

The

ENGLISH HOME



Celebrating the essence of English style
September 2023 | Issue 223 | £5.50 | UK Edition

GREAT BRITISH BUYS

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Calm*

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- Display dahlias
- Be playful with stripes

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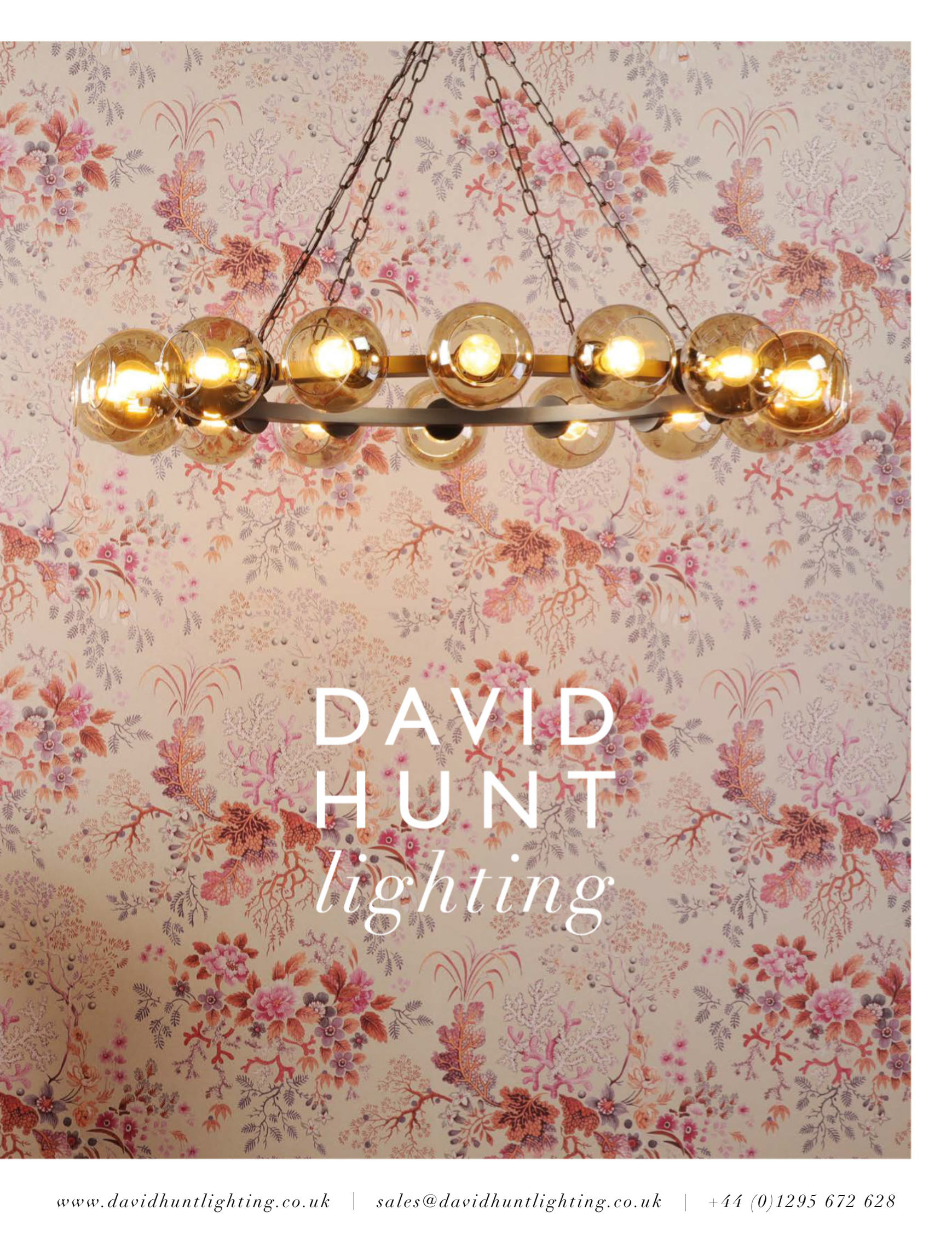
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SEPTEMBER 2023



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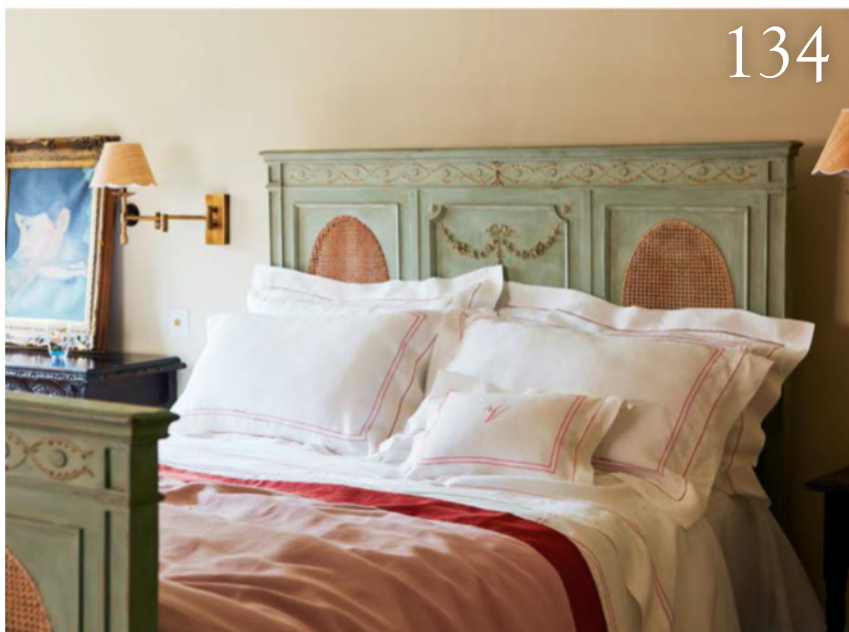
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Discover the British companies crafting classic designs, such as this smart sofa by Beaumont & Fletcher, to add timeless updates to interiors, in our feature on page 85

A letter from home



The English Home has always celebrated homegrown talent and craftsmanship. Buying with quality and provenance in mind (rather than promoting fleeting fashion) has as always been at the heart of what we do too. Yet it also feels particularly timely to invest in British-made products for our homes.

Buying from brands who work with local materials or production methods is not only sustainable but keeps our long tradition of craft and heritage skills alive while imbuing interiors with a sense of place.

Creating this issue has highlighted the talent and beauty of much of what is produced on our shores, as well as the incredible technology and innovations that are being adopted alongside traditional skills (see our feature on page 85). We champion more than 100 great British brands and products, showing you how to add handmade touches and pieces full of craftsmanship and unique stories to your home. Of course, English decorating also has a long history of taking inspiration from overseas and we reflect this in the issue too.

September is a month in which we embrace the end of summer and look forward to a time of productivity and new projects in our English homes. Our decorating feature shows how to harness a calm, mellow mood and late summer light (page 78), while our feature on page 106 explores how to add a part-time work area successfully to existing rooms for flexibility. For that all-important downtime, we hope you'll be inspired by our Living The Season section (page 125) featuring projects and adventures to enjoy at this time of year.

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor



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'Pupil'
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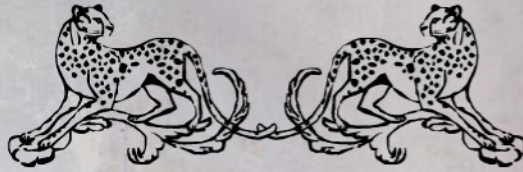


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SPOTLIGHT ON...

Evocative Elegance

Festooned with butterflies and flowers embroidered and painted by hand, An English Butterfly Garden is the enchanting new silk wallpaper collection by interior designer Katharine Pooley for Fromental, inspired by her gardens in the Oxfordshire countryside and sold with a donation to the charity Butterfly Conservation. She says: "I have been delighted to see how the story of my garden has unfolded so beautifully 'stroke by stroke' and 'stitch by stitch' by Fromental's world-leading, meticulous atelier of artists. Together we have created a wonderfully whimsical scene, as if one has accidentally wandered into a secret English garden full of beauty and intrigue." katharinepooley.com; fromental.co.uk >



King Honours Queen of Paint

Annie Sloan is awarded the CBE

In his first Birthday Honours List, His Majesty The King awarded paint maven Annie Sloan the CBE for services to interior design.

Annie says: "To be given the CBE is just extraordinary and is the best acknowledgment of my life's work I can imagine. I'm extremely honoured to be recognised in this way. This honour is very much appreciated by me as a champion of creativity for all. I've tried to support independent businesses around the world and further the understanding of the connection between colour, painting and well-being."

After training as a fine artist in the 1970s, Annie began painting murals on commission but could not find one paint that did everything she needed. "I wanted a paint that was easy to use, quick to dry and could be mixed with other colours," she says. "The most important thing for me was not having to do any prep, so you can just start painting whenever the mood takes you."

She invented Chalk Paint, a water-based non-toxic quality formula with a velvety matt finish that sticks to any surface inside and outside the home without the need for priming or sanding. Proudly made in England, it now comes in 43 mixable colours, with a range of decorator's accessories.

Annie says: "Everything I do is designed to help my customers transform their worlds and inspire them further in their decorative adventures. I am committed to making the world a more colourful place, saving unloved furniture from landfill, sustainability and giving everyone the power to transform their homes." anniesloan.com



Craft Pioneers Crowned

His Majesty rewards Benchmark

Handcrafted furniture maker Benchmark has been awarded in the first King's Awards for Enterprise in Sustainable Development.

Official Palace documents describe the company's creations as: "Furniture that makes a positive impact for the environment, community and human health, inspiring sustainable consumption."

Founded by Sir Terence Conran and Sean Sutcliffe in 1984, the company's mission is to make furniture that contributes to human health and well-being using natural, sustainable and non-toxic materials. With workshops in Berkshire and Dorset, it works with many of the world's leading architects on residential and commercial projects, including the new Aya furniture collection designed by renowned architecture firm Foster + Partners.

Made with solid Forest Stewardship Council British-grown ash and finished with low-VOC natural oils, and featuring dining, conference and high tables plus stools, variations in colour and character are embraced rather than rejected to minimise waste, its soft tactile curves and natural materials promoting a sense of calm.

benchmarkfurniture.com ▶

INCHYRA





ABOVE Lee Jofa at GP & J Baker. Lee Jofa's origins date back 200 years – from rope-making to fine fabrics and more.

RIGHT This Royal Suite Master Bedroom at The Goring hotel showcases the finery of Gainsborough silks.

BELOW Hartley Botanic's luxury greenhouses and glasshouses are all endorsed by the Royal Horticultural Society.



Great British Success Stories

Heritage brands celebrating landmark anniversaries this year

Here we spotlight a number of the long-standing interiors and garden companies marking significant anniversaries in 2023.

Lee Jofa's origins stretch back two centuries to 1823 when Englishman George Johnson started a rope-making business, expanding into upholstery and later fine decorative fabrics under the partnership Johnson & Faulkner – shortened to Jofa. Arthur H Lee founded an innovative weaving company in Lancashire in 1888 known for crewel embroidery, needlework and tapestries. Exporting worldwide by 1930, in 1965 his firm bought Jofa, forming Lee Jofa, later expanding into wallcoverings, furniture, lighting and trimmings. Quintessentially English designs charm its global clientele and it recently launched a collaboration with couturier Oscar de la Renta.

Gainsborough began as a silk-weaver founded by Reginald Warner in Suffolk in 1903, and today – 120 years later – it is among Britain's last remaining craft-weaving houses. It immediately earned a reputation for high-quality damasks, tapestries and

velvets, specialising in historical reproductions, drawing on designs Warner bought from European mills, overlaid with an English interpretation. Today, demand remains strong for its extensive archive dating back as far as the 15th century. Proud holder of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Royal Warrant, it has made bespoke luxury fabrics for the Royal Family, Liberty, Morris & Co and other eminent names.

This year marks 85 years in business for Hartley Botanic. Founded in 1938 by brothers Vincent and Norman Hartley following their ground-breaking aluminium greenhouse design

which marked a huge improvement on its wood and wrought-iron Victorian forerunners. Today, the company still handcrafts luxury greenhouses and glasshouses in the same Lancashire factory, with customers worldwide and North America its largest growth market, and balances modern innovation with traditional, time-honoured fine craftsmanship to produce classic, modern and bespoke structures of distinction – all endorsed by the RHS.

Other anniversaries of note include furniture companies Duresta (85th) and Tetrad (55th), and fine bone china maker Caverswall (50th).

gpjbaker.com/brands/lee-jofa; gainsborough.co.uk; hartley-botanic.co.uk ▶





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Diary



Discover new-season launches, experts' talks and workshops at Focus/23, the international design show brimming with creative ideas, inspiration and insights at Design Centre Chelsea Harbour on 18–22 September. dcch.co.uk



Pick-your-own from hundreds of apple and pear varieties in the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale Farm in Kent at its Heritage Orchard Days running on 16–17 and 30 September, and 1 and 14–15 October. brogdalecollections.org



Meet and buy from top designer-makers at Beautiful & Useful, 16–17 September at Sussex Prairies, an eight-acre garden near Brighton, when the grasses and many flowers will be at their peak. beautiful-useful.co.uk

Decorative Duo: Master The Art

Father & daughter present creative classes

Retreat to the Shropshire countryside for creative courses with master gilder Roger Newton and his daughter Kate Elwell.

Based in Kate's beautiful Georgian home, 'Master The Art: Roger Newton and Daughter School of Decorative Finishes' offers courses in gilding, paint finishes, block-printing, willow-weaving, paper-marbling and making cushions, lampshades, Roman blinds, hand-painted candles, paper flowers and more. No experience is necessary – just a willingness to learn – with courses from one day to four days and residential options.

Kate says: "Students receive intensive training in these crafts and develop a sound basis from which to work for their own enjoyment or start a new career."

Roger began his training in 1955 at Colefax and Fowler, where he learnt the art of furniture decoration from experts and worked on pieces from the finest houses for private clients and the National Trust. He subsequently opened his own workshop specialising in furniture painting, gilding and lacquering on London's Kings Road in 1961, and quickly established a reputation for high-quality work.

In 1982, he opened a school running gilding and furniture-painting courses on the island of Guernsey, and moved it Shropshire in 2021.

September courses include paint finishes, cushion-making, lampshade-making and creative writing, with gilding and more to come in October.

mastertheart.uk

Deliciously Eccentric

Explore the Wedding Cake at Waddesdon Manor

Standing at 12 metres tall in the grounds of Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire, *Wedding Cake* is a major artwork commissioned by the Rothschild Foundation. A three-tiered ceramic sculptural pavilion by Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos, it is a playful continuation of Waddesdon's history of placing fanciful buildings in the estate's gardens and landscapes. Visitors will be able to step inside this work of art on 45-minute guided tours until 26 October 2023.

Lord Rothschild says: "The vision, imagination and ambition exemplified in the *Wedding Cake* is a perfect match for the passion which drove Baron Ferdinand, the creator of Waddesdon, to build the Manor and the Dairy, where he intended that his many friends would be surprised and delighted at every turn. I am sure that the *Wedding Cake* will have just as great an impact on visitors today."

waddesdon.org.uk





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DESIGN DISCOVERIES

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INSPIRED BY NATURE

A love letter to the Hebrides, British tile manufacturer Marlborough's latest collection takes its lead from the dramatic colours and rich textures of Scotland's landscape. Uist's (*pictured*) gentle plaster pink shade is taken from the limewash of traditional Scottish bothies. Time-honoured techniques create a tactile, organic finish meaning each tile is unique.

Uist square tile, £124 for a box of 40, Marlborough Tiles

CURVE APPEAL

The soft lines and sculptural silhouette of this armchair make it a smart addition to any sitting room. A more compact version of its predecessor, the Moreau sofa, it can fit seamlessly into smaller, trickier spaces. Each chair is made to order with a choice of oak or walnut legs and can be upholstered in an array of fabrics.

Moreau armchair, from £3,670 for medium, Pinch



STATEMENT STRIPES

Crafted from high-quality wood and hand-painted by skilled artisans, this bold striped mirror adds a playful touch to interiors. Available in three colourways, including a classic monochrome stripe (*pictured*), it sits beautifully in contemporary and traditional schemes alike. (For more inspiration on the timeless appeal of stripes and how to decorate with them, turn to page 96).

Large striped mirror, Black and White, £900, Studio Atkinson



LEADING LIGHT

The latest lighting collection from deVOL is named after the historic tradition, beginning in the 17th century, of the Grand Tour, where wealthy young gentlemen would spend several years travelling through Europe before returning home to Britain with new ideas on design, art and culture. The range consists of a desk lamp (*pictured*), library lamp and reading lamp, each handmade in Leicestershire.

The Grand Tour desk lamp, £450, deVOL ▶





PATTERN REIMAGINED

Coinciding with its 10 year anniversary, Salvesen Graham has launched a fabric version of one its most iconic wallpapers, Floral Trail. A reinterpretation of an archive textile originally hand-painted in the 19th century, the updated colours and large scale make the pattern feel contemporary. The fabric is available by the metre and on ready-made cushions and lampshades. Sink curtain in Floral Trail fabric in Original, £110 a metre, Salvesen Graham



FRUITY VESSELS

Honouring the beauty of the autumnal fields and hedgerows of Britain, these new jam jars are adorned with intricate illustrations of quinces, redcurrants, raspberries and blackberries and are ideal for celebrating the arrival of the new season. Jam jar, from £30 each for small, Emma Bridgewater

FLEXIBLE FURNITURE

Expanding its range of beautifully crafted cupboards, British Standard by Plain English has launched a mobile kitchen island. The island is handcrafted in Suffolk and encapsulates the brand's signature style of pared-back, honest and timeless design. Paint colours, hardware and other elements such as worktops can be customised for a truly unique piece. Mobile Island, from £4,550, British Standard by Plain English ▶





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ON DISPLAY

Driven by a desire to create sustainable, British-made furniture, designer and colour consultant Emma Diaz has launched The Westridge Collection. Consisting of three tables, a bench and bookcase, each piece uses responsibly sourced, *Grown In Britain* certified wood and is finished in a choice of standard or bespoke colours from Edward Bulmer Natural Paint. *Westridge narrow bookcase, from £2,660, Emma Diaz*

BOTANICAL BEAUTY

A fresh take on a 16th-century print, interior designer Beata Heuman's latest fabric is hand-printed in the UK and works well on both drapery and upholstery. A specially developed antiqued golden silver pigment is used to capture the Nettle design's velvety surface. *Nettle fabric, £150 a metre, Beata Heuman*



HOME COMFORT

Made from 100 per cent lambswool in a 17th-century Welsh mill, run by the same family company since 1912, this weighty blanket will provide warmth and comfort as the darker evenings begin to roll in. It features a reversible Knot Garden weave that was originally created in the 1950s and is available in a mead/ash (*pictured*) or indigo colourway. *Melin Tregwynt Welsh blanket, £195, Toast* ■

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPHS (MARLBOROUGH TILES) © TORY MCTERNAN; (PINCH) © JAMES MERRELL/PINCH; (SALVESEN GRAHAM) © JON BOND; (BY EMMA DIAZ) © ALEXANDER COLLINS



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Avalon four-door sideboard in satin finish, from £3,900, Trove by Studio Duggan

Fluted glass ball finial, Old Ivory, £41.80, Jim Lawrence



Fluted side table in Glais, from £1,250, Georgie Wykeham

Nami glass bowl, Peach, £65 for small, Birdie Fortescue



Gems champagne flute, Sapphire, £50 for a set of four, LSA International

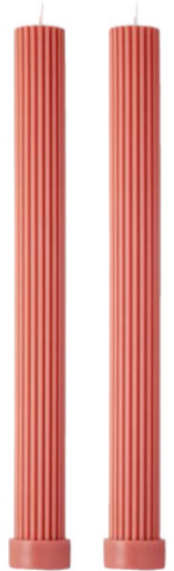


Mae dining chair, Velvet Lichen, £795, Soho Home

FALL INTO LINE

From furniture to accessories, ribbed and fluted surfaces bring texture and character to interior schemes

Roma candles, Antique Rose, £40 for a set of four, Candle Flair



Tall green reeded dry flower vase, £73.99, Dowsing & Reynolds



Pink fluted candlestick, £18, Joanna Wood



Pearl stand and dome, £145, LSA International



Buto glass candlestick, Green, £35, Issy Granger



Ribbed glass dome candle holder with tray, £18, The White Company

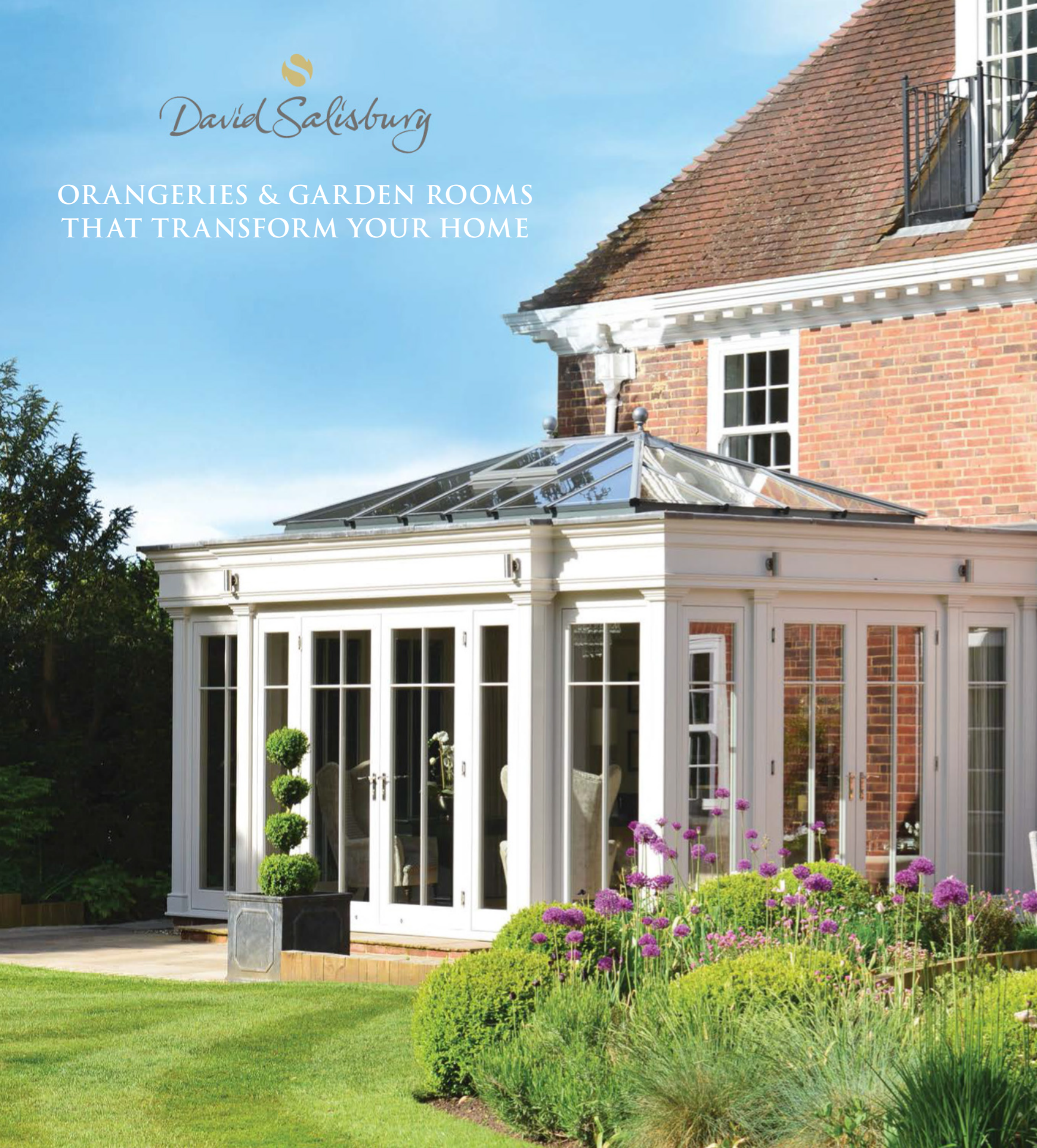


Chamberlain wine glasses, £56 for a set of four, Anthropologie




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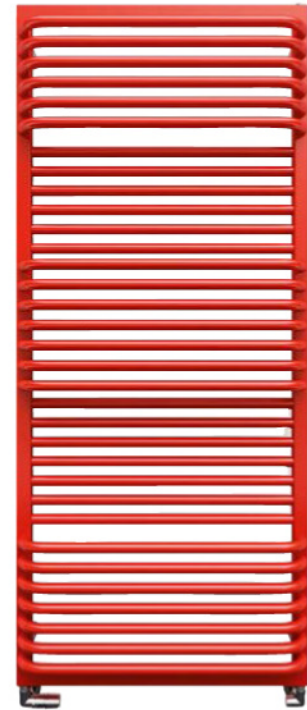
SHOPPING



Bobina Bobble candleholders, Chinese Red, £80, Oka



Trellis chairs, Sambal Red (fabric not included), £625 each; Wave square table, British Blue, £1,710, all Charles Orchard



Poll radiator, £268, The Radiator Centre



Cinders mirror, Ruby Red, from £205 (smaller), Pooky

Whitewashed
with Breakfast in
Bed by 1900 The
White Company

RED ALERT

Add a vibrant flash of versatile red via small accessories or statement pieces to catch the eye and lift a scheme

Pen pot, Rouge, £20, Jessica Buckley



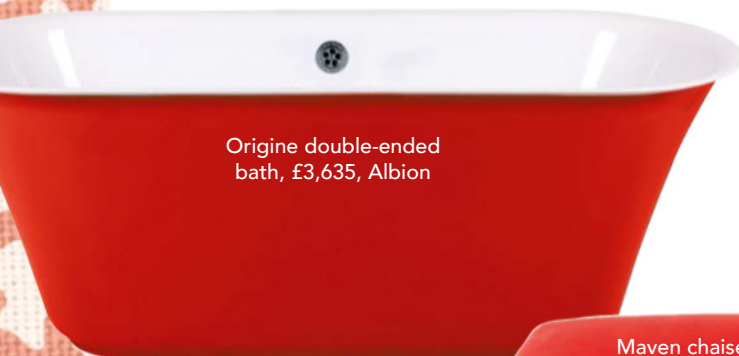
Mallorcan Apple Red Large Chevron cushion, £120, The Mews



Bamboozle (left) and Incarnadine (right), both £75 for 2.5l Dead Flat, Farrow & Ball



Red butter knife, £9.95, Motes & Clark



Origine double-ended bath, £3,635, Albion



Maven chaise (shown here in Tomato Mohair), £3,558, plus 5m of fabric, Amy Somerville

Background, Red Seaweed printed fabric, £135 a metre, Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE

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lewisalderson.com

THE EDIT

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



IN THE FRAME

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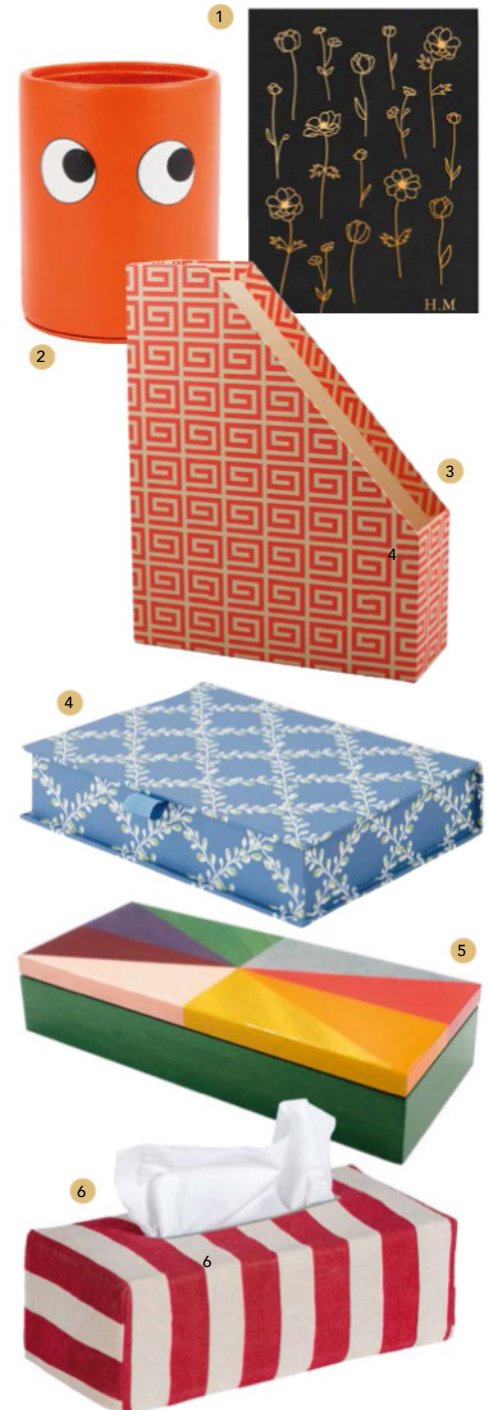


JOINERY JOY

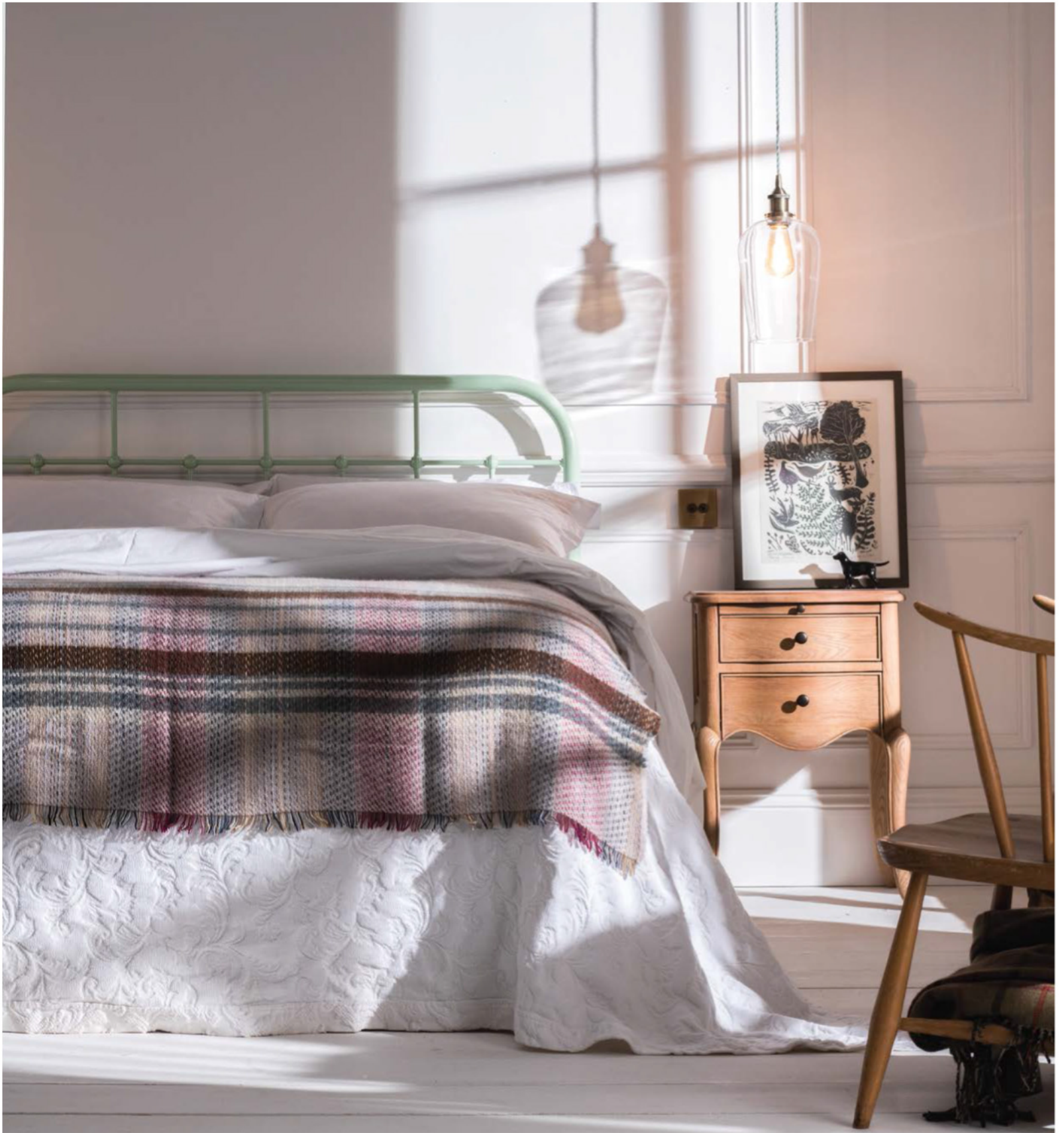
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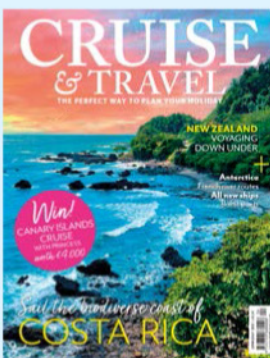


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Hettie the Cavapoo appreciates the rug by Rodarte for The Rug Company. The sofa is by Jamb and the ottoman is in Turnell & Gigon fabrics. This room also displays favourite paintings, including one by Henry Jabbour from Stafford Gallery above the radiator.





Flights OF FANCY

A subtle redesign has reignited the magical atmosphere integral to this Arts and Crafts home in South West London

FEATURE JO LEEVERS
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



ABOVE Louise in the sitting room, where a vintage lamp from Louise Verber at Alfies Antiques Market is topped with a shade from Samarkand. She brought in designer Susanna Thomas (susannathomas.co.uk) to help reimagine the interiors.

This is a house with fairy-tale flourishes that include a polygonal tower and a central staircase that swirls its way up seven flights to a final wisp that ends at a vantage point overlooking South London and beyond. It was this otherworldly atmosphere – and a desire to recapture its history – that motivated its gentle redesign.

For new owners Louise and Martin Green, buying this characterful house felt like moving into the light, after living in a nearby home with a darker feel. “I immediately noticed the views from the

large windows and its generous proportions,” explains Louise.

The house has listed status, but in any case Louise, a chief marketing officer working in technology and data, and Martin, an executive in the software industry, did not want to impose anything that would jar with the architect’s original vision. “It was built in 1901 for a wealthy tradesman by a prestigious young architect, while his partner built the house next door. I would not be surprised if a secret tunnel runs between the two houses,” Louise says.



The couple live here with their Cavapoo, Hettie, and although their three grown-up children, Molly, Ollie and Lottie, often come to stay, there was no need to extend the house. However, Louise did bring in her good friend and interior designer Susanna Thomas to reimagine the rooms. “I was adamant that I didn’t want to modernise this beautiful house but revive it,” she explains. “Susanna has an abiding love of old houses and we share an enthusiasm for maintaining original features and proportions. I’d admired other houses that she’d

worked on, which have an authenticity and a feeling of almost going back in time.”

A key room Susanna created from scratch was the kitchen, now located in the basement, to echo the National Trust ‘below stairs’ spaces Louise has always been drawn to. “I wanted it to be a room first and a kitchen second, with art, an open fire and minimal modern accoutrements on show. In our initial meetings, I soon became a massive Robert Kime fan,” Louise says. “And the central island, with its marble worksurface, looks as if it has always been here.” ▶

ABOVE The kitchen features panelling and units painted in TC9 Pale Smoke Grey and an island painted in SC304 Chocolate No 2, both by Papers and Paints. The Murano glass lantern is antique and the fireplace came from Lassco.



‘The house’s character has been reinstated. It feels just as it should’

ABOVE A bespoke dresser designed by Susanna holds Louise’s impressive collection of china and glassware.

LEFT The listed Arts and Crafts house was designed in 1901, with balconies and an array of levels.

Previously, this basement area had been a gentlemanly billiards room, but it now has a different atmosphere, with bespoke cabinets, serenely balanced colours and interesting personal collections, for which Susanna designed a dresser and a second set of display shelves. Already familiar with Louise’s love of ceramics and art, dovetailing these pieces into the design of the kitchen was an important consideration for Susanna. There is also a pantry cupboard and a pantry, where appliances live. “Everything is accessible but not visible,” says Louise. While the house does have a more formal dining room, which doubles as a home work space for Louise, easy suppers around the kitchen table are a key part of the couple’s lives.

A magical array of fabrics in the form of cushions, throws and curtains evokes an interesting mood in ▶



An antique chair reupholstered in vintage linen creates a cosy corner to sit in the kitchen. The blind is in Glynde in Original by NicholasHerbert.



‘I wanted the house to look like it was already a little faded, rather than shiny and new. Wallpaper has really contributed to that look’

ABOVE The staircase walls are painted in Lilac Pink by Edward Bulmer Natural Paint. The artwork is by Unskilled Worker and the runner is a vintage Turkish one. **ABOVE RIGHT** The Pierre Frey wallpaper in the main bedroom is echoed by the blind in the dressing room beyond.

the drawing room, a space that is relaxed and lived-in, but with a few modern surprises. The bones of the room were already impressive, with a polygonal bay window that forms part of the house’s tower providing a cosy seating area and impressive French windows leading on to a balcony. Details such as these served as a reminder of the house’s original uses and its heritage, and helped to guide the interior design. However, it was a more contemporary purchase for this room, a rug by the LA-based design duo Rodarte for The Rug Company, which suggested a palette for the whole house. More traditional pieces in the drawing room come in the form of a sofa and armchairs from Jamb.

Louise has long been an admirer of how wallpapers can bring “complexity and depth” to a room and this comes to the fore in the bedrooms and bathrooms. “I

love layering wallpaper with art and fabrics and I wanted the house to look like it was already a little faded, rather than shiny and new. Wallpaper has really contributed to that look,” she explains.

While Susanna sourced fabrics and papers from designers such as Robert Kime, Soane Britain, Pierre Frey, GP & J Baker, Rubelli and Thibaut, she and the couple also felt strongly that the house itself helped to select the right colours, making it clear when some colours did not work, and welcoming other combinations, such as earthy pinks and greens.

Louise and Martin were also keen to include some playful decorating touches in areas of the house. “I wanted to be bold with the wallpaper in our bedroom and I love the flowery French vintage feel we’ve created,” says Louise. Matching Pierre Frey ▶



The wallpaper in the principal bedroom suite is Imperatrice Eugenie by Pierre Frey while the bed, artwork and other furnishings are all vintage.



ABOVE The en-suite bathroom has been updated with Soane Britain's Scrolling Fern Frond wallpaper and flooring from Artisans of Devizes.

fabric has been used for the blinds in the dressing room and en-suite bathroom to continue the mood.

In a similar vein, art ranges from framed posters to vintage oil paintings and contemporary pieces, a mix that adds personality to many of the couple's spaces. "I don't really understand walls without paintings or artwork," Louise says with a smile. "I'm drawn to

colour while Martin favours portraits, but we will often both experience the same pull of a piece, when you know you just can't leave it behind."

The same could be said of this home, which the couple immediately fell for. "We made an offer on our first viewing which, looking back, seems quite irrational. But also the very best decision," Louise says. ■

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Dual APPEAL

Kate van Vollenhoven favours the romantic, English country house aesthetic; her husband Ivo prefers clean-lined modernity. The result – as their London townhouse proves – is a harmonious marriage of opposites

FEATURE SERENA FOKSCHANER
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH





LEFT The compact garden was landscaped by Butter Wakefield. THIS IMAGE Contrasting colours and forms have been used in the drawing room. A contemporary Italian sofa upholstered in bouclé and leather is offset by silk curtains made from Dedar fabric.



‘Spaces radiate the ease and comfort that comes from a considered floorplan: everything has its place and every room has a function’

LEFT, BELOW & OPPOSITE

The rear half of the drawing room features mid-century French brass wall lights topped with chocolate brown diagonal-striped shades. It has been designed to reflect the neighbouring drawing room but with a more casual tone. A Minotti

sofa in Dedar velvet and a mid-century floor-lamp sourced from Lillie Road in Fulham are teamed with striking artwork sourced from The Decorative Fair. An ebonised Swedish desk from Les Trois Garçons forms a charming study area with a garden view.

So many things in life are underpinned by compromise, not least doing up a house, and Kate and Ivo van Vollenhoven’s home in West London is a case in point. “When it comes to decorating, Ivo and I often disagree,” explains Kate, a former television producer. Her taste, she says, is for the romantic English country house aesthetic – a salad of colour and texture, while husband Ivo, who runs a film company, leans towards a leaner, more modern aesthetic. So when they embarked on the transformation of their stucco-fronted home the question was: how could they reconcile their tastes? Enter interior designer Abbie de Bunsen.

While an interior designer can be many things – confidante, counsellor, personal shopper – in this instance, Abbie drew on her training to act as a mediator. Inspired by the work of Italian mid-century architects Piero Portaluppi and Carlo Scarpa – noted for their use of surface pattern offset by restrained, pared-back silhouettes – she arrived at what she describes as “a happy halfway meeting point”. The result, behind the terraced house’s 19th-century exterior, where a deep flight of steps leads to the panelled front door, is an interior with a judicious combination of hand-painted wallcoverings and ▶







'It had a warm and well-loved feel, with soul, but now it needed a new soul, one that reflected its new owners'

ABOVE The existing kitchen has been revived by being repainted and the addition of pink and cream tiles from Balineum behind the Aga.

RIGHT A set of classic Wishbone chairs, relacquered in turquoise, and the pink pendants over the table help to add a modern feel to an essentially classic English kitchen.

whimsical antiques offset by stretches of plain walls or unfussy upholstery. Romance is twinned with modernism in a marriage of opposites.

There was a point, however, on which Kate and Ivo, who have a 12-year-old son, were in complete agreement. "We share a love of hotels and we wanted this house to have the elegance of a five-star hotel," explains Kate. "Not in a corporate, predictable way, but for an effect where spaces radiate the ease and comfort that comes from a considered floorplan: internal spaces flow, everything has its place and every room has a function."

Before the couple could arrive at this point, there was work to be done on the four-storey property, not least to make the most of its views of the tree-shaded park it backs on to. "The last owners had lived here for 30 years. It had a warm and well-loved feel, with soul, but now it needed a new soul, one that reflected its new owners," says Abbie. ▶





In the guest bedroom at the top of the house, a false ceiling was removed to reveal the original butterfly roof. Abbie edged the walls with a terracotta stripe to accentuate the architecture. The brass wall lights are from Arterior, the oil painting was found at The Decorative Fair.





ABOVE A bedroom has been turned into a new bathroom, with the bath positioned for leafy views. The parquet floor is from Jago Anderson while the chandelier is a mid-century find. Storage has been cleverly built in behind the mirrors.

“We had initially planned to move in and live in the house for a few years before deciding what to do, but Ivo is the world’s most impatient man,” laughs Kate. Soon, therefore, the house was full of builders and covered in dust sheets. The starting point for the project was gently reshuffling the floorplan of the first floor and turning a bedroom into an indulgently spacious en-suite bathroom for the principal bedroom. Abbie designed it not just for opulence, but with practicality in mind too. The 20th-century feel is echoed in the brass fittings and the octagonal mirrors, which conceal useful storage behind. “As you travel up the house, every level offers a different view – of the park, the bowling club, or the sunsets in the west. It has so much character,” says Kate.

Moving and starting again is nothing new for the couple: this is their eighth home together, and every time they move, they sell their furniture and furnishings and start afresh. Kate has known Abbie since childhood and doing up the house provided an excuse for companionable shopping trips to markets like Alfie’s, in North West London, or the antique shops which line the capital’s Lillie Road. Most of the artwork in the house was also bought recently: the landscapes in oil, ink or watercolour often depicting parks, gardens or rooftops, chosen to echo the views from the house. “I have a weakness for paintings and pick them up in antique shops,” says Kate. “My mother is a picture framer, and a new frame can give something a whole new lease of life.” ▶



ABOVE LEFT
Hand-painted silk de Gournay panels adorn the wardrobes, designed by Abbie, set the tone for the principal bedroom where the brief was to bring the 'outside inside'. To see more of Abbie's work, visit abbiedebunsen.com

ABOVE RIGHT
Abbie designed the bespoke headboard. The pair of mid-century mirrors were found at Circa Battersea, while the silk carpet is from Peter Page.

Painterly surfaces set the tone for the principal bedroom. The vivid green de Gournay hand-painted silk used on the panels of the bespoke wardrobes had been on Kate's wish list for a while. Its floral motifs inspired the headboard with its petal-shaped outline. "Abbie found the two oval mirrors hanging either side of the bed to balance the room; we designed the bedhead together using egg cups and coins to draw out the rough shape," says Kate. The contrastingly pale walls are a concession to Ivo's taste.

At the top of the house, a wall dividing a bedroom into two has been removed, as has what was a low false ceiling, creating a large welcoming space and revealing the original pitched ceiling soaring above. "The starting point for this room," says Kate, "was the warm terracotta trim on the plain cream curtains." This adds a tailored feel and is echoed in the painted edges outlining the wardrobes and the top and bottom of the walls, cleverly emphasising the height of the room.

'We all need different environments to make us feel happy and cocooned. Everyone has their own version of their ideal space'



By contrast, the kitchen in the basement is cosy and low-ceilinged though. The hardworking classic-style kitchen cabinetry came with the house and has been revived with a new neutral paint colour and glowing brass handles. Interest has been added in the form of a set of African baskets parading across the wall, their intricate, handworked detail contrasting with the sleekness of the mid-century chairs and the row of glossy pink pendant lights. The long, sociable dining table, found in Barcelona, is one of the very few pieces the couple have held on to and it has travelled with them, like an heirloom, from home to home. "It is solid enough for the rigours of family life," says Kate.

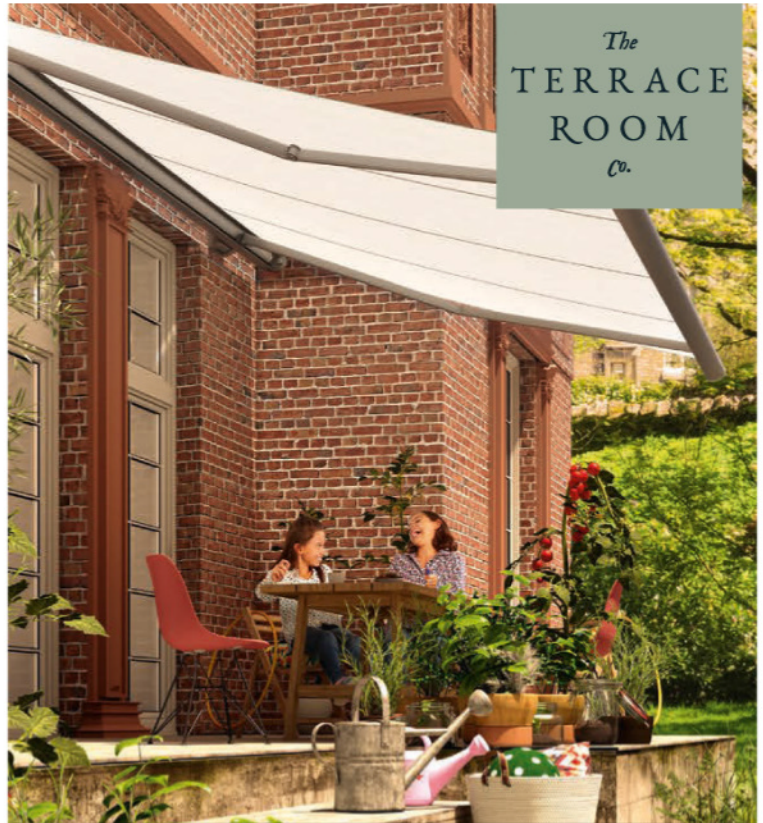
The result of this collaboration is a sophisticated yet vibrant home perfect for family life. "I find it fascinating how we all need different environments to make us feel happy and cocooned. Everyone has their own version of their ideal space. This is very much Kate - and Ivo," says Abbie. ■



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COUNTRY *in the city*

Restoring a characterful cottage in a tree-encircled setting in Bristol has given Katy and Fergus Cronk a slice of rural harmony just minutes from city centre life

FEATURE KERRY HARPER-CUSS
PHOTOGRAPHY BOZ GAGOVSKI

Nestled in a secluded location down a winding road, this sweet property is a wonderful contradiction. With its curved bay windows, diminutive rooflights and rose-clad exterior it is the epitome of an English country cottage. The back garden merges almost seamlessly into woodland that slopes to a brook which flows into the River Trym, yet in truth, the house is situated not in a rural hamlet but in a suburb of the bustling city of Bristol. ▶



THIS IMAGE Having been in the same family for 45 years, the cottage required extensive renovation. Katy and her husband Fergus have sensitively retained its original features and enhanced its charm.

LEFT Katy, seen here with Mango the spaniel, runs her interior design studio from this idyllic location. katycronk.co.uk





The dresser was an original fixture in the cottage and is painted in Trumpington from Edward Bulmer Natural Paint. Space for a larder was freed up when the staircase was moved and offers neat additional storage.



Kitchen cabinetry painted in Sage Green from Little Greene and topped with Carrara quartz from Valley Marble and Granite is teamed with pendant and wall lights from Felix Lighting Specialists and Jim Lawrence and a rug from Fleetwood Fox.

‘It’s important to me that colours flow throughout a house, and harmoniously link the upstairs and downstairs’

RIGHT The utility-cum-downstairs features Bengali wallpaper from Pierre Frey and cabinets from Gerard Selby Ltd with undercounter curtains in Light Linen from Lewis & Wood.

Home to Fergus and Katy Cronk, a vet and an interior designer respectively, it is a rare find. Despite being only a 10-minute drive from cosmopolitan Clifton, it sits on the edge of 650 acres of parkland that form the Blaise Castle estate. A charming vestige of a bygone age it was formerly two gardeners’ cottages but is now a four-bedroom house which Fergus and Katy have sensitively brought into the modern age.

When the couple bought the cottage in May 2020, it had long been converted into a singular house from a pair of one-up-one-down cottages. The previous occupants had used it for more than 45 years as a much-loved family home but the roof was leaking, there was no central heating, the wiring needed a complete overhaul and even the underground ▶





‘I love the idea that we are part of a cyclical story of custodians – a tiny speck in history, giving the cottage new energy and then passing it on’

ABOVE The storage footstool from Sofa.com is bespoke-covered in Constanza Antique Pink fabric from Susan Deliss. A mirror from Neptune, lamp base from Lorforde and lampshade from Oka frame the furniture beautifully.

pipework that connected the house to the local water supply needed digging out to be replaced with larger-gauge pipes. Yet the country-in-the-city atmosphere had captured their hearts and they were excited rather than daunted by the opportunity it presented to enjoy the lifestyle they wanted to lead.

“Having completed a renovation project at our last house together, Fergus and I were ready for a new, exciting challenge,” Katy explains. “The cottage is steeped in history and character and offered the perfect opportunity to blend a traditional aesthetic with our desire for a modern family home.”

Fergus – as an animal lover – was quick to add chickens in the garden alongside two beehives and a vegetable patch. Katy’s work as a professional interior designer meant she had ample project management experience and a bulging contacts book to confidently

rework the design and layout. She reveals, “When we bought the house it was a series of dark little rooms connected by corridors. I immediately knew that revising the layout, adding the utility room, changing door positions and sensitively removing some walls, we could make the best use of available floorspace making the house lighter and flow well. I approached the cottage like any client project, starting by formalising the concept design and brief for our new home. I then worked through the required interior architectural drawings such as the furniture arrangements, lighting, plumbing and small power plans.”

Early in the renovation Katy investigated moving the staircase round to ascend in the opposite direction. “It was located in the heart of the house, with a congregation of four doorways in a dark windowless corridor. By relocating it we drastically changed the feel ▶



Made-to-measure bookcases by Gerard Selby divide the sitting room from Katy's studio and are painted in Farrow & Ball's French Gray to match the walls. Rafferty the Siamese cat makes himself at home on the sofa.

WOMEN AT HOME
BRITISH DESIGNERS AT
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ABOVE The dining room was formerly a sitting room at the back of the house. Katy sourced dining chairs from an antiques auction and had them covered in heavyweight linen from the Cloth Shop. The rise and fall pendant lights are from Pooky, the lemon painting is by Frankie Thorp, and the stair runner is in Unnatural Flooring sisal from Capitol Carpets.

of the house,” she says. The relocation of the staircase released space on the first floor, enabling the addition of an en-suite bathroom to the main bedroom. It also allowed the creation of a kitchen larder downstairs where the stairs used to start. Leaving the staircase unenclosed to the side of the new dining room and removing a section of wall between dining room and kitchen has created a more open-plan look and allows both rooms to benefit from the glow of evening sunsets.

The bay-windowed space stretching the full width of the cottage at the front of the cottage was formerly a sitting/dining room. Katy found it too long and narrow and neatly divided it with a wall of bespoke bookcases to create a sitting room and a design studio beyond. The repositioned sitting room is now a welcoming space focussed around the wood-burning stove in the inglenook fireplace.

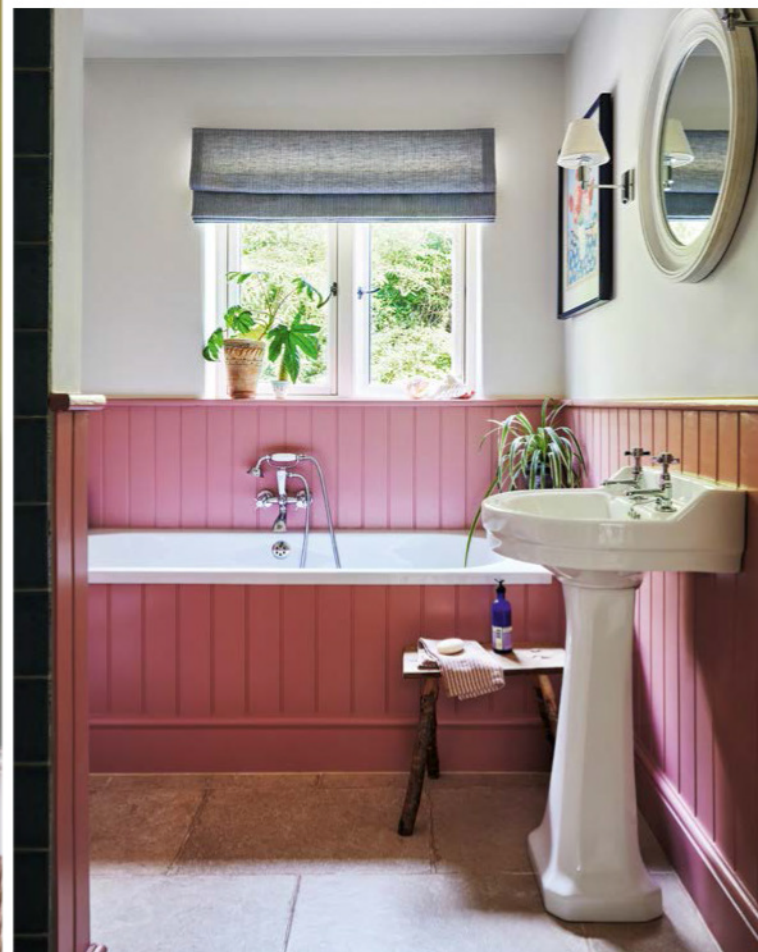
When it came to redecoration, Katy created mood boards for each room. “With every project it’s important to me that colours flow through a house and harmoniously link the upstairs and downstairs.

I like to use natural materials where possible, and to connect to the narrative of the house and stay sensitive to its architecture,” she says. “It felt important that we didn’t do anything too contemporary here. When everything is new or everything is old it can feel one dimensional, so my approach is all about creating a balanced blend and echoing the location. We made some lovely discoveries too, such as beautiful, wide wooden floorboards under carpets and the period fireplaces that had been boarded over in the bedrooms. The kitchen dresser was original too and we stripped it, repainted it and added an architrave. All of these are such an important nod to the history of the house.”

She goes on to say, “I love the idea that we are part of a cyclical story of custodians; each person who lives here is a tiny speck in history, giving the cottage new energy and then passing it on. There are a few things still to finish but living here has completely changed our life. We take our dog for fantastic walks every day, and love entertaining here. We often have friends and family over, and our nieces and nephews love making



LEFT The headboard in Blue Passion Flower from The Toile Man is complemented by cushions from Penny Morrison and bespoke cushions in fabric from Titley & Marr. The walls are painted in Blue Gray from Farrow & Ball while the wall lights are from Original BTC and the bedside tables from Georgie Wykeham



‘I like to connect to the narrative of the house and stay sensitive to its architecture’

dens and exploring the garden. Every morning we sit at the breakfast bar in the kitchen and see new flowers that have popped up in the garden and watch the birds at the bird feeder. We love that feel of nature all around us, encircled with trees in every direction and feel lucky to have found such a gem.”

TOP RIGHT The cottage-style bathroom has panelling painted in Nicaragua from Edward Bulmer Natural Paint, walls in Slipper Satin from Farrow & Ball and rustic stone flooring from Mandarin Stone

RIGHT Walls in Jonquil from Edward Bulmer Natural Paint add a warming glow to this guest bedroom. Cushions from Katy Takla and Penny Morrison co-ordinate with a bedspread from Birdie Fortescue and Imogen Pope lampshades. The artwork is by George Rodney.





The Editor's chair from David Seyfreid, scalloped Roman blind, and upholstered bench in the light and airy kitchen are made using Blithfield's Pomeroy in Spring/Oyster.

RICH LEGACY

Finding a charming 18th-century Grade II listed former merchant's house close to where he grew up in West Sussex was worth the wait for Simon Laver, his wife Caroline and their three young daughters

FEATURE KATE FREUD PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER STYLING MARISA DALY



‘She’s a beautiful old dear – she just needed a new dress’

ABOVE The drawing room bookcases are from Howe London and painted in Edward Bulmer Natural Paint’s Pomona to blend seamlessly with of Cole & Son’s Giselle wallpaper in Leaf Green.

RIGHT Simon and Caroline have breathed new life into the handsome Georgian property, turning it into an idyllic family home to share with their three young daughters.

Patience is a virtue and certainly proved a useful one for Simon and Caroline Laver, who today are relaxing in the garden room of the beautiful Georgian home they waited five years to find. Focusing their search on the countryside surrounding the market town of Petworth in West Sussex, there were only four houses that fitted their brief – Georgian in style, a good size and in close proximity to the town.

“I grew up in the area, and our first marital home was in nearby Midhurst, so we had a definite idea of where we wanted to be,” Simon, co-founder of executive search firm Perrett Laver, explains. “But there are very few elegant Georgian houses in this county, so we knew we would have to sit tight for a while.”

Five years of renting a property nearby ended with a fortuitous call to local estate agent Jackson Stops, which had just that day been asked to list one of the Grade II listed Georgian homes the Lavers had their eye on. The house was built around 1740 as home to a wealthy landowner (with earlier parts of the building ▶

The graceful dining room boasts an original antique Georgian table and chairs framed underfoot by an antique Persian rug from Farnham Antique Carpets. The Lucienne chandelier above the table is from Villaverde London and is finished in tinted silver.







having been a cider press, bakery and dairy), and had fallen into a state of disrepair in recent years, with only a small part of the house still in use.

Despite being the first people through the door to see the property, Simon and Caroline were 'interviewed' by the owner, who had lived there for 40 years, before they were allowed to buy it. "We took our young daughter, Audrey, on the first viewing, and I think having her there helped seal the deal," says Simon. "The previous owner, who had raised her daughter there, could see the home was going to be put to good use."

That was 10 years ago, and today the home is filled with the heart-warming hubbub of the Laver's three daughters, Audrey, 11, Charlotte, nine, and Otilie, seven, and their Russian Blue cat, Misty. As with any restoration of this scale, it was no mean feat to get to this point. "When we got the keys, we

realised the extent of the work that lay ahead," explains Simon. "There was a heating system that dated back to the Interwar period, where anything that could be burnt was thrown into a vast agricultural furnace in the cellar, and air vents in the house would then let the heat in. It was unbelievably dangerous and meant the house smelt extraordinary! There was no way we could live in it while the works were going on; we just didn't realise it would take two years before we could move in."

The Lavers set about restoring the property to bring it back to its former glory, a project which would take three years to complete, in part due to the home's Grade II listed status. They enlisted the services of Chichester-based heritage architecture firm Duncan O'Kelly Partnership, whose team, despite having worked on several historical buildings

ABOVE The family bathroom features three basins, one for each daughter, topped with Crema Marfil marble from Cullifords, which is also used on the bath. The nickel taps are fixtures from Lefroy Brooks.

OPPOSITE The landing, painted in Crown Paint's Golden Cream, boasts a full-height window dressed in Linwood's Madura in Oyster.



ABOVE In the principal bedroom, walls in Edward Bulmer Natural Paint's Whiting prove the perfect muted background to the half-tester canopy in Christopher Farr Cloth's Field in Indigo. The blind and wallpaper in the en-suite bathroom seen beyond are in Thibaut's Chelsea Morning, as is the ottoman at the end of the bed.

over the years, had never seen so many conditions attached to a programme of works once planning permission was approved.

Even though the house had not been modernised for many years, the bones were, as Simon says, "fabulous". Rather than rushing the project, the couple really invested, not only financially but emotionally in bringing the home back. "Of course, we needed new electrics and plumbing, but we restored and repaired as many of the original features as we could," Simon explains. They had the original planks taken up individually, numbered, repaired, put back and stained to the original natural tone. "I'm a firm believer in the house telling you what to do," Simon adds. "I don't believe in knocking down walls to create a modern layout in a historical building. Houses like this have a natural rhythm and flow."

As a result, the house has a warm and cosy feel despite boasting an impressive 11,500 square feet – including the party barn – with eight bedrooms and

'I'm a firm believer in the house telling you what to do. Houses like this have a natural rhythm and flow'

five bathrooms. A wing that was added to the property in 1820 had lain unused for several years when Simon and Caroline moved in as the previous owner had closed it off and only used three bedrooms in the other part of the house. The couple opened it up again and added a garden room by Vale Garden Houses which seats up to 18 and where they love to entertain.

In the early days of the project, the couple worked with Leveson Design on the interiors before enlisting the help of local Petworth-based firm Marks & Ayling, who helped with many of the curtains, reupholstering and finishes for the formal rooms downstairs. Another local firm, Fine Line Joinery, is responsible for much of the beautiful cabinetry.

The result is a clever combination of a home that is not only beautiful to look at but wonderful to live in too. Simon, Caroline and their daughters spend much of their time in the kitchen, a light and airy space with an Aga at its heart. Upstairs, the bedrooms are decorated in a cossetting mix of patterns and balanced hues to add interest and variety to each scheme. In the blue principal bedroom, an ottoman from David Seyfried in Thibaut's Chelsea Morning – carried through to the en-suite – sits perfectly alongside Pierre Frey's Plumettes fabric in Celeste for the bedhead and valance. For a touch of masculinity, the Lavers also chose Colefax and Fowler's Belgrave Check in vintage blue for the tester.

When the project was finally complete, Simon and Caroline wanted the previous owner – who still lived in the village – to come back and see it first, and hopefully give her seal of approval. Her verdict? "She's a beautiful old dear – she just needed a new dress."

Though the Lavers never imagined leaving the house, particularly after having put so much love and care into the restoration, it was not long before it attracted the attention of another family, longing to return to the village where they had once lived. Simon and Caroline received an offer they could not refuse and have since made the difficult decision to move, though not before finding another project to get their teeth into. This time, on a rather larger scale, they have bought Gatcombe House on the Isle of Wight, a large Georgian house with lots of land where they are planning to plant 18,000 vines to create their own vineyard. "I'm sure I have said it before, but this really will be our last hurrah," Simon insists. ■

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STYLE INSPIRATION

This month we look at calming interiors, British craftsmanship, decorating with stripes, clever home offices and the best ways of lighting the home ▶



HERITAGE REVIVAL

Revisiting GP & J Baker's extensive archive of hand-painted documents, the Baker Originals collection has brought classic designs up to date in new colourways. Ferns was a popular design from 1935, originally created by textile artist Joseph M Doran who was inspired by botanical drawings of plants that grow within a 10 mile radius of London. Here it has been given a chic new look on a dark charcoal ground for a modern twist. All GP & J Baker wallpapers are printed in England.
Ferns, Charcoal, £159 a roll, GP & J Baker



All is CALM

Embrace the quiet luxury of mellow, nuanced, textured interiors in soft, neutral hues to ease gently from late summer into autumn

Rich, warm shades of cream and earthy neutrals are seeing a comeback as a chic palette to imbue calm. Subtle and pared back, the look is full of warmth and layers of texture, richness and detail that give an understated sense of luxury. Far from clean, crisp minimal white and cool grey interiors, this new wave of neutrals has a focus on quality and comfort, and while carefully curated, the mood is relaxed, welcoming and serene.

Materials such as linen, wood, stone and wool offer a gentle harmony with nature, as well as sustainable benefits. Often too, they are showcase for craftsmanship, bringing nuanced character as well as being investment pieces that quietly exhibit opulence. Consider sheers, for example, with exquisite,

embroidered detail, timber floors expertly crafted with a specialist finish, or 'plain' wallpapers subtly demonstrating artistry through texture. Even paint finishes in creamy tones will deliver subtle differences across surfaces to create intrigue and depth – a room full of detail, even if seemingly of one tone. Of course, pattern can feature, not as a strong statement or burst of colour, but as an extra layer of sophisticated detail, perhaps more textural or to subtly bring together other muted tones present in the scheme.

It is a look that brings calm and serenity to the whole house, from an elegant sitting room to a bathroom retreat to a restful bedroom. Though the rooms do not shout, they should have a lot to say, so consider each detail, arrange different textures and materials, and embrace the luxury of limited colour. ▶

ABOVE Add pattern in a soft, tonal palette. *My Home Spa Roses, Cream, £35 a roll, Beautiful Walls*

RIGHT Mark Alexander's delicate floral used for curtains here imparts a quiet sense of luxury in this rustic setting. *Curtain, Peony Coromandel Red, £189 a metre, and all other fabrics, Mark Alexander*



The natural texture of stone, brick and plasterwork adds subtle but impactful character in a neutral scheme. Use a limewash paint to showcase and enhance the finish. Balance with the more refined finish of crisp linen upholstery for a chic ensemble.
Anders sofa and armchair, from £2,250, Sofa.com





LEFT An intricate jacquard weave gives the appearance of embroidery, while the embossed wallcovering has a subtle metallic shimmer akin to handwoven silk. Both bring opulent levels of texture and detail. *Curtain, Estella, Cream, £98 a metre; wallpaper, Astral, Pearl, £112 a roll, both Jane Churchill at Colefax and Fowler*

RIGHT This delicate, scrolling botanical design chimes with a natural mood. *Lotus, Linen, £25 a metre, The Pure Edit*

BELOW Create a calming bedroom with a monotone palette of warming creams. Bedding in 100 per cent linen offers excellent temperature regulating benefits as well as being aesthetically appealing with a relaxed look that continues to soften over time. *Oatmeal & White stripe bedding set, from £220, Bed Threads*

STYLE NOTES:

- Use natural materials that offer tactile finishes such as linen or stone and wood.
- Choose warm creams and beiges to bring soft, mellow richness. Bring out the red undertones in earthy browns, terracottas and rusty reds in subtle patterns or smaller accessories.
- Add opulence through finely crafted finishes such as embroidery on fabrics or carved details in wood. ▶



DECORATING



FAR LEFT Exquisite finishes on wallcoverings add luxury to a backdrop. Keep textiles plain to allow the delicate craftsmanship to take centre stage. *Waves of Wood, White with Gold, £160 a metre, Phillip Jeffries*

LEFT Warm neutrals are the perfect choice for a tranquil, soothing bathroom. Keep lighting soft for a restful experience. *Small Box wall light, £679, Davey Lighting*

BELOW A simple stripe can add a touch of pattern in a pared-back room. *Scallop Stripe wool Roman blind, Mushroom, £565, Tori Murphy*

STYLE NOTES:

- Though the scheme is pared back in terms of colour, adding texture, subtle patterns and nuanced tones will produce a considered, layered and evolved look.
- Stick to a restricted palette, opting for textiles in scrolling, floral or intricate designs and plain wallcoverings with a woven texture, or painted stone or plasterwork with chalky limewashes.
- Use different tones of paint to create depth and intrigue across walls, ceilings and woodwork. ■





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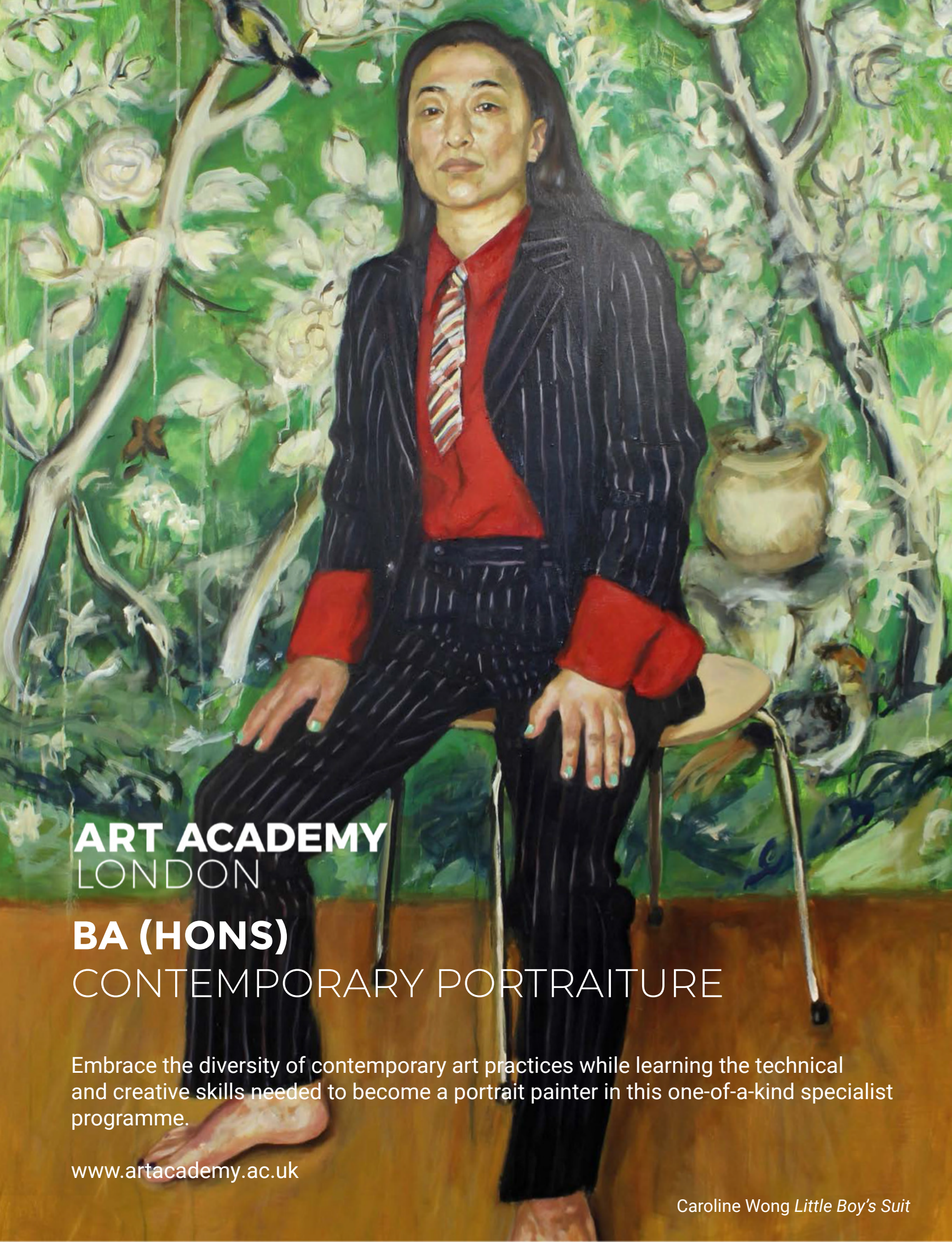
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Caroline Wong *Little Boy's Suit*

75 WAYS TO BUY BRITISH

Discover the brands that add craftsmanship to the home with beautifully made pieces from Britain

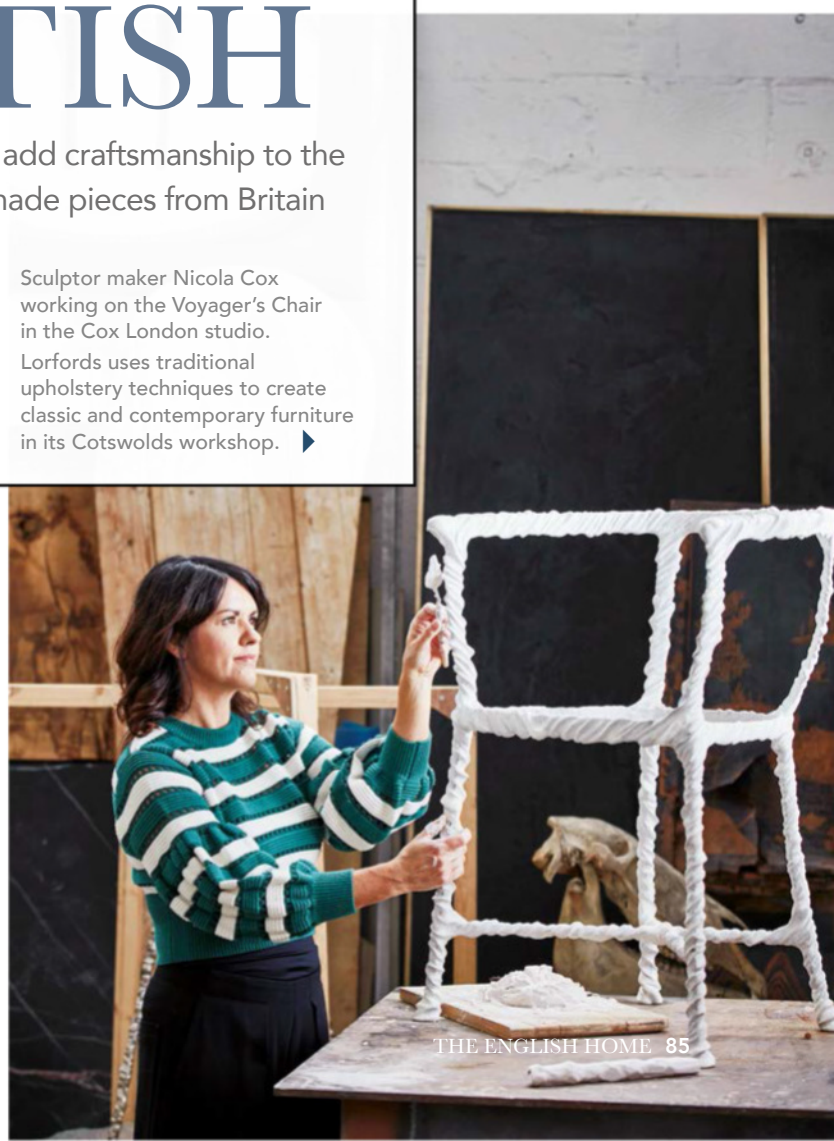
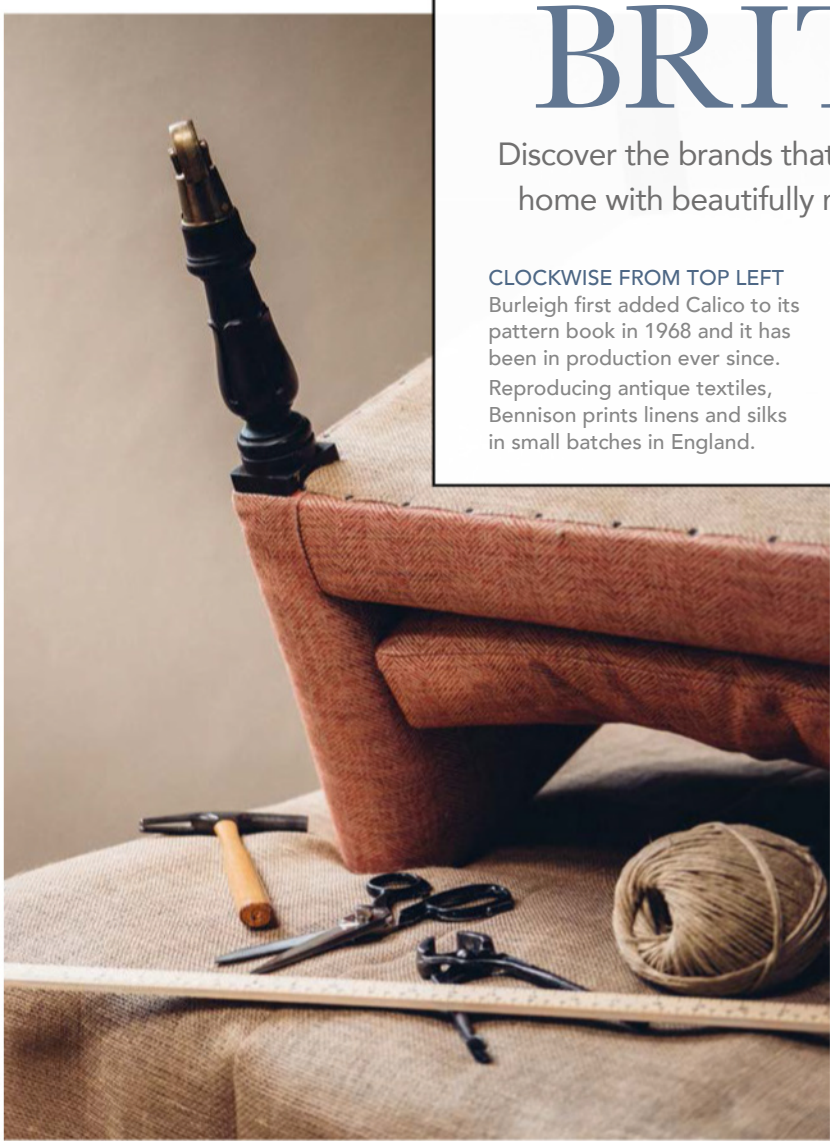
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Burleigh first added Calico to its pattern book in 1968 and it has been in production ever since.

Reproducing antique textiles, Bennison prints linens and silks in small batches in England.

Sculptor maker Nicola Cox working on the Voyager's Chair in the Cox London studio.

Lorforde uses traditional upholstery techniques to create classic and contemporary furniture in its Cotswolds workshop. ▶



Britain's nations are a hive of activity, full of makers who are preserving heritage skills, modernising craftsmanship and innovating techniques to bring exceptional pieces to interiors. Buying British can also have the benefit of being more sustainable – even if only in avoiding shipping miles, but often in terms of the materials and practices employed.

While it may not always be at the forefront of decision-making, choosing a British product will support the makers. Many of these will have honed their craft over years, perhaps via previous generations, and are fiercely protecting this heritage for years to come. Others may be developing alongside technologies to ensure the highest quality of product, designed to last and become an antique of the future.

There are many ways to add British craftsmanship to the home – from a fresh coat of paint or a feature light, to investing in bespoke furniture or a beautiful new wallpaper. Here we look at a selection of brands championing British skills and creating a wonderful array of products. We hope this provides inspiration to further explore our great nation of makers.



Tiles

From classic ceramic techniques to hand-painting, a simple splashback or a more elaborate floor offers a chance for homegrown talent to be showcased in kitchens, bathrooms and hallways.

CRAVEN DUNNILL JACKFIELD
Handmade decorative tiles from the oldest surviving purpose-built tile factory in the world, in Ironbridge, Shropshire.



ORIGINAL STYLE Combining heritage techniques and innovation to make tiles in Devon.



BALINEUM Known for using a historical technique of 'tube-lining' for a raised piping detail.



MARLBOROUGH TILES Offers a range of different tile types, but is best-known for its hand-painted designs

'Hand-painting directly onto the raw glaze allows the base glaze and artist's work to be fired at the same time, which achieves a better integration of colour and intensifies each brushstroke'

Anita Rivers, head of new product development, Marlborough Tiles





Kitchen carpentry

Commissioning the services of a skilled carpenter or joinery company for kitchen cabinetry and other wood fittings around the home is an excellent way to support British craftsmanship as well as ensure a long-lasting, high-quality finish. Seek a local company for ease of viewing showrooms and to discuss tailored options in detail, though many will also offer home visits, virtual consultations and other services nationwide. Consider the timbers used, verifying if they are native and sustainably

sourced. Thankfully this is an area we excel in and there is a wealth to choose from.

NOTABLE BRANDS

- Barnes of Ashburton
- Chalon
- deVOL (above)
- Martin Moore
- Naked Kitchens
- Plain English
- Pluck
- Smallbone of Devizes
- The White Kitchen Company

Kitchens in numbers

2 generations working together at family-run business, Martin Moore

45 years of craftsmanship at Chalon, which was founded in 1978

550 hours on average for the Barnes of Ashburton team to handmake and prepare a kitchen for fitting and finishing ▶



Lighting

There are several British companies in the lighting world preserving heritage skills and developing new techniques to create outstanding designs. We have singled out three new statement lights here, but we also love Jim Lawrence's hand-forged pieces, Tigermoth's innovative chandeliers, Soho Lighting's vintage styles, Original BTC's delicate bone china shades, Curiousa's mesmerising free-blown glass pendants, and the classic lamps from Besselink & Jones.

3 STATEMENT LIGHTS

DAVID HUNT LIGHTING Working in its Costwolds workshop, this brand uses a range of handcrafting techniques for its lighting range. Launching in September, the new Icarus pendant (*top left*) is an undertaking of many processes from moulding to fettling to hand-spraying as well as high-level quality inspections to ensure the perfect finish.

TOM RAFFIELD Using the age-old technique of steam-bending wood, Raffield and his team create modern pieces of furniture as well as lighting. The new collection includes the minimalist but captivating Loer pendants, (*centre*) inspired by the elliptical orbits of the moon and planets. A sustainable steam-bent ash wood forms a halo for the soft spherical globe light.

PORTA ROMANA Though it sounds Italian, Porta Roman is thoroughly British with almost all pieces made completely in England by a range of differently skilled artists who create textures and details with innovative techniques. This new piece (*above right*) in collaboration with British artist and designer Gareth Devonald Smith has a hand-applied texture that can take up to six hours to complete.



Seating

Ensure seating is beautifully considered, comfortable and long-lasting with expertly crafted pieces, from timber dining chairs to cosy upholstered sofas, made by expert craftsmen.

7 MASTERS OF SEATING

ERCOL For over a century, this name has been synonymous with the best of British craftsmanship. The famed Windsor chair (*far right*) is still in production in Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, alongside other iconic, and new, designs.

BEAUMONT & FLETCHER Master craftsmen specialise in creating upholstered furniture with a softly modern update on

historical pieces. Perfect for sympathetically giving a nod to the period of a property in a fresh new way (*left*).

MAX ROLLITT As an antiques dealer, Rollitt has been privy to many unique and special pieces. Inspired, he has created a bespoke furniture collection that reproduces some of his favourite design ideas. Skilled craftsmen use sustainable

Carpets & Rugs

The British have a closely woven history with carpet making, with two distinct types named after the towns in which they were developed – Wilton and Axminster – both of which continue to home to these eponymous carpet manufacturers. Brintons, too, with its 200-year history, excels at producing these two traditional types of carpets.

Brands of note using traditional processes to make contemporary-style flooring include Cormar Carpets, (right), founded in 1956, which makes all its carpets from two mills in Lancashire and Alternative Flooring whose Wilton-style carpets are made on looms in Hampshire. Alternative Flooring has also collaborated with designers Ashley Hicks, Ben Pentreath and Margo Selby to create bold new patterns.

Roger Oates is a pioneer of flatweave techniques and specialises in stair runners and rugs, though has diversified to cut-pile, bespoke rugs too.

For natural fibres such as jute, seagrass and sisal, The Crucial Rug Store offers handmade options, while Rush Matters makes its flooring using the ancient craft of weaving the bulrush it harvests by hand from punts on the rivers Ouse and Nene.



materials to produce made-to-order pieces.

SEBASTIAN COX Using sustainable native timbers, Cox creates modern classics that celebrate their natural beauty. Choose from the main collection or commission a bespoke piece. Timbers felled or fallen on a client's land can also be utilised to give new life to an old tree.

DAVID SEYFRIED Over 35 years of experience in crafting fine upholstered furniture sees pieces from David Seyfried in luxury hotels as well as fine homes. Each piece is crafted from beech wood and they offer classic pieces alongside contemporary updates.

GP & J BAKER A new venture into furniture sees renowned fabric and wallpaper house GP & J Baker offer a curated collection of sofas, chairs, ottomans and footstools which are beautifully crafted with traditional techniques and look sublime upholstered in the brand's fabrics.

LORFORDS With a focus on sustainability, and durability, Lorfords lovingly creates 'contemporary' pieces inspired by antique and vintage designs. It has recently collaborated with Natasha Hulse and Turner Pocock to combine creative forces. The result is unexpected, beautiful pieces for life today.

Seating in numbers

8 brand new pieces in GP & J Baker's first capsule collection of handcrafted upholstered furniture

70 years of continuous handcrafted production of the iconic Windsor chair, designed by Ercol founder Lucian Ercolani in the 1950s

1,000 decorative nails individually placed by hand on Beaumont & Fletcher's Edgar Sofa ▶



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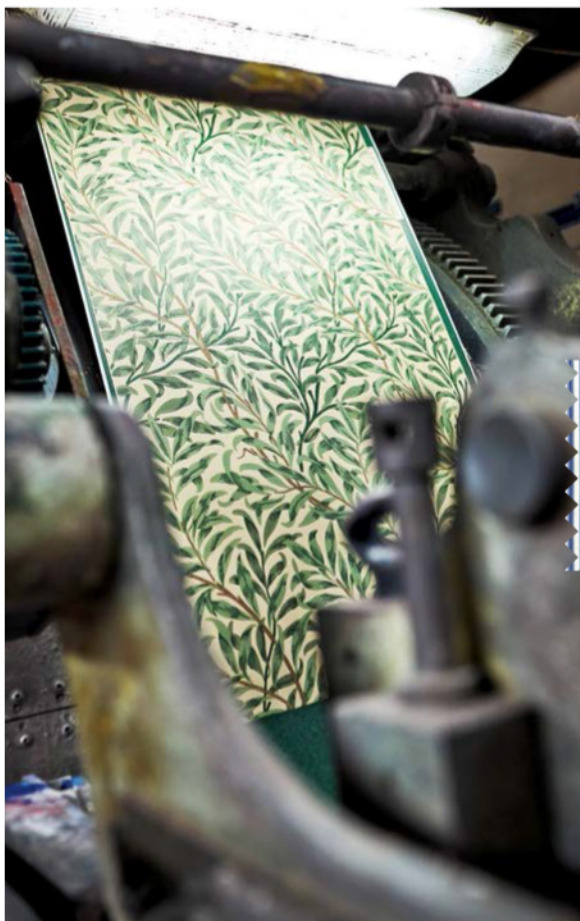
COX LONDON Due to celebrate their brand's 20th anniversary in 2024, founders Nicola and Christopher Cox made craftsmanship a priority when starting their North London business. Ancient and modern crafts are used to create extraordinary pieces of furniture, mirrors and lighting that tread the line between function and art, using processes including cast-bronze, hand-forged metalwork, hand-patination and glass-blowing.

SOANE BRITAIN A long-time champion, nurturer and preserver of British skills, Soane Britain is probably best known for saving the last remaining rattan workshop in England from closure. It now works with the Leicester-based rattan-makers to produce furniture and lighting, with an apprenticeship scheme to keep the skills alive for generations to come. The newest collection includes this art deco-style cabinet (right) inspired by a piece in founder Lulu Lytle's home.

RUPERT BEVAN Trained as a gilder and restorer, Bevan specialises in bespoke finishes and his team of craftsmen create bespoke furniture and decorative finishes such as antiqued glass, gesso, églomisé and metalwork. An exclusive furniture collection also offers beautiful pieces made in Shropshire.

'Once a particular craft is gone, it is gone forever. The teaching process is fundamental to a craft's survival and only the craftsmen themselves can pass on these skills'

Lulu Lytle, founder, Soane Britain



Wallpaper

Papering walls is an excellent way to support British-made products, with many companies printing in the UK. Cole & Son has printed in England since 1875; The Sanderson Group prints for Sanderson, Zoffany, Morris & Co, Clarke & Clarke, Scion and Harlequin at its Anstey factory (left); GP & J Baker prints all its wallpapers in England; Madeaux papers are printed from designs hand-painted in a Rye studio; 1838 Wallcoverings continues a five-generation family business; Rapture & Wright hand-prints its papers; and Bloomfield Ink hand-block-prints using traditional methods.



Textiles

There are still some remaining mills that weave fabrics in Britain - Ian Mankin (1) is known for maintaining one of the last mills in Lancashire. Gainsborough Silks (2), one of the last silk-weaving houses in the UK, celebrates its 120th anniversary this year, and Johnstons of Elgin has

produced wool and cashmere for 225 years in Scotland. There are a number of artisanal fabric designers printing in Britain including Bennison, Penny Morrison, Inchyra (3), Beki Bright, Lowri, Cloth & Clover (4), Charlotte Gaisford, Sarah Hardaker, Julia Brendel, and Cabbages & Roses. ▶



Paint

Simply purchasing a tin of paint is a wonderful way to add a British product to the home. Manufacturers each have secret recipes, specialist ingredients, pigments and methods that ensure depth of colour and a perfect finish.

6 PAINT BRANDS

LITTLE GREENE Nestled in the foothills of Snowdonia, the factory “manufactures on a scale that’s small enough to measure ingredients in kilograms not tonnes. Much of the process is undertaken by the hands of time-served craftspeople rather than machines, right down to sample pots, which are filled by hand from a glass jug.”

Blue Verditer, Little Greene

FARROW & BALL Based in rural Dorset for over 75 years, the well-established brand remains dedicated to offering a 100 per cent water-based range of paint finishes made to artisanal recipes to suit period properties. It has recently added 11 new colours and a new dead-flat finish.

Bamboozle, Farrow & Ball

MYLANDS Originally sold only to trade customers and used extensively by set designers in the theatre and film industry, these marble-based paints became available to the public in 2012 with the launch of the ‘Colours of London’ collection. It is the only remaining London-based paint manufacturer, is still a family-run business, with Dominic Myland continuing the work of his great-grandfather.

Haymarket No47, Mylands

ATELIER ELLIS A relatively new paint brand offering luxurious curated palettes of soft, earthy tones and neutrals, from dark and moody to ethereal and light. All bases and pigments are made in Britain and mixed and made to order in the Bath studio.

Lady Susan, Atelier Ellis

CRAIG & ROSE One of Britain’s oldest paint brands, creating paints in Scotland since 1829. The company began with an ethos for going the extra mile – triple-grinding raw materials when competitors were only doing it twice. Today it applies its expertise to both period and bold decorative paints.

Flanders Blue, Craig & Rose

FIRED EARTH To celebrate its 40th birthday, Fired Earth has added six new colours to its extensive collection. These have been designed to reflect the brand’s ethos to be earthy, inviting and timeless. ■

Dartmouth Green, Fired Earth

The Potteries

Nestled in the heart of Staffordshire, The Potteries are six towns, home to many stalwarts of British ceramics. Owing to their prime position on the waterways which allowed for transportation of clay and the finished pieces, old and new potteries are still thriving, each with a distinct specialism, preserving their heritage and innovating new designs.

4 THRIVING POTTERIES

- Burleigh’s patterns are printed using hand-engraved copper rollers.
- Emma Bridgewater’s china is known the world over for its sponge-printed designs (*below*).
- Wedgwood continues the cherished work of ‘father of English potters’ Josiah Wedgwood, training apprentices for up to 10 years in order to truly master the craft.
- Beginning life in London in 1815, china company Royal Doulton moved to a Staffordshire pottery in 1955, where it remains to this day.



‘We’ve been making Burleigh in Middleport Pottery since 1889. Every single piece. For over 130 years’

Jim Norman, managing director, Burleigh



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KNOCK ON WOOD

Barnes of Ashburton has built an outstanding reputation over the past 40 years for its beautifully bespoke cabinetry and freestanding furniture for the home

ABOVE Barnes of Ashburton worked with Sarah Verey Studio on this project in this family home in a delightful rural location within the Dartmoor National Park. The remit included lots of bespoke classic-style cabinetry, designed and handmade in lime wood, and the kitchen island is faced with natural oak.

When British furniture designer Patrick Gunning decided to turn his hand to creating handmade, bespoke kitchens in 1980, he was steadfast in his vision for the business. He wanted to use locally sourced materials and traditional joinery techniques to make the highest-quality cabinetry – and these core beliefs remain at the heart of what Barnes of Ashburton does, more than 40 years later.

Though Gunning is still involved in the business, the day-to-day running of the company has been charged to a team of employees who have all worked at Barnes of Ashburton for many years and continue to champion the brand's ethos. Today, not only does the company make kitchens, but also cabinetry for other areas of the home, from sitting rooms and bedrooms, to studies and boot rooms. The attention to detail is clear for all to see.

Kim Whinnett, director of the business says, “At Barnes of Ashburton it has always been about British craftsmanship. In today’s world the demand for things

to be made quickly and cheaply means kitchens, boot rooms and other cabinetry can lack the quality and longevity of a more traditional approach. We offer a lifetime guarantee because we have complete confidence that our products will last.”

For example, the company uses a mortice-and-tenon joint (a simple design to join two pieces of wood at 90 degrees by inserting one end of the piece of wood into a hole in another piece of wood). It is the strongest wood joint, but because it is time-consuming to create by hand, many companies tend not to bother. For Barnes of Ashburton, however, it is how it can have absolute certainty that its kitchens will withstand the wear and tear of family life for generations to come.

With sustainability also at the core of what it does, Barnes of Ashburton typically uses wood sourced from New World Timber in Exeter to keep travel miles down. Where possible, they use British companies to supply sinks, taps, ironmongery and worktops, too. Over the past 40 years, the company has designed, built, and



installed kitchens and cabinetry in an array of properties, from luxurious seaside developments to historical buildings. As Whinnett explains, “We pride ourselves on making kitchens that enhance your home. We are as happy working with the irregularities of an old period building as the dramatic designs of modern architecture. In most houses these days, the kitchen is the heart of the home, so it is vital that the space really works for the family. It’s all about ample storage and use of space. Kitchens are for so much more than cooking, so need to work as a place to relax and entertain too.”

All the kitchens and cabinetry are made from scratch in the company’s Devon workshop. The process tends to begin with a site visit so the designers can get a feel for the home before budget, timescale, style and specifications are discussed. The spaces are measured meticulously, considering everything from irregular walls and ceiling beams to uneven floors. “A new kitchen is a major investment, but because our kitchens are made by hand, we have absolute control of costs and

can tweak the design, so we always stay within budget,” adds Whinnett.

Though it is all about a traditional approach to craftsmanship at Barnes of Ashburton, it knows that alongside the bespoke, handcrafted elements of its kitchens, customers also want all the mod cons. It has a strong relationships with all the leading cooker and appliance manufacturers, as well as manufacturers of work surfaces and lighting, which can make a kitchen design in itself.

With so much of its business coming from word of mouth, it is the personal touch that sets Barnes of Ashburton apart. It is proud of its history and strongly encourages all its customers to visit its workshop in Devon to see the heart of the business and the attention to detail that goes into every aspect of its work. It really does go to show that traditional, British-made kitchens and cabinetry, really are hard to beat. ■

barnesofashburton.co.uk

TOP LEFT & ABOVE RIGHT In this coastal property, the team made to order classic-style cabinet work, designed and handmade in lime wood and painted in Farrow & Ball’s Off Black. Accent timber as used in the freestanding cook’s bench is walnut.

ABOVE LEFT Barnes of Ashburton also makes bespoke freestanding pieces to add further character as well as utility to a room.



STRIPES

Fine Lines

Continuing our series focusing on colour and pattern, we explore how trends and historical influences have shaped British interiors, this time turning the spotlight to timeless stripes

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE

A design that consists of long bands against a contrasting plain background, stripes are by nature eye-catching, whether they run horizontally or vertically. But although they are considered an enduring classic, both sartorially and in the interiors world, stripes have a surprisingly chequered history. In the Middle Ages, they garnered attention for controversial reasons.

Widely perceived as transgressive, striped clothing was 'relegated to those on the margins or outside the social order' according to Michel Pastoureau, author of *The Devil's Cloth: A History of Stripes and Striped Fabric*. This negative symbolism was slowly revised over subsequent centuries – striped walls, drapes and furniture became de rigueur around the time of the American Revolution; Napoleon Bonaparte reportedly ▶

THIS PAGE In this elegant bathroom designed by Studio Duggan, subtle Green Stripes flooring by Otto Tiles draws the eye towards a mustard-finished bath and a window dressed in simple linens. **OPPOSITE** Generous, striped drapes lend a cossetting feel to this tongue-and-groove cabin bed designed by Barlow & Barlow.





ABOVE LEFT In this kitchen scheme by interior designer Laura Stephens, a mid-century chair upholstered in Manuel Canovas pops against mustard joinery and wooden elements.

ABOVE RIGHT The upper half of this kitchen wall is finished in wide vertical stripes, as a creative alternative to cabinetry. An antiqued brass pendant and table lamp by Pooky adds depth.

LEFT A graciously curved staircase is softly contemporised by a striped pale-blue-and-white runner in this country house renovation by Studio Atkinson.

added a striped tented room to Château de Malmaison to receive guests, and when Queen Victoria dressed her son in a sailor suit for a yacht event, a nautical association with stripes was cemented. In the hands of Coco Chanel, this distinctive design eventually became a fashion staple. While vertical stripes were once thought of as conservative and horizontal considered rebellious, stripes of all kinds are now appreciated as a way to add interest to an interiors scheme.

Casual yet chic

Whether classic pinstripes and ticking, or bold, wide cabana-style bands, stripes can be both traditional or directional, depending on how they are incorporated. Classic, slim stripes are an ideal backbone to a decorating scheme, an anchor that can provide a contemporising foil to florals, a smart note to an occasional chair or impact as a window treatment. “Simple ticking or a broad stripe feel essential when creating English style at home,” reflects wallpaper designer and artist, Sophie Harpley. “They remind me of the beach, deckchairs and parasols, as well as reassuringly British habits like striped pyjamas or toothpaste. There’s an inherent nostalgia in stripes.”

This is a design that carries much versatility. In their simplest form, stripes can act as a unifying neutral; ▶

In this scheme, Studio Atkinson's highlighting of doors and architraves with a smart stripe from its collection, Reggie wallpaper border in red, is instantly contemporising in a period home. Additional contrast is created with a chequered border, Ernie in red.



A wide blue-and-white stripe – Neptune's Flax Blue and Shell - adds playful appeal here, while subtly referencing the colour palette of the kitchen beyond.





‘Simple ticking or a broad stripe feel essential when creating English style at home. There’s an inherent nostalgia in stripes’

Sophie Harpley, designer and artist

given the spotlight, they add dynamism. “I love using them as a counterpoint to florals,” says interior designer Laura Stephens. “I often pair a subtle striped blind with a boldly patterned wallpaper. It’s a great way to break up a busy design and stop things looking overly chintzy.”

Ticking is a good way to introduce the look gently. A durable fabric once largely consigned to the outer layer of mattresses, this slim, easy-on-the-eye stripe looks smart on bedlinen and chairs. “Stripes have the magical ability to create impact while knocking back busier patterns,” says interior designer and textile specialist Alexandra Morrall. “Bear in mind though that too many in one scheme almost always feels overwhelming, so use them wisely. Sometimes all it takes is one bold move, such as introducing vertical stripes on floor-length curtains, to help make a room feel taller and grander.”

A bright, wide stripe can be statement making, especially if used inventively. “Upholstering a stripe on the diagonal immediately lends an extra playful layer that feels really nostalgic – almost like a school tie, which works well when trying to create a preppy aesthetic,” says Jo Littlefair, of Goddard Littlefair. “I also enjoy the beauty of a wide-striped awning shading a busy pavement cafe. This bold type of striped fabric always evokes memories of holidays, glamour, nonchalance and a laissez-faire attitude.”

Super scale

Though stripes carry nostalgic appeal, as with any historical design, paying attention to scale, colour and context marks the difference between contemporary treatment and an overly staid feel. Pairing both narrow and wide bands will add depth and variety, especially when set against other designs. “Bear in mind that it’s ▶

ABOVE LEFT In this kitchen by Beata Heuman, a striped island skirt adds informal elegance, tying in neatly with the Roman blind beyond.

ABOVE RIGHT In this sitting room by Alice Leigh Design, a striped Silk Jajim by Nushka Home adds dynamism and complements cabinetry painted in Farrow & Ball’s Green Smoke.



‘Striped stair runners work brilliantly, as their elongating quality adds depth and height’

Alex Keith, Otta Design



the relationship between patterns that makes a room sing,” says Sophie Harpley. “Simpler prints like stripes, paired with other busier patterns, add a sense of order. Stripes can help you notice the architecture of a space, while florals help soften it.”

As well as adding a decorative flourish, used cleverly, stripes can help emphasise a room’s proportions. “Striped stair runners work brilliantly, as their elongating quality adds depth and height, drawing the eye from ground to first floor,” says Otta Design’s Alex Keith. “Generally speaking, the larger the room the wider you can go with the stripe. Conversely, wide bands in small rooms can appear unbalanced. We tend to use bigger, bolder designs on curtains or headboards, and smaller stripes on soft furnishings such as cushions. It really pays to invest in an excellent upholsterer too. The fabric needs to be as tight as possible to avoid any sagging, which ruins the effect of the linear pattern.”

Considering what effect stripes will have within a scheme is vital. “As with paintings, composition is key,” advises designer and hotelier Kit Kemp. “If a room is relatively tall, with several vertical or ascending elements, a horizontal stripe will balance the

proportions of the room. Using a striped rug against an otherwise plain background is another powerful tool in interior architecture – it redirects the eye and can reshape a space.”

Striped delight

From painted walls to embellished wooden furniture, stripes are also useful when it comes to decorative tricks of the eye. Those handy with a paint brush can use masking tape to add stripes to walls, whether wide and vertical or horizontally on a wall’s lower half. When pairing two colours, opt for the same basic tones for a note of cohesion, such as warm taupe with soft terracotta or soft grey-green with a deeper olive. Stripes can be subtle too, used as a single motif. Picking out the silhouette of a traditional mantelpiece or doorway with a fine brushed line applied carefully around the entire surround can look chic in a deep burgundy or green.

Stripes also offer an excellent opportunity to get creative, especially when used as an unexpected painted effect. Interior designer Kate Guinness recently incorporated a painted stripe detail around the top of a bathroom wall to counter a lack of ▶

ABOVE LEFT In this scheme by Otta Design, striped lampshades by Sarah Harley at Loving String complement linear reeding on the vanity beneath, adding a sense of height and space to a compromised room.

ABOVE RIGHT In this bedroom scheme by Kitesgrove, Marquee Stripes wallpaper in Ochre by Cole & Son lends an elegant backdrop to inset shelving.



In this renovation by Otta Design, the vibrant colourway of a stair runner by Sinclair Till cleverly unifies the palette of the adjacent sitting room, with its clay and terracotta tones.



‘Stripes create such a cosy atmosphere and really bring fabrics and colours together’

Alice Palmer, Alice Palmer & Co



ABOVE In designer Alice Palmer’s sitting room, box-pleated lampshades in Tangier Mustard and a selection of Stripe Frilly Cushions by Alice Palmer & Co add a lively contrast to walls in Faded Terracotta by Farrow & Ball.

ABOVE RIGHT In this child’s bedroom designed by Kate Guinness, a bold red striped rug from Ikea makes an effective unexpected pairing with sky blue walls and cabinetry.

RIGHT Stripe in cherry, by Johnstons of Elgin & Ben Pentreath, makes for a contemporary upholstery treatment in a deeply classical space.

architectural features. “We used the same technique on flat cupboard doors to create interest instead of adding a moulding,” she says.

Lampshade maker Alice Palmer has added bold horizontal candy stripes to the fire surround in her sitting room (featured in our March 2023 issue), as well as to cafe curtains, bed valances and cushions. “They create such a cosy atmosphere and really bring fabrics and colours together,” she says. “I use them to add originality to my interiors. Introducing a stripe is also a great gateway to incorporating pattern for those who might be a little fearful to do so.”

Striped ceilings in children’s bedrooms or nurseries are another fun way of channelling this style. “A circus-tent effect is sweet and playful and helps double up the space as a playroom,” says Barlow & Barlow’s Lucy Sear-Barlow. “I also enjoy a sailor-striped bathroom because it always looks fresh and jolly, and can work in any size room.” To create bold appeal in bathrooms, try using two-tone Zellige square tiles in a striped arrangement, and for truly timeless living room schemes, opt for classic fabrics, from Guy Goodfellow’s Olive Sacking, to Flora Soames’ Pavilion collection. For wallpapers, Adam Bray’s Brown Paper Stripe is a bold and adventurous addition. “Like a good friend, stripes let other patterns shine while they remain balanced and steadfast,” concludes Harpley. “Far from being boring, they are a wonderful springboard on which to build a scheme.” ■

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PERFECTLY ALIGNED

Rely on ticking stripes to anchor classic schemes and bold, broad stripes to add a playful, dramatic touch

1 Piero footstool, Artichoke, £845, Ceraudo 2 Tangier Denim Stripe box-pleat lampshade, from £120, Alice Palmer & Co 3 Painted Stripe frilly cushions, £115 each, Sophia Frances Studio 4 Rander ceramic stool, £225, Oka 5 Organic cotton Ticking Stripe Oxford pillowcase, Ecru/Rose, £21 each, Toast 6 La Boule stacking dinner set for two, £415, Villeroy & Boch 7 Striped throw, £22.50, Marks & Spencer 8 Kingston armchair in heavy linen Szepevitz Stripe, £1,820, Mind the Gap for Amara 9 Wide Stripe block-printed linen fabric, £168 a metre, Molly Mahon 10 Anna-Lisa cushion, Bordeaux with Plum piping, £116, Cathy Nordstrom 11 Stripe linen tablecloth, Rose Pink and Avocado Green, from £295, Summerill & Bishop 12 Kara hemp fine stripe Oxford pillowcase, from £48 each, The White Company ■



FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPH (SOPHIA FRANCES STUDIO) RACHAEL SMITH PHOTOGRAPHY



Hybrid WORKING

Leading designers demonstrate how to create a home workspace within another room, creating two – or sometimes more – beautifully functional spaces in one

ABOVE Cabinetry from Martin Moore's New Classic collection, hand-painted in the company's Soft Grey (main units), Slate (island). Martin Moore kitchens start from £45,000

Modern life often means making the most of smaller spaces or, conversely, making sense of larger spaces. All homes need an area in which to catch up with admin, store paperwork and technology, read, write, think or even work from home. Be it shared with a bedroom or drawing room, a kitchen or hallway, or another part of the house, it is possible to create a multifunctional space that works on both a practical and an aesthetic level.

Small yet smart

The kitchen may often be the ideal location in which to have a dedicated spot for catching up on paperwork. Provided an all-singing, all-dancing home office is not required, a small desk area can be built into a corner,

with a pretty chair and lighting, and a little storage just to tuck things out of sight. In some cases, it may even be possible to add doors so the whole space can be closed off. The seamless elegance of this Martin Moore office in a kitchen (*above*) is thanks to a continuation of cabinetry style and walnut worktop, with careful attention paid to levels and proportion. The built-in desk with drawers is complemented by shelves (which include flush, slimline downlights) and – thanks to very high ceilings – cupboards above. The addition of a pinboard means it can be used for mementoes and visual reminders. With the opposite end of the room used as an informal breakfast bar and a large dining area, the office space is very discreet yet eminently practical.

Cohesive scheme

For creating a calm multifunctional space, a cohesive colour scheme is paramount. In this room created by interior designer Leonora Birts, the clients wanted a space to sit, relax and read a book or work at a desk. Birts chose a darker colour for the joinery to bring a more serious feel to the workspace, and more colourful fabrics in the reading area to create a subtle contrast between the two functions. The areas are married together with a stool that links them by echoing all the colours in the room, yet also cleverly creates a natural division between the two spaces.

Lighting is an important way to zone different areas of a multifunctional room. Birts installed separate lighting controls for each area, enabling each space to be lit individually. The reading space is lit by two lamps on the side tables and a picture light, and the desk space has individual desk lights as well as overhead bookcase lights. As the room is not very big, whichever space the client lights up creates a desirable warmth and zonality without losing the feel of the whole room. ▶

RIGHT & BELOW Interior design by Leonora Birts. The Bobbin stool is from David Seyfried and covered in Pierre Frey fabric, and the wallpaper is by Tatiana Tafur.







Purposely separate

It can make sense to set up an administrative area in a bedroom – and perhaps more so in a master, as guest rooms will be out of bounds when occupied – as long as it is separate from the main area. In order not to disturb a calm and restful atmosphere with the clutter of technology and paperwork, and for mental health, it is essential that workspaces can be closed off.

In this bedroom by Neptune, a graphic rug delineates the floor area and a simple-but-beautiful gathered curtain can be drawn to conceal the desk from the rest of the room. A pretty lamp offers enough illumination, and a stool (which could be tucked under the desk when not needed) a handy extra surface. The advantage of this particular desk is that it has a surround along the back and sides to stop items toppling off, and a slimline drawer that's large enough to stow away a laptop, pens and a notebook. This informal set-up, with the addition of a mirror, could easily double as a dressing table, too.

Hidden solution

When a home office is combined with a drawing room it is essential that the paraphernalia of working life can be concealed easily when the working day is over, enabling the room to return to its serene, relaxing and attractive state. A workstation with hinged, folding or sliding doors is a good solution, the only additional consideration being where to put the chair when not in use (assuming it cannot just tuck under the desk).

This design also means unsightly plug sockets and wires can be catered for. Good lighting is essential where there is no natural light, and this could either be built-in underneath shelves or cupboards, wall mounted or simply plugged in and stood on the desktop. As shown in this bespoke hideaway office by Neville Johnson, the cabinetry can be beautiful in itself, and complemented by further cupboards and shelves that integrate with the overall design of the room. ▶

ABOVE Calletto-style bespoke hideaway home office by Neville Johnson, finished in Inky Sky paint and with Arlo handles.

OPPOSITE PAGE Larsson writing desk, £695; Larsson bed, £1,675; Whytock rug, £600; Northwich round stool in natural oak, £225; Larsson bedroom chair, £570; all Neptune



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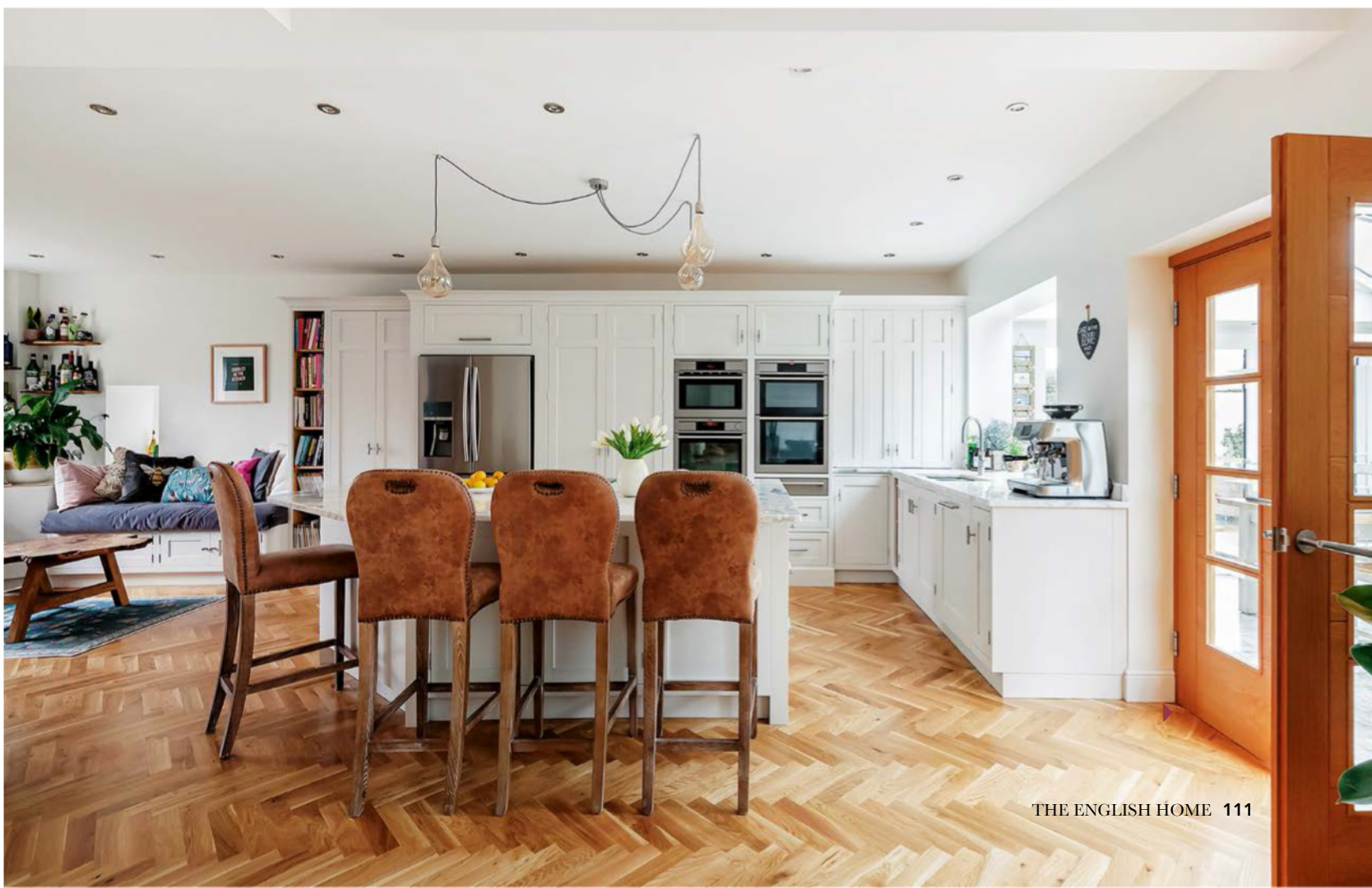
Previously known as AGACLEAN

Well-planned layout

Today's kitchens must often satisfy many more requirements than simply being a place in which to cook efficiently. In this open-plan design by The White Kitchen Company, for example, the room encompasses not only a run of cabinets that incorporates a fridge/freezer, integrated ovens and a worktop pantry, but also a breakfast bar at a bespoke island, an office and – at the opposite end of the room – a home bar and a snug with a wall-mounted TV.

Fitting so many functions into one space is all about a clever floorplan, which here includes angles and curves for flow and a softer look, and positioning the desk in the corner to provide natural light and allow for a deep space on which to place a large computer monitor. Storage designed for the smallest detail is essential, too, and in this room it includes office drawers and cupboards, wall-mounted shelves, tall, thin bookshelves and even blanket cupboards below the built-in seating. ▶

BELOW & RIGHT Shaker kitchen cabinets hand-painted in Little Greene's Slaked Lime Mid, with hardware by Buster + Punch, The White Kitchen Company





FEATURE SARA EMSLIE PHOTOGRAPHS (LEONORA BIRTS); JONATHAN BOND; (THORP) RICHARD POWERS

Harmonious details

When a home working space is combined with another room, but does not need to be completely concealed, it may still help to have some kind of division. A screen, a bookshelf or some partial walling, for example, could separate the two areas visually without completely closing them off from each other.

In this case, a room-within-a-room designed by Thorp, the home office forms the end of an enfilade of rooms, leading off the dressing room and looking

out onto the garden. Solid doors would have blocked off too much natural light, so slender, mostly glazed walls demarcate the change of use, coupled with a change of wall colour and the use of natural rather than painted wood. That said, the overall feel is still complementary, thanks to the use of pale tones and joinery that matches in proportions. The office itself is full of light, with a generous desk that runs around three sides and space to display photographs on the walls. ■

ABOVE Here a space has been cleverly carved out to provide a home office leading off a dressing room in a central London townhouse designed by Thorp.

LIVING IN THE DETAILS

Sound softening

Passages of light >

Pausing here (20 mins)

T H O R P
SLOANE ST

A decorative wall light can accessorise and enhance a plain area of the room. *Delphis light in decap and gold, £2,850, Beaumont & Fletcher*



GUIDING LIGHT

As one of the most important decorating decisions, it is essential to consider placement and style of lighting carefully when updating interiors

A lighting scheme that functions precisely for each room as well as tying in with the overall style and producing the best ambience needs to be meticulously planned. For key areas of the home, we asked industry creators and innovators to offer their advice on choosing the right lighting for different purposes and how to overcome any practical obstacles.



SURFACE APPEAL

Creating interest and atmosphere, wall lights add layers of texture and detail. “Always consider the purpose of the light,” says Jana Durisova, creative director at Beaumont & Fletcher. “Where there are high ceilings, for example, we recommend a tall wall light for scale, while in an area such as a hallway, be sure to consider how far the fitting projects from the wall – placement above shoulder height means it’s far less likely to get knocked.”

Practical considerations can open new avenues. Installing hardwired wall lights will often require rewiring, and therefore redecorating, whereas opting for plug-and-cable models means simply attaching them to the wall and plugging them in. Try making a design feature of the flex, advises Hollie Moreland, creative director at David Hunt Lighting, who suggests

that “a woven, braided cable in a contrast or coordinating colour” can provide a neat counterpoint or matching feature compared to the wall behind. For bathrooms, look for lights with approved IP44 rating to ensure they are safe and suitable for environments prone to moisture. In bedrooms, articulated-arm wall lights provide directional light for reading and an uncluttered bedside table.

“When choosing between classic or contemporary, it is important not to feel hidebound by the period of the property,” says Alastair Hepher, director of Charles Edwards, who suggests playing with materials and finishes to achieve a fitting look. “Nickel will add a crisp, clean feel and add a contemporary twist to classic designs, while brass and bronze can be used to create a traditional and warm ambience,” he adds. ▶

ABOVE LEFT Wall lights either side of a mirror provide the right illumination for bathroom tasks.

Custom-made Opal Angel wall lights, £POA, Cox London
RIGHT An antiqued mirror sphere amplifies light and casts a soft glow.
Gramercy double sconce, Lumière du Jour, £479; Vintage silk sari shade, £60 each, Samarkand Design



HANG IT ALL

ABOVE Pendant lights above a table create an inviting atmosphere for all occasions.

Original 1227 midi wide brass pendant in Elephant Grey, £209, Anglepoise

LEFT Make a statement with an eye-catching pendant and lampshades.

Bodkin five-light pendant, bespoke in a combination of 12 paint colours and five special paints for this range, £426; pleated gathered shades, from £116, David Hunt Lighting

Elegance and symmetry each play their part in drawing the eye to ceiling lighting, whether in classic or traditional form. Used individually or placed as a series, pendants and lanterns create rhythm and flow in pleasing harmony – not least in spaces such as kitchen entertaining areas, where, Harriet Daniels, founder and CEO of Tigermoth Lighting, explains, “They should add decorative interest during the day, and atmosphere at night.”

Daniels also suggests selecting uniform designs for each specific area which, “can work really well to simultaneously denote different zones.” She advises using complementary styles above a dining table to offset a trio of kitchen island pendants in the same space.

With this in mind, the height at which pendants are hung is key for islands and tables. “We often recommend 75cm–90cm clearance between the bottom of the shade and the top of the surface, as this usually equates to eye level,” says Esther Patterson, designer and director at Curiousa. Note that height-adjustable pendant lights allow for flexibility and versatility after installation.



When grouping pendant lights, the oft-cited guidance of opting for odd numbers works well to please the eye. In a hallway, for example, where sometimes narrow areas may require a fuller wash of light, odd numbers of lights can be cleverly capitalised on with a judicious use of materials says Lee Lovett, founder and designer at The Soho Lighting Company: "In hallways glass pendants are perfect on account of your eye passing through to the interior beyond," she says, "plus, they're also highly effective at lighting small spaces."

To select the right style of traditional pendant for a period property, Sheena Lawrence, co-founder of Jim Lawrence, suggests looking back in time. "Would this area of a room feature candlelight, oil, or gas lamps? Allow yourself to be led by the history of your home or seek new-to-you-ideas from the period you are taking inspiration from." For a modern aesthetic, Lawrence adds that pared-back designs give the same output but with an angular silhouette, while contemporary glass "looks elegant in modern homes", particularly with a sleek track for up-to-date styling. ▶

ABOVE LEFT Add to a symmetrical kitchen layout with a trio of pendants. *Large Slate Grey Classic Traditional lights, £545 each, Curiousa, kitchen by Martin Moore*

ABOVE RIGHT Assess how the kitchen island and pendant shades will work visually when viewed together. *Constance shade in stone with stone interior, £44, cone pendant fitting kit in stone, £46, Pooky*

RIGHT Consider eye-level pendants above a food preparation space in the centre of the kitchen. *Walcot pendant, £184.33, Jim Lawrence Lighting*



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EYE ON THE TASK

Be it office desk, functional kitchen space or preferred reading spot of choice, choosing the right task lighting begins with considering any site-specific needs, along with how and when the light will be used, so the resulting scheme responds accordingly.

To meet different needs, downlighters that produce focussed, directional streams are ideal for close work. For reading, standalone lamps and angled lights are favourable, as too are hinged arm models, while office spaces benefit from desk lamps with adjustable elements such as height and neck. Consider, too, dimmable options to be turned up or down as the mood requires.

For kitchen tasks or ancillary spaces that require total shadow-free lighting, see solutions such as tailored under-cupboard sources. Sally Storey, design director of John Cullen Lighting, advises, "For a traditional look, try individual spots to create scallops of light onto the surface below or, for a contemporary take, a linear LED strip works well to highlight the space."

Showcasing displays or artwork with accent lighting draws attention to treasured items and can also provide additional ambience. "Picture lighting will not only illuminate, but also casts out borrowed light into the rest of the room, creating atmosphere and tone," outlines Simon Wallis-Smith, director and head designer at Fritz Fryer. He also suggests offsetting classic light forms with contemporary artwork (and vice versa) to create interest – for example, overhead picture lights lend a traditional touch, while spot uplighters can create shafts of focus on individual works or shelving displays. ▶

ABOVE Floor lamps with lights at angles provide sharp focus for reading.

Copernicus floor lamp, £2,250; Copernicus wall light, £785, shades for both the floor light and wall light as seen here, £135 each, Bella Figura

RIGHT Avoid the glare of spotlights and opt for lighting that offers a diffused glow suitable for kitchen tasks.

Hector large pleat ceiling light, as seen here in antique brass, £199, Original BTC

FAR RIGHT Hinged arms allow for directional lighting. *Hanson Library wall light, £148.05, Jim Lawrence Lighting*





MAKE A STATEMENT

Whether seeking to install a traditional chandelier or a more contemporary sculptural form, statement lighting brings impactful design to any space. Key to its success, says designer Kate Wilkins of Kate and Sam Lighting, is the joyful permission “to be guided simply by choosing something you love”.

Wilkins continues, “Statement lighting is an ‘add-on’ to the fabric of a building, so whether opting for traditional or ultra-modern be mindful of how the light it produces will add to the ambience. Ensure the proportions you have in mind work in your chosen space – hanging a balloon from the ceiling is an easy way to check heights, as clearance distance is context-dependent.”

In transitional spaces with tall ceilings, such as stairwells and double-height areas, statement pieces can often be appreciated from different angles throughout the day. If this is the case, all sightlines should be a guiding force to ensure the light’s design can be appreciated from every angle.

Smaller rooms can also benefit from a dramatic style of statement lighting. “Dining spaces, for example,

benefit from modern, minimalist forms to layer the room with boundless light,” says designer Tom Raffield. “Choosing a wooden fixture will not only fill the space, but it will also add texture to make it feel homely and welcoming. If your entire space is calling out for enhanced illumination, exposed bulbs will suit.”

If opting for a traditional chandelier, Lucy Vaughan, founder of Vaughan, advises always installing them on a separate dimmer circuit and looking beyond obvious settings such as dining rooms and hallways; “Chandeliers look fabulous hung in multiples in corridors and can give gravitas and impact to small rooms such as dressing rooms and boot rooms.”

In terms of dimensions, “it’s all down to personal preference” says Connor Prestwood, interior design specialist at Dowsing & Reynolds. “Some like an oversized exaggerated statement light, whereas others prefer a more minimal look. I would usually suggest going slightly bigger than you think you need – it’s easy to play it safe, when actually the opposite really elevates the space.” ■

ABOVE LEFT Opting for odd numbers pleases the eye, while glass allows light to pass through in narrow spaces.

Paola pendant, Blu Avio, from £1,020, Hector Finch

ABOVE RIGHT For a showstopping stairwell light, commission a design that ensures impact from every viewpoint. *Lymington chandelier, available to order with a bespoke amount of tiers, as seen here £26,495, Vaughan*



LIGHT IT UP

How lighting brand Pooky has carved a niche in the market with its beautifully crafted yet purse-friendly designs

When Rohan Blacker – the founder of Sofa.com – decided to set up the lighting brand Pooky back in 2014, he knew he wanted to create beautiful, decorative pieces, that look like they cost a fortune, but do not. Nearly 10 years later, he has achieved just that, as Pooky lights can be found everywhere from student digs to stately homes throughout the UK and across the globe, with endless designs to suit any style.

“I’ve always had a fascination for lighting, with its impact on any decorative theme both dramatic and immediate,” he explains. “When you walk into a space – whether it is a home, restaurant or performance space – and the lighting clicks, there is a quiet magic at play. At Pooky, we have designed a range of beautiful, decorative lights, with our clever website allowing customers to try out combinations of bases and lampshades to find the perfect style for their homes.”

At Pooky it is possible to find everything from table lamps and lampshades to pendants, chandeliers and outdoor lighting in marble, brass, resin, wood, and glass. The brand’s bestsellers include the classic urn-shaped Lolita ceramic lampbase, available in four colours, the stripy Lottie style for a bold statement, and the glass Wisteria table lamp for a lighter mood. Each element is offered separately, allowing customers to mix and match to create their perfect lighting combination, with myriad lampshades to choose from in everything from block-printed cotton to handmade marbled paper, rattan and linen.

One of Pooky’s greatest successes has been its impressive collection of rechargeable table lamps, which have transformed the way we enjoy dining both indoors and al fresco. Added to which, is its excellent collaborations with everyone from Matthew Williamson to Sanderson. The company has also designed a range of mirrors, including the ever-popular bobbin-style Charming design and art deco-inspired Daffings mirror. View the range in its full glory at Pooky’s showrooms in Chelsea and Redbrick, near Leeds, or visit pooky.com ■

ABOVE LEFT The super sparkly Lachrymose crystal chandelier, £450, pairs beautifully with the sleek Rodtastic wall light in brass and glass rods, £235 for a glamorous bathroom. LEFT Create a cosy reading corner with the new Darcy floor lamp with handy brass tray, £380, topped with a delicate 45cm scalloped shade in Blue Sky, £118.



CALLAGHANS OF SHREWSBURY

FORM & FINESSE

How a lifelong love of sculpture led Benson Landes to leave a career in couture to pursue his true passion in later life



As the great artist and sculptor Leonardo da Vinci once said, “A beautiful body perishes but a work of art dies not.” Words that could undeniably be applied to the sculptures of Benson Landes (1927–2013), who had a rare gift for capturing the female form at its most graceful. He was inspired by ballet and would listen to classical music while sketching and sculpting.

Among the many admirers of Benson Landes’ works are Stella and Daniel Callaghan, who run the gallery Callaghans of Shrewsbury, which is set in the heart of the beautiful Shropshire town. They were fortunate enough to know Benson Landes during his lifetime, working with him for many years, and continue to represent his works to this day. “I feel fortunate to have known and worked with him for so long,” says Stella.

Sculpting was Benson Landes’ passion, with ballet dancers and women in quiet repose his preferred subject matter. His obvious appreciation of the grace and elegance of the female form stemmed from 25 years spent in the couture business, where he began work at 14. Reminiscing, he said he reluctantly gave his time as an apprentice in his father’s clothing workroom and factory as he had always harboured a desire to become an artist. That said, his sense of responsibility at that age was clearly equal to his creativity as he knuckled down and learnt the family trade.

At the age of 18, however, a two-year conscription to the RAF provided an unlikely opportunity to embrace his artistic side, giving him access to pastels, paper, perspex and plaster of Paris, found in the RAF base’s well-stocked workshop. On completion of his service, he briefly returned to work with his father, but following his marriage to his wife Ruth at 21, he decided to set up his own business. Starting with a single sewing machine and a tailoress, the couple grew the business, eventually employing over 50 staff and supplying prestigious stores such as Dickins & Jones and Harrods.

Over the years, fashions changed and became less tailored, spurring Benson Landes to retire and return to his first love, sculpture. Buoyed by the liberty he enjoyed in his studio, he sold some of his first pieces – a collection of sporting trophies shown at the 1981 Open Golf Championship – to Garrards, the Crown Jewellers. This success brought important contacts and new commissions, and he was able to turn his attention to what he loved to sculpt the most – the female form.

“This, combined with the world of ballet, was Benson Landes’ true love, and can be seen through the extraordinary movement and detail in his sculptures,” explains Daniel. “All are worldwide editions of 12 or 25 and their gentle appeal works well in any interiors setting.” A perfect example is the original bronze, *Resting Swan*, depicting the principal dancer of *Swan Lake* taking a moment of respite between rehearsals. His sculptor’s skill is evident too in the dynamism and



movement in *Pirouette*, which shows not only the female form but the movement captured in the dancer’s silk skirt.

Benson Landes always insisted that being able to work as a sculptor is a unique privilege, and the pieces he created are truly a privilege to witness for those lucky enough to get a closer look. “He was an inspiration to the world of art, design and sculpture throughout his lifetime,” says Stella. “We were extremely fortunate to work so closely with him over several decades, commissioning pieces and developing his portfolio of works to bring to an international market. His gentle and tender personality is carried on through his sculpture. It seems so fitting to hold a retrospective exhibition 10 years after he sadly passed away and celebrate the wonderful legacy of works he has left behind.” ■

callaghan-finepaintings.com

ABOVE *Pirouette*, original bronze, height 66cm, edition of 12, signed
OPPOSITE *Resting Swan*, original bronze, height 35.5cm, edition of 12, signed



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LIVING THE SEASON

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

VARIETY SHOW

For both new or experienced dahlia growers, visiting British gardens and shows is an ideal way to view a variety of dahlias in full bloom. Open gardens with large collections include Perch Hill Farm in Sussex, Hever Castle in Kent and Kelmarsh Hall in Northampton. Visit Harrogate Show and RHS Wisley for growers. Cutting fields, such as Pythouse Garden in Wiltshire and Rows at Priory Gardens in Yorkshire, also provide armfuls of new ideas.

For inspiration on using dahlias to enliven interiors, turn to page 112.



DAHLIA DAYS

Far from shy and retiring, these striking blooms with their dazzling hues and intricate structure are a wonder to behold. We celebrate the many ways they can be used to enhance autumn days at home

STYLING & WORDS SELINA LAKE PHOTOGRAPHY SUSSIE BELL ASSISTANT STYLIST SARAH PRALL

Here pink 'Wizard of Oz' dahlias and orange 'Nicholas' dahlias are combined with *Verbena bonariensis*.



The beauty of dahlia season is being celebrated again after a huge increase in popularity mainly due to growers and floral stylists sharing inspiring images via social media. Once reserved for growing best-in-show specimens on allotment plots in the 1950s, dahlias have made their way back to our gardens. They offer real value for money as they produce tons of flowers and when cut can last for up to a week in a vase. Famous gardener and flower expert Sarah Raven hosts Dahlia Delirium open days in August and September at her wonderful private garden, Perch Hill, in East Sussex, showing how to grow dahlias en masse and how to mix colours in borders. The array of hues can spark inspiration in the home as well as the garden – from styling a seasonal table for supper to designing a new decor theme. There is no better time to get reacquainted with these dazzling blooms. ▶



‘Cut dahlia stems as long as possible and just before where the stalk meets the leaf to encourage more blooms’



Growing and cultivating

Few flowers are as floriferous as dahlias. They are in bloom from June to the first frost and, with very little looking after, will result in armfuls of flowers. They can be grown in pots, too – dwarf varieties are best for this, just bear in mind they will need more feeding and watering than if grown in the ground.

Dahlias have always been looked at as a high-maintenance flower to grow due to their tubers needing to be kept frost-free over winter. If milder winters are to be expected, however, it is possible, in most places, in not too wet and exposed areas, to leave the tubers in the ground if they are covered with a thick mulch of compost or straw. If that is not desirable, dig them up in mid-autumn and make sure they are dry before storing them in dry compost in a frost-free place like a greenhouse, basement or garage.

In early spring, plant the tubers in three-litre pots, one tuber to each pot. Giving them a generous pot will give them a head start. With lots of fresh compost to get their roots growing, bring them into the light and water sparingly. When the tubers start to shoot, take cuttings to increase plant numbers. Nipping out the top shoots when the plant is about a foot tall will increase the number of flowers produced later as it will branch out and be bushier and stronger.

From mid to late May, the sprouting dahlias can be transferred into the ground. Make sure they are protected from slugs and snails, as dahlia shoots are one of their favourite snacks. Grit or sheep’s wool around the new shoots helps prevent this. Once the plants are growing strongly, they can easily lose a few leaves to slugs without incurring too much damage. For tall dahlias that grow to over 75cm tall, it is necessary to stake them to keep them from collapsing in high winds or heavy rain. Make sure to pick the flowers regularly as the more they are picked, the more they produce. Deadheading is essential as if the plant is allowed to set seed it will stop producing flowers. This is the rule for most cut flowers/annuals.

Dahlias come in several different shapes and sizes, with blooms from the size of a dinner plate to small delicate pom-pom shapes. They are good for wildlife too. With bees and butterflies in mind, the singles, collarette and cartwheel types are best because the petals are open and the nectar is easier to reach.

TYPES OF DAHLIAS:

- Decorative
- Dinner plate
- Cactus
- Collarette
- Pompom
- Single
- Anemone
- Waterlily
- Dwarf
- Cartwheel



**ABOVE LEFT
& RIGHT**

Art and flowers have long been companions, with floral still-life displays inspiring artists the world over. Vintage paintings of any flowers work as an interesting backdrop to a seasonal display of flowers.

**OPPOSITE TOP
& BOTTOM**

Dahlias come in a wide range of showstopping shapes and colours that are bound to enhance any corner of the home.

The art of display

Placing vases of freshly arranged flowers with art creates a layered look full of interest and floral flourishes. If picking the dahlias, it is best to do so in the cool early morning or late evening. Cut the stems as long as possible with clean, sharp scissors or flower snippers, aim to cut just before where the flower stalk meets the leaf to encourage more blooms. Plunge the stems straight into a bucket of cool water and leave them to soak for a while before arranging them in vases – this is known in the floral trade as conditioning the flowers.

Before arranging the flowers in a vase, work out the rough height of the arrangement to be created; smaller vases work best with little posies while bigger vessels with wider necks and openings are ideal for big, blowsy creations. Choose vases, stoneware pots, glazed jugs and ceramic urns with hand-decorated designs in mustards, rich greens and rust reds as these will combine well with the rich colour palette of the delightful dahlias. Snip the ends of the stems at a slant and adjust the heights accordingly. Start with the

more sturdy stems, leaving anything delicate until last. Although dahlias are showstoppers, blending them with other flowers and foliage will help to show them off – possibilities include cosmos, fennel, amaranthus, flowering basil and zinnias.

To create an eye-catching display use an available surface in the home – perhaps a closed piano, a shelf or a console table – then lean vintage floral paintings against the vertical surface, overlapping canvases of different sizes and artwork, small landscapes over larger portraits for example, then dot the vases filled with flowers in between. Find similar art at antique and vintage fairs or via online sites such as Etsy.

The display should inspire and spark joy for the change in season, so place art and vases in groups that feel aesthetically pleasing. For a more permanent take on this look, consider wallpapering an alcove or area behind a console table for a permanent floral backdrop. Wallpapers that will work well for such a project include *Dahlia Garden* by Boråstapeter, and *Dahlia in Coral/Fig Leaf/Gilver* by Harlequin. ▶



Seasonal suppers

Dress up a simple rustic wooden table for cosy harvest suppers. Start by laying a cotton or linen cloth in a rust tone and add ceramic tableware glazed in subtle, natural hues with a textured leaf design. The centrepiece will be the floral arrangement of course – combine dahlia ‘Molly Raven’, ‘Linda’s Baby’ and ‘Labyrinth’ with cosmos ‘Dazzler’ and amaranthus ‘Red Army’ in a vintage stoneware vase. Chairs can be mismatched while a frilly fabric shade in a tent stripe linen fabric overhead will add a softness and a warm glow as the light fades.

ABOVE Botanic Garden Harmony plates, £170 for a 12-piece set, Portmeirion; Honey Yellow linen napkin, £22 for a set of two, Rowen & Wren

OPPOSITE Tent Stripe Tiffany Ruffle pendant shade, £355, Beauvamp; Vintage Flower vase, £60, Split Figs; Black scented candle, £15, Shearer Candles

Autumn abundance

Harvest time is immediately obvious when visiting farm shops and farmers’ markets at this time of year. Stalls are brimming with seasonal produce, from piles of apples to stacks of pumpkins in an array of sizes and colours. British flower growers are also having a last hurrah before winter sets in, so it is a great time to indulge in a bucket of British blooms. To find local flower growers, head to flowersfromthefarm.co.uk

An abundance of seasonal produce calls for cake baking and new recipes to be explored. Think roasted pumpkin and goat’s cheese salad to start and warm apple cake with custard for dessert.

PUMPKIN AND GOAT’S CHEESE SALAD

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

1 medium-sized pumpkin (or two small pumpkins)	200g goat’s cheese
– tasty varieties to try include Onion squash, Crown Prince squash and Kabocha squash	150g winter salad leaves
	1 tbsp toasted pumpkin seeds
	1 tsp caraway seeds
	olive oil

METHOD

- Pre-heat the oven to 180°C. Remove the pumpkin’s skin and seeds, setting the latter aside if using instead of shop-bought pumpkin seeds. Cut the flesh into bite-size pieces. Arrange the pumpkin pieces on a baking tray and drizzle with olive oil, caraway seeds and salt and pepper. Roast in the oven for 15-20 minutes or until soft and slightly crispy on the outside. Leave to cool.
- If using the seeds from the pumpkin, wash them and use a roasting recipe to prepare them. If using ready-prepared seeds, toast them lightly in a frying pan for a minute or so, no oil needed.
- Serve by layering the roasted pumpkin over a dish of salad leaves, then tear the goat’s cheese into and arrange them between the pumpkin. Give the whole a good drizzle of olive oil and scatter the toasted pumpkin seeds across the top. Finally, an extra turn of salt and pepper will add the final seasoning to this simple starter. ▶





'Add a mix of textiles from brushed cotton to slubby linens to indicate a change from the lighter days of summer'

Extending the season

ABOVE Walls, Puck, £37 for 1l Intelligent Eggshell, Little Greene; Tangier Mustard Stripe frilly cushion, £75, Alice Palmer & Co; Orange Gingham cushion, £42, Poppy & Honesty; Cushion in Palampore, Autumn, £156 a metre, George Spencer Designs

There are several ways to savour the end of summer by taking inspiration from the warm colours of dahlias and adopting them into home decorating schemes in preparation for autumn days ahead.

Ways of doing this can be as simple as adding a few new cushions to a bench or sofa, together with cosy wool check blankets. Consider ruffle-edged cushions in gingham or stripes in butter yellow, coral, deep orange and warm pinks. Patterns can be directly taken from dahlias or choose ditsy prints in two tones of mustard and ivory. Combine florals

with bold stripes and oversized gingham checks to keep the look layered.

Give an entrance or dining space a fresh new look with warm honey, plaster pink or brighter bold green paint colours. Think about adding textures, vintage wooden furniture, terracotta floor tiles, woven natural rugs and a mix of textiles from brushed cotton to slubby linens as these will all indicate a change from the lighter days of summer. Velvets work well for window treatments going into the cooler months as they will keep drafts at bay.

What to do in SEPTEMBER

Savour tarts and pies bursting with fruit fresh from the branch, linger for longer with the warmth of a candle, add an extra layer on beds for comfort and create a vignette that is forever summer

HARVEST... *orchard fruits*

English favourites such as apples, pears and plums that are ripe for picking make wonderful seasonal preserves, purées, sauces and crumbles that allow us to really savour the changing of the season. Even figs, usually associated with warmer Mediterranean and African climates, still manage to grow here and produce an abundance of fruit if planted in a sunny, south-facing spot. All these fruits are ideal for eating straight from the branch: simply wash well with running water and enjoy their tart fresh flavour with a generous spoonful of Greek yoghurt, a drizzle of honey and a sprinkling of toasted pistachios or almonds. Or use slices of apples, pears or plums to infuse a jug of water for the table with a fresh hint of late-summer sweetness. Simply add to the water and leave in for around four hours before straining through a sieve. ▶

Flora hand-painted jug, £54, Rowen & Wren





EAT... *pears*

British pears begin to be ready for harvesting from late August through to October, depending on the variety. They can be stored, and many will continue to ripen after picking, so they are best picked before reaching maturity. Enjoy succulent pears teamed with the sweet flavour of almonds in this elegant tart. Serve to family and friends and feel transported to France.



TARTE BOURDALOUE – ALMOND, PEAR AND TONKA BEAN TART

Serves 8

INGREDIENTS

Special equipment:

23–25cm fluted tart tin

For the pastry:

100g salted butter at room temperature, diced

2 tsp caster sugar

a pinch of salt

175g plain flour, plus extra for dusting

1 egg yolk

2 tbs whole milk

For the almond cream:

120g salted butter, at room temperature

90g caster sugar

2 medium eggs

120g ground almonds

½ grated tonka bean

1 tsp plain flour

4 ripe pears

flaked almonds, to scatter over the top

icing sugar, to dust

METHOD

- To make the pastry, in a bowl, crumble the butter with the sugar, pinch of salt and flour, then add the egg yolk and milk and quickly mix to form a ball of dough. Do not worry if it is not fully smooth; it is better not to overwork the dough. Cover and put it in the fridge for 20 minutes.
- To make the almond cream, in a bowl, cream the butter and sugar together with a spatula. Add the eggs and whisk well. Stir in the ground almonds, grated tonka bean and flour, then set aside.
- Take the pastry from the fridge, flour the worktop and use a rolling pin to roll out a circle of pastry larger than the tin and 3–4mm thick. Gently line the tart tin with it, press it into the sides and trim away the excess pastry, creating neat edges. Use a fork to prick a few holes in the base of the pastry and place the tin in the fridge for 20 minutes, or the freezer for 5 minutes.
- Preheat the oven to 180°C fan/400°F/gas 6.
- Prepare the pears. Peel and core them, then slice in half from top to bottom. Slice each half thinly, keeping the slices attached at the base. Place the pears at the bottom of the tin, fanning out the slices, then fill the empty spaces with the almond cream. Sprinkle over some flaked almonds and bake for 35–40 minutes, until golden on top.
- Serve warm or cold, dusted with icing sugar.

GATHER... *candles in seasonal hues*

Create gentle pools of light for late-summer entertaining. Tall elegant dinner candles are ideal, particularly when displayed in artisan candlesticks – seek ribbed or bobbled glass designs in mellow oranges and greens as a lighter, more delicate alternative to wood and ceramic models. These will add an extra special feel to any table setting, particularly when the candles they hold are lit, as the light will bounce off the glass detail beautifully. Group together to create a centrepiece of welcome glow as the evening draws in. ▶

Ombo glass candlestick, Amber, £38; Buto glass candlestick, Green, £35; Luxor glass candlestick, Clear, £27, all Issy Granger





UPDATE... *the bedroom*

Give the bedroom a gentle makeover so it feels that little bit more indulgent, ready for the season ahead. For a dreamy approach try a look that echoes the romance of a Provencal chateau or the ornate style of a grand Venetian palazzo with a few select luxurious touches such as an antique bedstead, chest of drawers or even a few gilt-framed oil paintings on the wall. Then add comfort and luxury with a new set of pure linen bedding, a co-ordinating throw for autumn layering and plenty of plump pillows. Nothing beats the sensation of sleeping on

natural linen and it is an investment well worth making. Not only is it a hugely sustainable material, but 100 per cent pure linen is antibacterial with fabulous temperature-regulating properties. It will keep those in bed cool in hot weather and warm when the temperature drops. Why not make it more special with a monogrammed pillowcase or two to complete the look?

Hemstitch Pink bedding from £30 for a pillowcase; Tea Rose/Terracotta dual colour linen throw, £395, all Volga Linen

CREATE... *a seasonal display*

Set the scene in a hallway, on a landing or in a corner of a living room with a curated collection of everyday objects in a unifying colour palette that resonates with the end of summer. Pieces naturally weathered by the elements are always good for creating a sense of rustic calm. Consider a vintage wooden gardening sieve or seed tray, an array of tiny terracotta pots or even an earthenware jug or bottle filled with seasonal seed pods or the last of the garden roses. This exquisite palette of sophisticated neutrals will look particularly striking when displayed against a wall of a similar hue, or a pretty wallcovering with a naive spot or stripe detail. ■

Wallpaper, Spotty Stripe, Limestone, £58 a roll, Vanessa Arbuthnott





Touring in STYLE

This autumn, dash through the British countryside on a classic train that combines the finest traditional details with indulgent modern touches to create a glamorous backdrop for a truly memorable journey

ABOVE The Royal Scotsman takes a scenic route so passengers can fully absorb the dramatic Scottish countryside. To book any trips on the British Pullman and Royal Scotsman visit belmond.com/contactus

The nostalgic romance of the golden era of train travel (from around the 1920s) is recreated today on a select number of lovingly restored classic British trains, which capture the elegance of travelling by rail in its heyday.

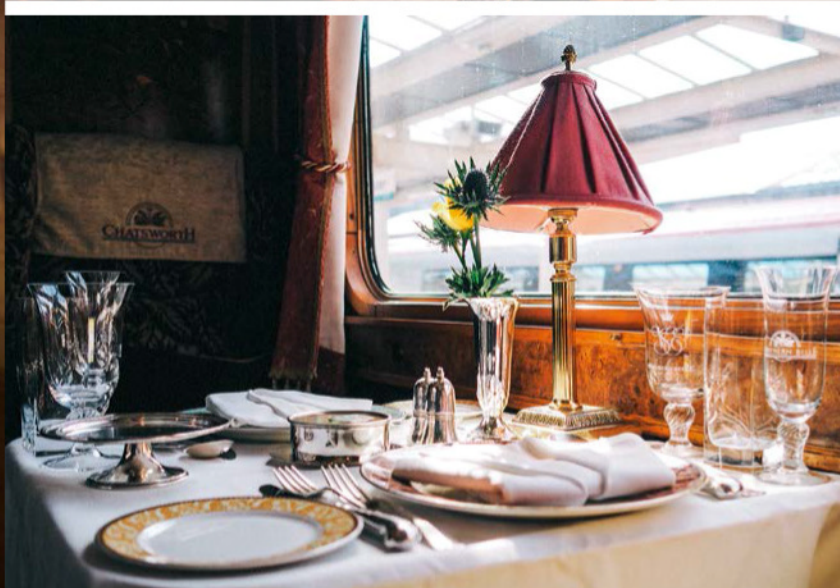
Travelling tales

Departing from London's Victoria station, the British Pullman train originates from the glory days of early 20th-century rail travel, and its impressive past includes appearing on the silver screen as well as being a favourite for Royal excursions. Today, the train comprises of 11 carriages, each with its own name and interior decoration story – from the Audrey's art deco strip lights and scenic landscape panels to the Ibis's intricate marquetry of Greek girls dancing. Each carriage is designed to evoke a different atmosphere for its passengers.

As a counterpoint to the period details of the other cars, the Cygnus offers something a little different. This carriage, which featured in the 1972 film *Agatha*,

has been redesigned by film director Wes Anderson in his inimitable style. The interior's classic walnut panels remain, while a pastel pink ceiling and emerald green upholstery bring a sumptuous finishing touch. For a truly exclusive experience, Cygnus passengers can opt for a private coupe.

The British Pullman offers a range of trips, from journeys to historic destinations such as Highclere Castle in Hampshire, to 'moving murder mysteries' that passengers can enjoy participating in while on board. There is also a selection of journeys with a modern sense of luxury and this autumn trips to highlight include those appealing to foodies, such as Michelin-starred Spanish chef Nieves Barragán Mohacho's five-course tasting menu served with champagne. There is also a trip to Herbert Hall winery in Kent, which includes a three-course brunch made using seasonal produce served on the outward journey, a tour of the winery, a talk about winemaking, all rounded off with a three-course dinner and wine on the way back to London.



Characterful details

The Northern Belle is a luxurious 1930s train, which was once part of the iconic Orient Express group, and it has been meticulously refurbished to celebrate its original decorative craftsmanship. Each one of its Pullman-style carriages has its own distinctive interior showcasing artwork, mosaics and marquetry, much of which has been restored using traditional techniques by British marquetry and furniture specialist A Dunn & Son, a company also entrusted with crafting the Ballroom floor at Buckingham Palace.

The carriages are all at least 50 years old and their individual style evokes a sense of period charm with intricate details and iconic imagery. The Duart carriage, for several years the Royal Train and used by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, features a marquetry motif of the Royal Castle on the Isle of Mull. The train also has a boutique selling homeware, accessories and confectionery.

While there is no official dress code on board the Northern Belle (aside from formal dress codes for

events such as trips to Royal Ascot), passengers are usually inspired to dress up. Dining on board ranges from champagne afternoon teas to formal meals, with celebrity chefs Raymond Blanc and James Martin both having served food on board for exclusive trips. The Northern Belle has resident musicians and a conjuror to entertain passengers as they dine.

Departing from different stations across the country, the Northern Belle offers a selection of diverse experiences including trips to visit historic venues, such as Castle Howard in Yorkshire, and excursions to shopping destinations such as Harrogate. This autumn, to mark the 100th anniversary of the Flying Scotsman, the Northern Belle is teaming up with this famous locomotive for a memorable trip from York to Edinburgh – where passengers can explore the city or visit The Royal Yacht Britannia. The trip includes champagne on arrival, a three-course brunch and a sumptuous six-course dinner on the journey home. ▶

TOP LEFT The British Pullman's Audrey carriage has been proudly used by several generations of the Royal family.

ABOVE The Cygnus carriage on the British Pullman, recently redesigned by Wes Anderson, can be hired for private events too.

ABOVE RIGHT A table set for a delicious repast on the Northern Belle. To book any trips, visit northernbelle.co.uk



Panoramic landscapes

Blending original design with lavish modern-day features, the Royal Scotsman is a harmonious marriage of classic and contemporary style. Launched in 1985, the train has 10 carriages and it was converted into its current luxury configuration in 1989.

Described as capturing the aesthetic of an Edwardian English country house, the inviting decor includes ornate wooden panelling and a refined mix of heritage fabrics and designs. The carriages include a spacious observation car, designed for passengers to appreciate the wild landscape of the Scottish Highlands from an ideal vantage point. For those wishing to absorb the dramatic scenery in comfort, the carriage encompasses sofas and armchairs and an open-air veranda that provides a more engaging outdoor experience.

In contrast to looking out upon the wilderness, the Dior Spa carriage offers an exclusive spa experience – being the only one of its kind in Europe. Inspired by fashion designer Christian Dior’s love of Scotland, there are two treatment rooms in the spa carriage, both decorated in the French fashion house’s iconic burgundy toile de Jouy motif. Passengers can take the

opportunity to relax with treatments including Bamford facials and massages.

From experiencing the rugged landscape of the Highlands to touring Scotland’s castles, waterfalls and isles, the Royal Scotsman specialises in tours and activities in the Scottish countryside. Each journey starts and ends in Edinburgh and there are different trips of various lengths – from two to seven nights – on offer. For sleeping onboard the train, there are four single cabins, 15 twin cabins and three double cabins. Created as luxurious Edwardian-style havens, each is equipped with an en-suite shower room, a wardrobe, a desk and a picture window to enjoy the view.

The trips include celebrations of traditional Scottish heritage – from enjoying local food to entertainment such as ceilidhs. This autumn, the Royal Scotsman presents The Ultimate Whisky Odyssey, a three-night journey touring leading distilleries and the Rothiemurchus Estate in the heart of the Cairngorms. The trip also features fine dining and entertainment on board the train and a private jet to Islay to visit the renowned Ardbeg distillery. ■

TOP LEFT Activities available during tour stops on the Royal Scotsman include Highland safaris and visits to country estates.

ABOVE The train’s bedrooms emulate country house style. Two new grand suites are due to be unveiled in May 2024.

BOTTOM LEFT The observation car is decorated to reflect the tones of the Scottish countryside, and the bar offers a choice of 50 whiskies to add to the indulgent mood.

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ON SALE
AUGUST 30 2023
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Skye in her kitchen, enjoying pasta served on her Tavola tableware.

BELOW The vintage dresser found at a flea market in Brussels.



My English Home

Cook and food writer Skye McAlpine grew up in Venice with her father, the late Lord McAlpine and her mother, Romilly. Today she lives between Venice and London with her young family



Where is your English home and who do you live with?

I live in a tall Victorian terraced townhouse overlooking a park in London, with my husband, Anthony, and sons, Aeneas, 10 and Achille, four.

What first attracted you to it?

I love a problem property. My husband found the house online. It looked sad and needed a lot of work, but it was affordable. I'm always going to want to redo a house to make it feel like ours. You can't really justify that if it's in beautiful condition and just not to taste, but you can if it is falling apart!

Did you have help making the house your home?

Initially, I thought it would be a slow-moving project. Then I became pregnant, so suddenly we had a three-month schedule. Our friend, the architect Ben Pentreath, took over the reins. He helped us to gut the whole house, rework the layout, plumbing, everything. We moved in the week my younger son was born.

Did growing up in Venice inspire your interiors style?

I love the grand palazzos with their crumbling walls, the feeling of history and layers of stories. I like to embrace imperfection; imperfection is a form of perfection. I didn't want our house to feel perfectly done and somewhere we'd spend our time terrified of scratching surfaces. I didn't want the boys to grow up in a home where they couldn't have fun or sit on the sofa. Our solution is to use things that already have age, their own story and patina. We travelled to Brussels to the flea markets and bought vintage furniture and light fittings to incorporate into the design. For me that creates a relaxed, homely and special feeling.

Can you tell us about the kitchen?

It's on the first floor, in the best room of the house, which was appealing to me. We knocked through to the hallway to increase the space and light, and we put in reclaimed herringbone parquet floor from Lassco, and mouldings to restore some Victorian character. We wanted the space to be flexible, so we bought a massive vintage dresser (left), and added wheels and a marble top to a reclaimed workbench, which is useful for food photography as well as entertaining.

Is your love of entertaining behind your brand Tavola?

I love cooking, but more than that, I love having friends over and hosting. My philosophy is about taking good ingredients and doing something simple to create something memorable. Using a pretty plate means you can be proud to serve something simple that's impressive. I decided there was a need to create a collection of ceramics and glasses, made in Italy where they have a long tradition of craftsmanship, so that they could be handmade and playful but more practical than the vintage and antique pieces that I'd collected but aren't dishwasher friendly.

What is your most treasured possession?

My Lacanche cooker. It's huge, as big as the kitchen and Ben was tasked with making it work. I love it. It's my third child!

Finally, what should no English home be without?

A comfy sofa. British people do sofas really well. ■

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