. In Provence, challenged by a new range of colours and light, by new landscapes and images, Dyf graduated from painter to artist.

In 1935 Dyf took on a studio in Paris and thrived in the creative vitality pervading the city in the 1930s. Following the invasion of Paris in 1940, Dyf returned to Arles, but quickly had to abandon his studio. After the war, he divided his time between Paris and Saint Paul-de-Vence, and his pictures began to sell through galleries in Cannes, Nice, Marseille and Strasbourg.

In the summer of 1954, Dyf met Claudine. Aged 19, she was 36 younger than him and with her long fair hair, vivacity and patience, she was what he felt to be



LEFT *Golden Fields*, oil on canvas, 46cm x 56cm, signed
BELOW *Trouville*, oil on canvas, 46cm x 56cm, signed

his perfect model. Her arrival in his life acted as a catalyst, bringing his art forward to the threshold of its most mature phase. In 1956, they married and bought a 16th-century hunting lodge at Bois d'Arcy, near Versailles. The gardens were filled with flowers – a rainbow of colours and textures that inspired Dyf's still life paintings including *Fleurs de Jardin* and *Summer Bouquet*, both of which perfectly demonstrate his wonderful use of colour and clever brushwork.

Each autumn the couple returned to Provence on painting trips; the olive trees, cane windbreaks and grey-white crags of the Alpilles provided countless motifs for Dyf's paintings of Provence, and his artistic and emotional attachment to the area endured to the end of his life. "We've been privileged to become friends with Claudine over the decades of specialising in Dyf's wonderful works. Many years ago, she invited us to join her at home for a light lunch. It turned into a whole day and evening discussing his inspirations, execution of works and their wonderful life together travelling to different parts of France for inspiration." ■



FEATURE KATE FREUD

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QUINTESSENTIALLY

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



DRAMATIC DISPLAY

Create a spectacular sensory moment in the garden with a floral curtain of wisteria perfuming a walkway, pergola, trellis or arch. Although purple flowers are synonymous with the plant, a range of shades are available, from white to blue and pink. If growing wisteria on a support, it is worth noting that it needs to be strong and that the two most common varieties grow in different directions – *Wisteria sinensis* anticlockwise and *Wisteria floribunda* clockwise. If growing up against the wall of a house, it should be south or west-facing. Wisteria can be grown in a pot as a standard plant (a tree with a single stem), however, it will need constant feeding to flourish.

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE **PHOTOGRAPH** © SONJA/ZELANOLIVING4MEDIA

What to do in MAY

May is the month for reconnecting with the great outdoors. Enjoy the warmth of the late spring sunshine with a woodland walk, a lazy lunch in the garden, or even as impetus for a brand new decorating scheme



Curtain, Otelie, Kingfisher, £72.50 a metre, Romo



MAKE… *a space for quiet contemplation and creativity*

A separate room or area of a house for craft activities, or to use as a reading nook will make a wonderful addition to any home. It is worth putting some thought into creating a decorating scheme that is conducive to thoughtful and creative endeavours. Of course, the natural landscape is renowned for its ability to imbue a sense of calm, so soft shades of green and blue inspired by water or leafy foliage in the garden could be the starting point. Aqua, olive and ocean blue work beautifully as calming accent colours for a background neutral of soft taupe or pale grey that, when combined, will create a tranquil and calm retreat. Lightweight curtains made from voile or light cotton are the ideal window treatment as they will allow light to enter even on dull days while cleverly diffusing strong sunlight on brighter days that are void of cloud cover. Source designs that contribute to the sense of calm such as painterly designs whose artistic brushstroke-like patterns perfectly encapsulate the smudged beauty of watercolour paintings.

EAT… *wild garlic*

Forage in the woods and bring home a small handful of this gloriously pungent wild growing variety of one of the most popular kitchen staples and use it to add punchy fragrance to all sorts of dishes. Foraging means only taking a small amount of wild produce for consumption rather than digging up or removing entire plants or bulbs, which is illegal without permission from the site's owner or custodian. Wild garlic is easily recognised by its long, bright green leaves and cluster of flowers, each consisting of six small white petals that grow up from a single stalk. If in doubt, pick a leaf and crush it in the palm of the hand. If it smells like garlic, then it is the right plant. Should wild garlic not be in abundance nearby, consider purchasing some from Riverford Organic, which forages it fresh from the surrounding woods its farm in Devon when it is in season from March to May. Wild garlic leaves are one of the joys of spring and the season is short, so enjoy them while you can. Order a bunch or two of this seasonal savoury delight and use it for one of Riverford's favourite recipes – wild garlic and potato soup.

RIVERFORD ORGANIC WILD GARLIC AND POTATO SOUP

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp vegetable or sunflower oil for frying
1 onion, chopped
600g potatoes, peeled and diced
1.2 litres vegetable stock
50g wild garlic leaves, shredded
Crème fraîche or double cream, to serve
Wild garlic flowers (optional)
Salt and pepper

METHOD

Prep time: 10 min
Cooking time: 30 min

STEP 1
Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the onion and fry it on a low heat for 8 minutes, until softened without colouring.

STEP 2
Add the potatoes and stock. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes, until the potatoes are tender.

STEP 3
Add the wild garlic leaves, reserving a few shreds for garnishing the soup.

STEP 4
Blitz in a blender or food processor until smooth, with flecks of wild garlic leaves. Reheat in the pan, seasoning to taste.

STEP 5
Serve with a swirl of crème fraîche or double cream, a few shreds of wild garlic and a few wild garlic flowers, if you have them.



GROW… *peas*

Nothing speaks of a classic English summer than the sight of tall, slender pea plants climbing a willow obelisk or a tepee of bamboo canes in the vegetable patch. There is also a huge sense of nostalgia to be had sitting around the kitchen table, squeezing open the long green casings to reveal a row of peas that are deliciously sweet when eaten straight from the pod. Plant now and they will be ready to harvest at the height of summer. Remember, too, the culinary potential of the sweet pea shoots for adding to all sorts of dishes. Pick these early in the growing season and enjoy their nutrient-packed flavour in salads or homemade pesto. Look for unusual varieties of peas that have colourful pods such as 'Blauwschokker'. This sensational edible kitchen garden crop will add visual interest to the vegetable patch as well as look stunning as cut stems arranged in a vase with its show-stopping intensely purple pods and hugely attractive sweet-pea-like indigo flowers.

Pea 'Blauwschokker', £9.95 for pack of 120 seeds, Sarah Raven



UPDATE... *a window or door*

A window film with a whimsical floral border pattern featuring a delicate arrangement of wildflowers and foliage is perfect for adding a touch of the outdoors to a window or door without a view. If a kitchen or patio door has glazed panels at the bottom section this can often highlight a bare patch in the garden planting, particularly in spring, before the flowers have grown tall and are in full bloom and adding a decorative window film can introduce a little floral loveliness to the empty space. This Wild Flower design is also available on a frosted background, so would be ideal for adding an element of privacy to a bathroom or downstairs cloakroom. It can be made-to-order to suit the exact requirements of glazed door panels or window.

Wild Flower window film, from £14.13 for 50cm x 25cm, Purlfrost

GATHER… *al fresco*

May sees a marked rise in the strength of the sun around midday so is a great time to dust down outdoor furniture and enjoy a long lunch with friends. Wooden furniture designed for permanent use outdoors will benefit from a wipe down and seasonal refresh with a coat of oil. Check the manufacturer's recommendations before applying the oil with a clean cloth and allowing it to soak in to prevent it drying out over the summer months. Portable chairs such as foldable bistro styles or canvas campaign chairs are ideal for our climate as they can be easily put away when the weather turns.

Find a sheltered spot on the patio, or under the bough of a fruit tree that is still in blossom. If the garden is blessed with a woodland area, set the table close to where the wildflowers and birdsong set the perfect backdrop.

Pembrey table, £2,050; Denham campaign chair, £425; Hanover small cordless lamp in Nickel, £210, all Neptune ■

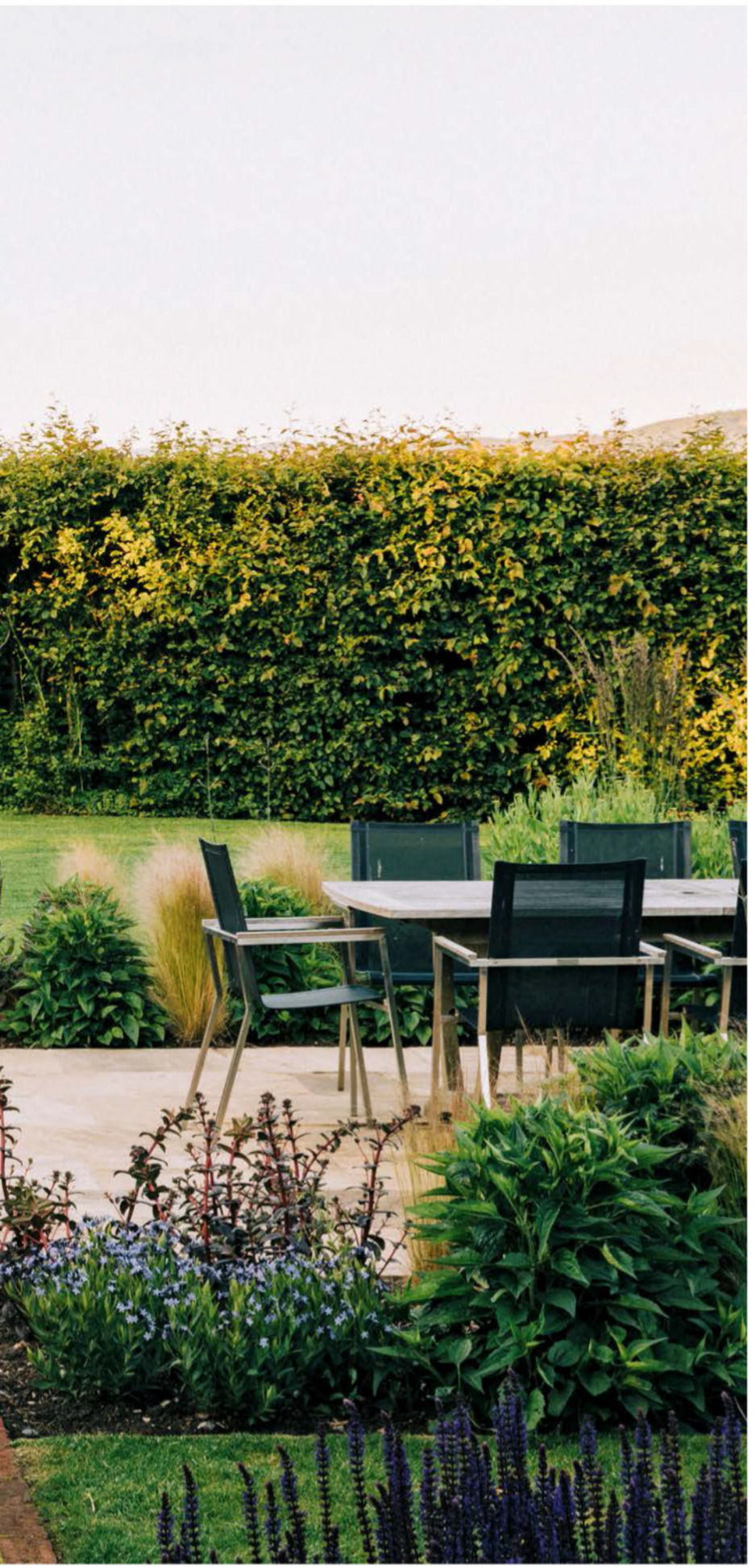
FEATURE SARA EMSLIE. **PHOTOGRAPH** SARAH RAVEN © JONATHAN BUCKLEY

Plotting AHEAD

From supporting wildlife to working from home, we are demanding more from our gardens then ever. Here leading garden designers reveal the new and emerging themes and how to address them



Created for a family, this garden designed by Rosie Nottage needed to be the right balance of quiet and fun, reflective and relaxing. An opening in the hedge lets the sun flood in and the view beyond be appreciated and drought-tolerant, loose planting makes for a low-maintenance garden.



While our love for gardens is unwavering, how they are landscaped, planted and enjoyed is steadily evolving. Here, leading garden designers share their thoughts on new themes clients are increasingly seeking to be incorporated into their gardens. Often reflecting current social concerns and values, these design requests gradually become exciting new garden styles. "Things move at a snail's pace in the gardening world, so most trends develop over several years," says RHS award-winning garden designer Juliet Sargeant. "However, overlying a general swell towards a particular style or product, we sometimes see a seasonal peak, which often reflects a societal zeitgeist."

RENEWED APPRECIATION

As with so many aspects of daily life, recent global events have led to a new-found appreciation for our homes, our gardens and our surroundings in general. "Climate change and Covid-19 have both had major impacts on the way we see our gardens," says Wiltshire-based garden designer Fi Boyle. "In general, clients are more aware of the environment around them. We have learned to value our outside space much more, and with so many people working from home, the outdoor office has become more of a feature. Outdoor kitchens are also in demand, along with a space to entertain, as we become more home-focused."

"As well as offering space to work from home, cabins provide a place to relax outside," says Sussex-based garden designer Louisa Bell. "All-year-round buildings can be lined and insulated, while summer cabins can be more open to the elements, with a wood-burner, using kiln-dried logs of course, or a small grill for cooking breakfast and making tea."

A desire to share experiences and reconnect with others is also shaping designs. Tina James, Preston Bissett Nurseries' head of garden design, says: "High on the priority list for clients are flexible spaces for outdoor entertaining – a little hard landscaping such as a gravel terrace, combined with lots of planting to soften the area, can deliver this. This can then be furnished for cooking, dining or relaxed seating."

There is also a requirement for a more solitary and peaceful experience. "Finding a sense of space and well-being outdoors is more important than ever," says revered sculptor and water feature designer David Harber. "Small pockets of habitat and calm will be intentionally dotted around the garden, each to evoke a new emotion and sense of connection with the earth. Homeowners are finding more reasons to add personality to their outdoor space through landscaping



'Clients are preferring softer, planted gardens with more flow – a space where they feel they are helping nature rather than trying to control it'

ABOVE In this design by Hendy Curzon a bowered walkway flanked by white flowers and dandelion sculptures leads to a seating area for some quiet contemplation.

and garden design – as really, your garden is just an extension of your indoor space."

PLANT-LED DESIGN

A new softness in garden design and planting has been quietly emerging over the past few years, encouraging homeowners to place plants and trees at the fore. "The move away from formality started in the 2000s with news from Europe and America of grasses and wafty perennials. People are also drawn to the potential for alignment of one's garden style with environmental considerations," says Sargeant.

Personal well-being and biophilia are potential reasons for this progression. "Connecting to nature to reap the health benefits such as reducing stress and anxiety has become very important to many clients," agrees James, "and so I find delivering calm, tranquil gardens is a frequent request. My designs are becoming even more plant-led as a response to this, which is healthier for the spirit and the environment. Paving is minimised and often moved further away from the house in favour of bringing planting closer to the house. Perfect gardens with straight lines and wide-open lawns are much less popular and clients are preferring softer, planted gardens with more flow and a greater connection to nature – a space where they feel they are helping nature rather than trying to control it."

DROUGHT-TOLERANT PLANTING

Garden owners have long been looking for low-maintenance solutions in all aspects of their outside space, so following a series of hot, dry summers it is no surprise that drought-tolerant planting is currently a top requirement. "Prairie plants continue to step up to the mark when subjected to testing climatic stress," says Pauline McBride, owner and designer of Sussex Prairie Gardens. "The plants in our garden are planted in an open, full-sun position and continue to flower successfully, offering impact through mass planting, deep colour and textural interest."

Often denoted by their silver and grey-green foliage, sun-loving plants are especially adapted to reflect the sun's heat and trap any moisture within a network of fine hairs, but there are other factors that contribute to ensuring plants can survive extreme heat. "Clients often ask about drought-tolerant plants, but it is more



ABOVE Designers Bridget Elworthy and Henrietta Courtauld of The Land Gardeners note a growing appreciation of naturalistic planting and an interest in soil health.

complex than that – plants need to be generally resilient and adapted to multiple vicissitudes of weather," says Sargeant. "I predict a move towards a greater interest in soil care. People are understanding more and more that the secret to healthy, resilient plants is rooted in healthy soil."

The Land Gardeners Henrietta Courtauld and Bridget Elworthy agree: "We are finding that gardeners are increasingly enjoying growing their own fruit, vegetables and cut flowers – gaining real pleasure from gathering their own produce. They are more open to being organic – thankfully now questioning the use of chemicals where once they would have sprayed them without thought – and of the underlying importance of soil health and feeding it with good compost and green manures."

SUPPORTING WILDLIFE

A greater awareness and appreciation of nature and the role of pollinators is clear from recent conversations with top garden designers. "The requests for bee and insect-friendly gardens are more and more common," says Boyle. "As a garden designer, I like to ensure that the garden delivers both a long season of interest and is wildlife friendly. Ideas can range from putting in early flowering shrubs such as *Hamamelis* (witch hazel) for sought-after nectar to putting in wildflower meadows under orchards to increase the biodiversity."

The eight experts offering their design advice for English gardens



DAVID HARBER
Renowned sculptor creating innovative, contemporary art for gardens and landscapes.

FI BOYLE
Award-winning garden designer, owner of Fi Boyle Garden Landscape Design & Consultancy.





JULIET SARGEANT
RHS award-winning garden designer and BBC *Gardeners' World* presenter.

LOUISA BELL
Owner of The Lovely Garden, designing and building gardens in Sussex and Surrey.





PAULINE McBRIDE
Garden designer and co-owner, with husband Paul, of Sussex Prairie Gardens.

ROB JONES
Garden designer, horticultural expert and director of The Garden Design Company.





THE LAND GARDENERS
Garden designers Henrietta Courtauld and Bridget Elworthy, standard bearers for healthy soil.

TINA JAMES
Head of garden design at Preston Bissett Nurseries in the heart of rural Buckinghamshire.



FEATURE JILL MORGAN **PHOTOGRAPHS** P124-125 © ANDREW MAYBURY. P126 © HENDY CURZON DESIGN. P127 (TOP LEFT) © THE LAND GARDENERS; (PAULINE MCBRIDE) © MARIANNE MAJERUS. P128 © DAVID HARBER. P129 (TOP LEFT) TINA JAMES MSGD PRESTON BISSETT NURSERIES; (TOP RIGHT) © CULLIFORDS; (BELOW) © FI BOYLE













"I am receiving many more requests from clients for wildlife-friendly gardens with a more naturalistic planting style with lots of nectar-rich species for pollinators," agrees James. "People are also asking to add habitats for wildlife and include lots of nesting sites. If a pond cannot be accommodated, or budget or space doesn't allow, then beautiful planters can be sealed to provide a bijou water oasis."

Natural swimming pools are attracting plenty of attention, too – more visually appealing than formal designs they also provide advantages for wildlife. Planting around the margins, sloped sides for easy access and pockets of planting all encourage birds, dragonflies and other beneficial insects. While a well-designed pool will sit gently in the landscape, it should also accommodate sudden changes in weather. "Overflows in case of heavy rain should not be forgotten, but this provides opportunities for a neighbouring bog garden to be created, filled with the likes of gunneras, hostas and ferns," says Garden Design Company director Rob Jones.

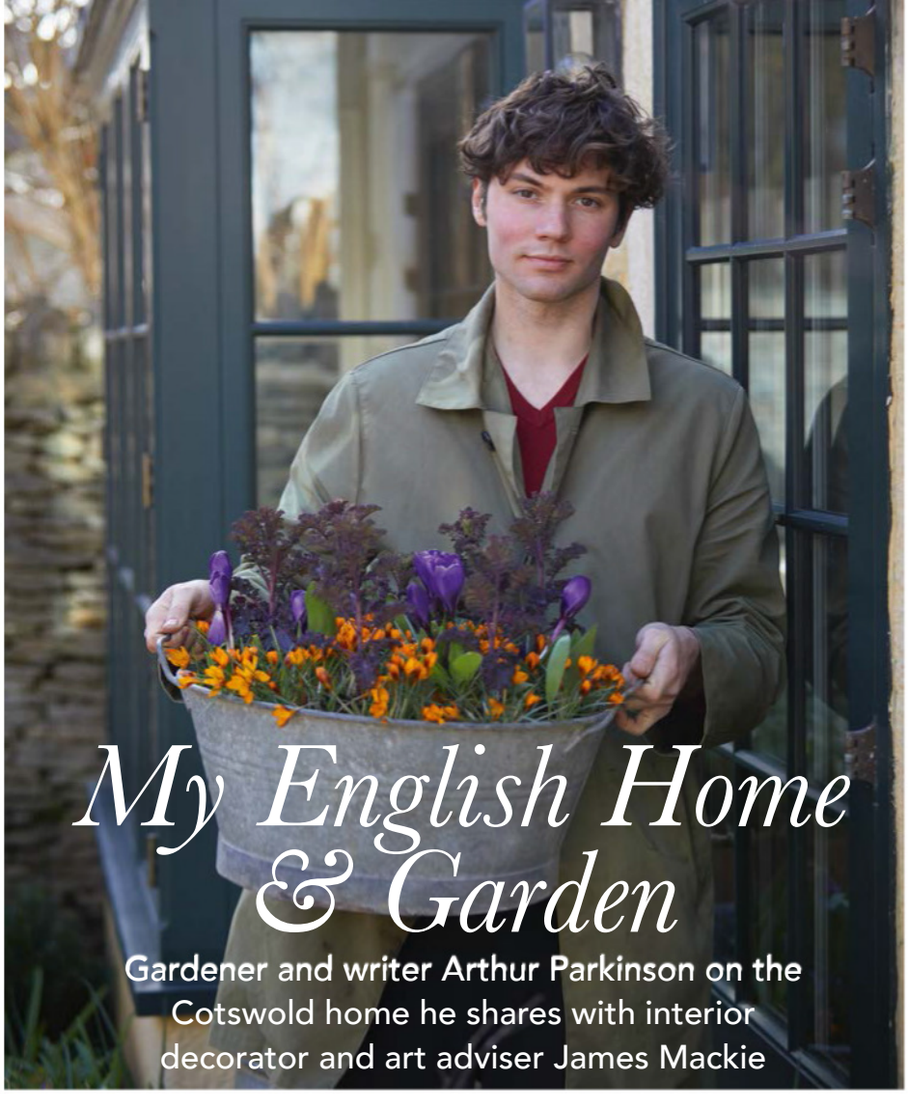
Designer Fi Boyle agrees. "Many clients have become much more aware of sustainability and the need to conserve water. Harvesting water is important but installing holding tanks is expensive so can be prohibitive. I often suggest putting in water troughs along each side of a greenhouse or even at the back to gather the runoff from the roof." ■

FAR LEFT Embedding a sculpture within planting creates a constant focal point to appreciate changes in the seasons. *Mantle II, from £8,384, David Harber.*

ABOVE LEFT Loosely planted areas are replacing formal lawns and borders, as seen in this plant-led design by Tina James of Preston Bissett Nurseries.

ABOVE RIGHT Outdoor kitchen and dining areas are becoming desirable. *Aran White Granite, £450 a square metre, Cullifords*

LEFT Garden designer Fi Boyle has seen a desire for natural rather than formal pools from clients. Softer on the eye and kinder to wildlife, they have a relaxed appeal.



My English Home & Garden

Gardener and writer Arthur Parkinson on the Cotswold home he shares with interior decorator and art adviser James Mackie

Tell us about the home you share with your partner James Mackie?
It's a Cotswolds cottage that dates back to the 18th century. It's small, which is part of its charm, but has a book room that's been added on by James to increase the space and add light with its big windows. He's done it so beautifully everyone thinks it's part of the original cottage.

Do you have a favourite spot?
I love it in the evening when there are fresh flowers everywhere and we're on the sofa with the fire lit. I love that primeval thing of lighting the fire. Second to that, I spend hours in the bath! There's a dimmer on the lightswitch which is really important. When I was little, my aunt used to make us a candlelit bath as a treat, and they still take me back to childhood.

You are a protégé of Sarah Raven, but who first inspired your love of gardening?
My grandma Min, who had a long vegetable garden. Our grandparents would take us to visit gardens in the countryside at the weekend. My dad used to take us to National Trust properties too, as he loves history and antique furniture. We were lucky – these things got us out of town and out of the house but also inspired me.

You wrote to the Duchess of Devonshire as a young boy, which started a lifelong correspondence. Is Chatsworth your favourite English stately home?
We went to Chatsworth a lot when I was a child. We'd holiday in Derbyshire and as a treat we'd visit Chatsworth House. It was always so magical and you never forget that moment when the house comes in to view. It is the most gorgeous jewel in Britain, I think. Joe Wright, who directed *Pride & Prejudice*, said the thing about it is "it's grand but it's also so beautiful", and not many houses come with both qualities. The letters are now kept safely at my mother's house, stored in books that Debo wrote.

You and James share a love of Chatsworth. Do you share a design aesthetic in your home and garden?
I don't impose on James. I think when you both have your own vision for gardens and interiors, you don't cross-pollinate. I admire how he puts things together and designs interiors, and similarly he finds it incredible how I select my tulip bulbs and layer them when I plant them so they come out at different times. There are similarities, but with gardening you have to be more patient for it to come to fruition.

How have you made the garden your domain?
I've introduced Venetian tones – a lot of deep reds, vermillion oranges and purples – lush, punchy colours. There's an area paved in Cotswold stone where there's a table I treat as a plant theatre and cover in pots, which come off when we have lunches outside. There are beds around the edge of the garden for roses, which we both love. We have lots of herbs which are hardy and don't need a lot of watering in the summer. I think climate change is something we all need to be mindful of.

What will you be doing in the garden in May?
This is the month, I'll be sowing cosmos, zinnias and basil, which all like the warm nights, and planting out the sweetpeas that are currently seedlings in the greenhouse.

What are your vessels of choice?
My favourite pots are by Bergs Potter Cophenhagen. I also love using old plates beneath plants inside the house; it's really important when you're living with someone with a lot of antiques!

Is there an interiors style that's prevalent in the cottage?
I think William Morris influences us a lot. For me, its that message from Morris about living in harmony with nature that I love. We also have what we call the Morris room, papered in Willow patterned wallpaper. It's actually named after our friend Tom Morris (another designer), who stays in the room a lot.

What should no English home be without?
Comfort is important. I love that sense that you can wrap a house around you. But seasonal flowers and a kettle are the two things no home should be without! I can't live without tea. My favourite plant in the garden is lemon verbena, which you can plant in May and it makes the most gorgeous tea.

Don't miss our next issue, where Arthur reveals his guide to keeping chickens. ■

FEATURE SAMANTHA SCOTT-JEFFRIES **PHOTOGRAPH** © BRITT WILLOUGHBY-DYER



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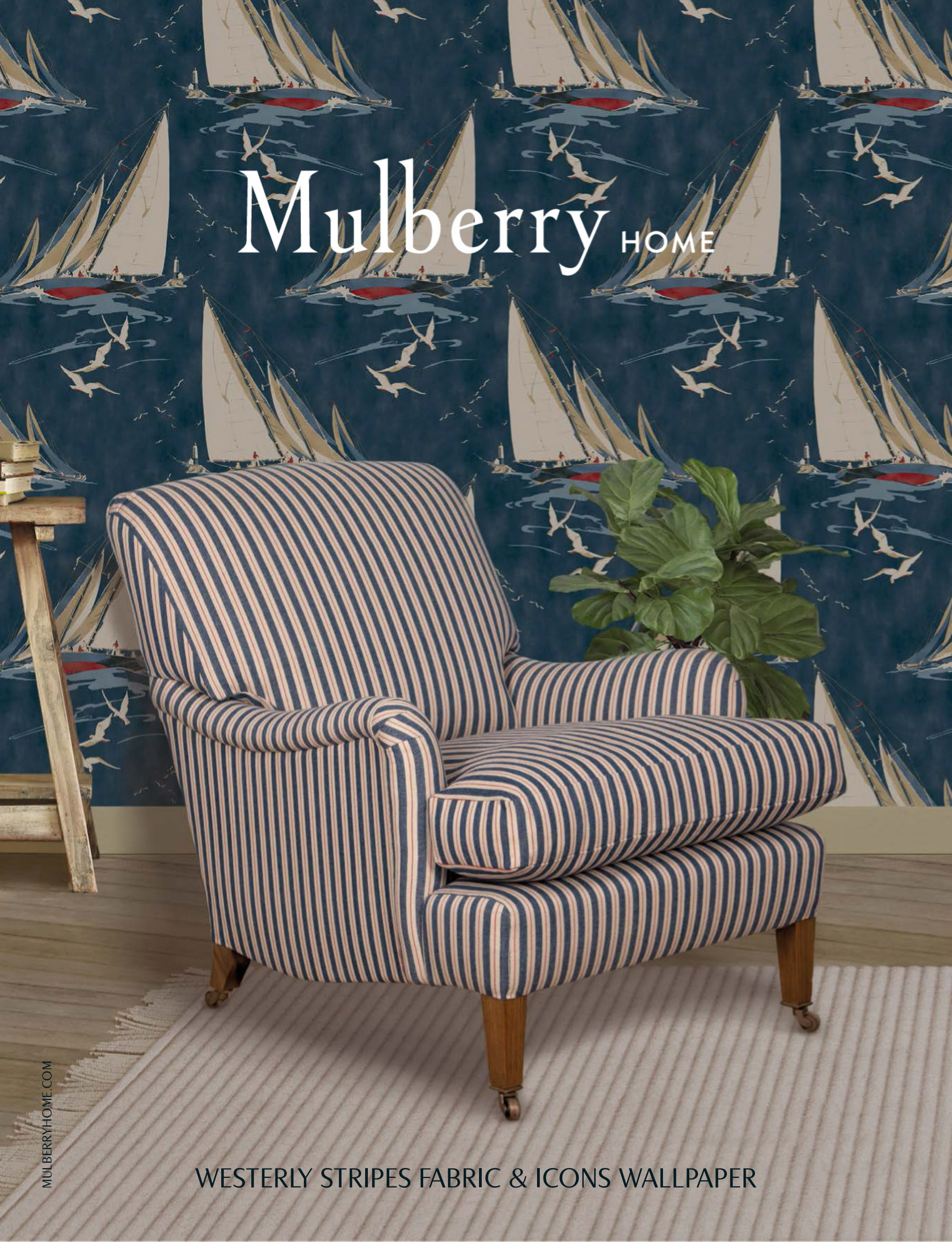
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