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2023 DECORATING GUIDE

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# CONTENTS

## 2023 INTERIOR DESIGN GUIDE

FROM *THE ENGLISH HOME* MAGAZINE













## Planning


**13** **A SURE START** Plan carefully before decorating for perfect results.

**14** **SITTING PRETTY** A guide to balancing comfort, decorative appeal and practicality for a timeless sitting room.

**24** **TAILORED TO FIT** How to design the ultimate multipurpose kitchen, whatever its size.

**34** **PLANNING A LIGHTING SCHEME** Create the right ambience throughout the home with well-designed lighting.

**45** **CREATING THE ULTIMATE TOWNHOUSE BATHROOM** Expert advice on composing a luxurious sanctuary in the city.

**53** **CREATING THE ULTIMATE COUNTRY BATHROOM** Key elements for a beautiful, relaxing and practical bathroom in a rural setting.

**61** **FLOOR SHOW** A comprehensive guide for selecting carpets and rugs with desirable qualities and timeless style.

**70** **FIRM FAVOURITES** Hard flooring best suited for different rooms in the home, from timber to porcelain.

**79** **HERITAGE REVIVAL** Specialist advice on restoring and reinstating original architectural features in period homes.

**86** **THE CONSIDERED COUNTRY HOME** Expert guidance from leading designers and specialists on working with rural abodes.


## Decorating


**93** **WELL DRESSED** Fabrics, wallpapers and paints add the finishing touches for a polished new look.





**94 CREATING A JOYFUL HOME** Design uplifting interiors through confident use of colour, pattern and texture.

**102 DRESSED FOR DINNER** Rejuvenate formal dining rooms with luxurious furnishings and finishing touches.

**111 BEDDED BLISS** Expert guidance on creating calm, classic and romantic schemes with soothing, stylish decor.

**120 OPEN-AIR STYLE** Outdoor furnishings perfectly suited and practical for country or town gardens.


## Resources

Top brands, stockists and designers.


**22 RESOURCES FOR SITTING ROOMS**

**32 EXPERT RESOURCES FOR KITCHENS**

**42 LIGHTING SPECIALISTS AND SUPPLIERS**

**58 BATHROOM DESIGN RESOURCES**

**68 SUPPLIERS OF CARPETS AND RUGS**

**76 SOURCES OF QUALITY HARD FLOORING**

**84 PERIOD FIXTURES AND FITTINGS**

**101 EVERYTHING FOR A COLOURFUL, UPLIFTING INTERIOR**

**108 RESOURCES FOR DINING ROOMS**

**118 BEDROOM FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES**

**128 OUTDOOR FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES**


## Plus


**6 A LETTER FROM HOME** A welcome from our Editor.

**52 SUBSCRIPTION OFFER** to our parent title *The English Home.*





NB All prices in this publication were correct at time of going to press.



*Fabrics and wallpapers from Cotswolds Manor collection, Zoffany*



# *A letter from home*

The interior designers we work with regularly all seem to be in agreement about one important point – that a successful English home is much more than a series of rooms that look beautiful. A home needs to be tailor-made for its inhabitants. Each space needs to be carefully considered so that it includes all of the practical requirements to be comfortable. Lifestyles need to be taken into account, and changes in how needs might evolve in the coming years also need to be identified and catered for before layers of decoration can be added. As interior designer Alidad told me recently, "If I was to finish a project and the client tells me they need one more cupboard added, then however wonderful it looks, I have failed with my design."

*Interior Design* is, therefore, a comprehensive guide to planning spaces that work hard to suit a range of lifestyles, as well as offering inspiration for those all-important finishing touches that make a home sing and reflect the owner's unique personality and taste.

We have consulted a vast number of experts and designers to bring you the definitive guide to creative solutions for every room of the house that can be adapted to your unique design brief. Full of ideas, advice and inspiration, this is a vital companion to designing successful schemes, and one we hope you'll turn to time and time again, as you plan, decorate and refine life in your own English home.

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor

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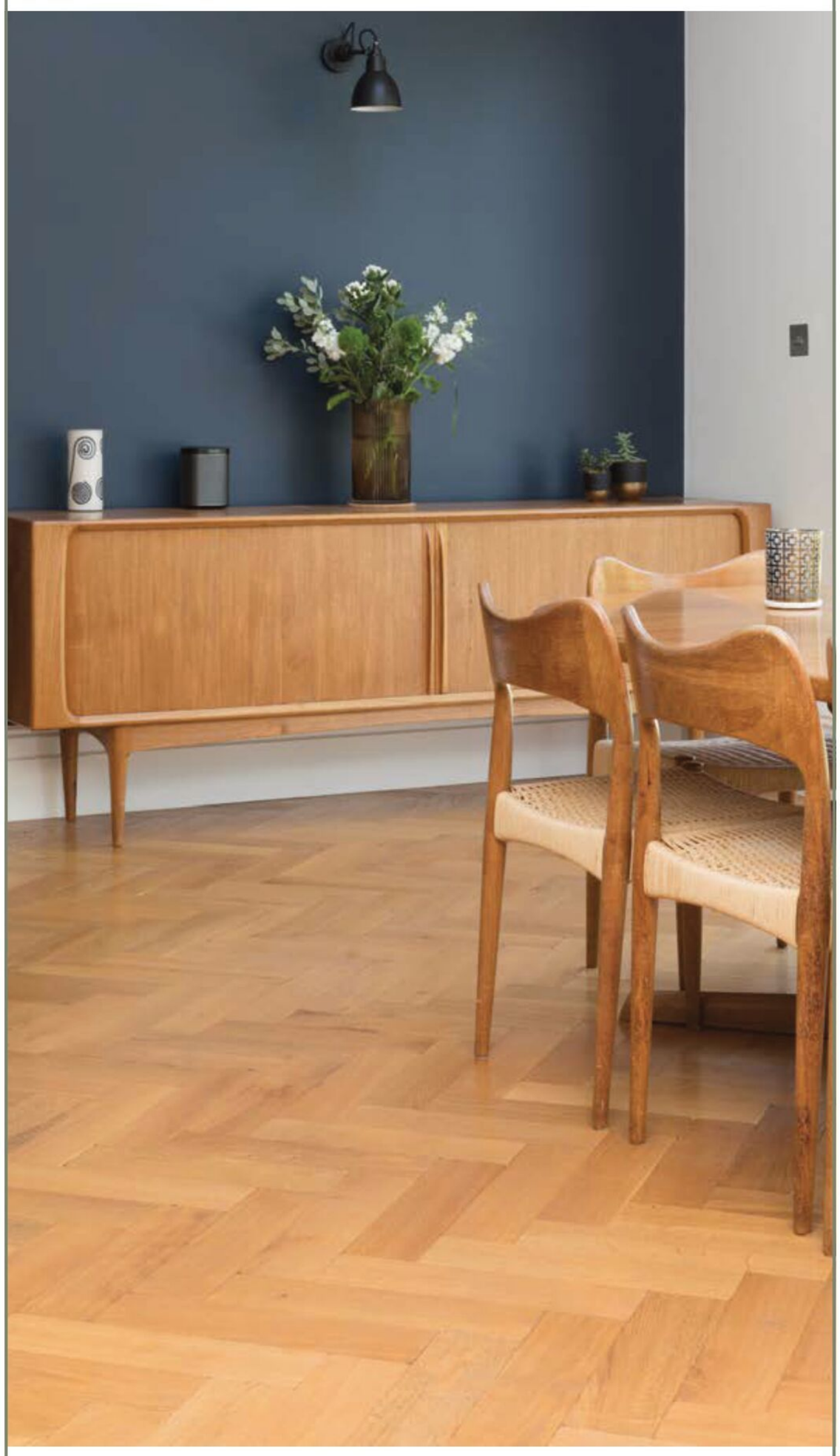
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**THE ENGLISH HOME (UK EDITION)** ISSN 2631-7346 (PRINT)

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CURRENCY At the time of going to press the exchange rate is US$1.11/C$1.53 to £1 sterling. Please be aware this will fluctuate on a daily basis.

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**Canada** C$49.95 (6 issues).
Includes GST/postage surcharge.
**UK** £72 (12 issues)
**Rest of world** £90 (12 issues)

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**USA PUBLICATION DETAILS**

THE ENGLISH HOME (ISSN 1468-0238) (USPS 018-446) is published bi-monthly by The Chelsea Magazine Company Ltd, Jubilee House, 2 Jubilee Place, London SW3 3TQ, UK.
Distributed in the US by NPS Media Group,
2 Enterprise Drive, Suite 420,
Shelton, CT 06484, USA.
Periodicals postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE ENGLISH HOME, PO Box 37518,
Boone, IA 50037-0518, USA

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# PLANNING A ROOM

Our expert guides to ensuring all elements are carefully considered from the outset



## A SURE START

Though the desired finished look for a room is often at the forefront when redecorating, time spent planning at the beginning will pay dividends and ensure a result that looks not only polished but performs well too. From layouts to show the best positions for electrical outlets and plumbing to choosing the most appropriate flooring and lighting, we advise on the decisions to be made before indulging in those beautiful new curtains.

*Curtains, Paradiso, Indigo, £125 a metre, Jane Churchill at Colefax and Fowler*

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN

Bespoke artwork by Miles Negus-Fancey integrated into wall panelling sets the decorative tone for this country scheme by interior designer Jojo Bradley.

# SITTING PRETTY

## *The Perfect English Sitting Room*

When it comes to creating a beautiful space for relaxing with the family or entertaining guests, a considered balance of comfort, decorative appeal and practicality will stand the test of time

Few rooms are called upon to fill as many functions as the sitting room. A space for hosting as well as retreating, it serves as both showcase and sanctuary. It is a place to read and rest, to gather as a family or entertain friends. While the kitchen is often considered the heart of the home, a sitting room, with its blend of form and function, may well reveal more about the signature style of its occupants than any other space. Nancy Lancaster and John Fowler's Yellow Room at 39 Brook Street, created in 1957, is perhaps the most famous of English sitting rooms. From its glossy yellow hues to its convivial furniture arrangement, it provided the blueprint for living areas as we know them today – an informal blend of grandeur and intimacy, colour and texture, *objets d'art* and personal artefacts. The result is an easy layering that chimes with Fowler's still pertinent view that a successful sitting room should be "essentially comfortable, not only to the body but to the eye". ▶








Floor lamps with integrated table tops are elegant and practical in compact spaces as in this design by Emma Benyon.

TOP In this scheme by Studio Duggan, a soft palette of rose pinks and taupes is extended to the built-in joinery for an elegant feel.

ABOVE A top floor London apartment renovated by Gunter & Co features a convivial furniture arrangement centred around a reclaimed fireplace.

## *In The Zone*

A considered layout is the starting point. "There is a subliminal message from rooms that are beautiful and also comfortable – they read well and look inherently inviting," believes interior designer Susan Deliss. "Simplicity is key. Don't make it difficult for people to move around; avoid trip hazards and accentuate attractive views."

A successful sitting room, whether large or small, will deliver space to access seating easily, giving an uncluttered feel. There should be ample options for guests and an arrangement that makes for easy conversation. That might mean a sofa facing a pair of armchairs, two sofas facing one another or a relaxed L-shaped or triangular formation, with side tables nearby for resting drinks. If space is limited, resist filling it with small pieces. Instead, opt for fewer, more generously proportioned items of furniture, balanced with lightweight silhouettes to create interest – try juxtaposing deep sofas with a slimline console, or a chunky coffee table with a pair of delicate side tables.

Stools are useful for providing extra seats that can be tucked away when not in use. "An ottoman is a great way to add pattern and texture while offering hidden storage," says Kitesgrove's Katie Lion. "Conversely, in a very big sitting room, don't be tempted to push the furniture to the perimeter of the space to leave more room in the centre – this can result in a draughty and unwelcoming feel."

In fact, in both spacious and compact schemes, a zoned approach instils a sense of intimacy. "With this in mind, we often place a fender or small seats near the fire for perching," says Mary Graham of Salvesen





Graham. "We also position furniture close together to prevent guests from needing to raise their voices if seated opposite each other."

Symmetry is a useful tool for injecting tranquillity, whether through a pair of table lights, painted alcove joinery, artwork or chairs. A good approach is to introduce a broadly symmetrical configuration and then blend in asymmetrical additions, from clusters of decorative items to contrasting upholstery, offsetting formality. "Incorporate unusual furniture pieces too," suggests Albion Nord's Camilla Clarke. "A bookshelf doesn't have to be conventional; use something unexpected as an alternative. You can stack books on a bar cart, on the mantelpiece or on a windowsill."

Technology can be challenging to integrate with the room's decor. One approach is to disguise it within bespoke cabinetry that also incorporates display shelving, which works especially well if joinery is painted in a dark tone. "We have also installed televisions that look like mirrors, hidden monitors within bookcases and added screens that roll up seamlessly into the ceiling," says interior designer Emma Sims-Hilditch. Another option is to incorporate technology as part of the room's function. "Sometimes, it's better to accept that you're going to be able to see a TV and speakers and specify the nicest looking that you can," advises Fentiman Design's Ciara Ephson. "I've recently used the Samsung Frame TV, whose screens can be disguised as artwork. We tend to avoid built-in speakers as they are often defunct within a few years, so discreet freestanding options are usually preferable."

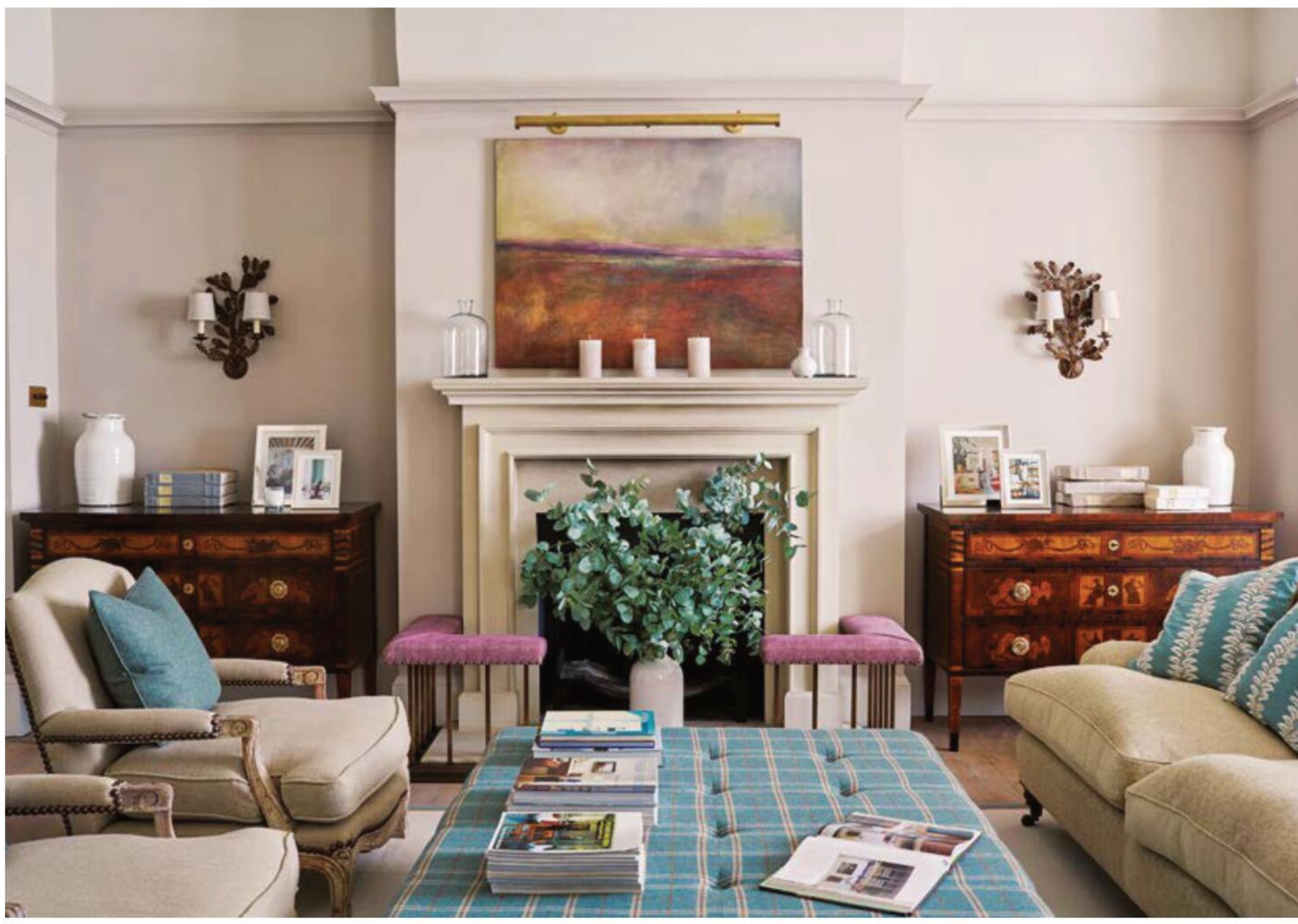
ABOVE LEFT In this design by Albion Nord, an ornate fire surround is contemporised by simple furniture and natural textures. An upholstered fender provides additional seating for guests.

ABOVE RIGHT This pretty scheme by Kitesgrove is grounded by a botanic curtain fabric by Soane and an ottoman upholstered in a subtle herringbone by Holland & Sherry.

BELOW A country sitting room by Susan Deliss features a selection of contrasting fabrics that complement one another. The framed botanical prints provide a note of symmetry.









TOP LEFT A relaxed scheme by Salvesen Graham features comfortable occasional seating, as well as a mix of wall and table lamps.

TOP RIGHT This room by Sims-Hilditch has a pleasing sense of symmetry with a pair of antique consoles in each alcove with wall lights centred above.

ABOVE In this semi-open plan scheme by Laura Stephens, shades of green on the walls and accessories bring the outside in.

## *The Right Light*

Ambient lighting is essential in creating a relaxing atmosphere. Observe the amount of natural light already in the room. If it features tall windows, less lighting will be required; a sitting room with small windows will require some artificial light during the daytime as well as evenings. "I like to include accents in the form of table lamps and reading lights for those moments of solitude with a book or newspaper," says Katie Lion. "Table lamps bring softer lighting to the room, and unusual, colourful shades draw the eye to new textures and tones." Antique lighting is a clever way to incorporate vintage pieces into a sitting room, not only adding to the aesthetic but providing a key functional element. If scale allows, a large statement chandelier or pendant light can be impactful, but bear in mind that bright lighting can be uncomfortable to sit in (as well as unflattering), so lower-wattage bulbs are crucial.

Installing dimmers on separate circuits controlled from wall switches will allow for a flexible, layered approach. "I opt for three circuits – one for pendant, one for wall, one for side lights," says interior designer Laura Stephens. "I also often place wall lights either side of a mirror or a piece of art on a chimney breast, or perhaps at the alcoves either side. I also like to use a console behind a sofa with two matching lamps atop for a symmetrical note – pleated fabric shades create an attractive diffused light."

Bear in mind that the style of lighting will set the decorative tone of the scheme. "Patterned fabric lampshades offer a more traditional, country-inspired feel, while matt metals and chromes add a contemporary note," says Pooky founder Rohan Blacker. "Mixing materials – blending soft, patterned shades with angular shapes, such as poised reading lights, is a good way to add depth to a scheme."





ABOVE Built-in joinery featuring a combination of storage adds depth and practicality to this sitting room by Fentiman Design.

BELOW A sculptural wall light from Pooky and a powder blue painted finish contemporises classic built-in library storage.





ABOVE Nicola Harding's reworking of a sitting room in an 18th-century home features walls in Pure & Original's Skin Powder.
A geometric rug anchors the scheme

LEFT In this scheme by Salvesen Graham, multiple prints, from leopard skin to modern chevrons, along with complementary lighting, build a richly layered look.





ABOVE Bold floral prints lend the back of a pair of armchairs fresh appeal in a scheme by French-Brooks Interiors that plays on symmetry to create a sense of formality.

RIGHT Neutral walls in Benjamin Moore's Frappe paint elevate the architectural detailing of this classic scheme.



## *Statement Style*

Sitting rooms benefit from a dynamic, decorative approach, because a combination of texture, pattern and colour produces a mellow appeal associated with relaxed schemes that have evolved over time. "There is little that feels satisfying about a 'flat' design," says Camilla Clarke. "Texture is a vital ingredient to activate our sight and touch senses. Try mixing different materials, such as natural linens with soft velvets or robust leathers with thick wools."

Building a scheme around a focal piece or a key decorative element is often a good approach. Rugs offer excellent anchoring appeal, both as a way to unify and zone a space and to kickstart a colour palette. As a general rule, make sure seating fits comfortably onto the rug. In smaller rooms, aim for a rug that fits as much under the main seating area as possible – the front legs of sofas at the minimum. Small decorative details, such as echoing the whip edging of a rug in the trim of a blind or window treatment, can instantly smarten a look. Buy with longevity in mind, treating the acquisition of a rug in the same considered way as purchasing a key piece of furniture.

An artwork or a statement piece can be a good starting point for a scheme in the absence of period features. "There are plenty of options to add interest in a room lacking architectural detailing," says interior





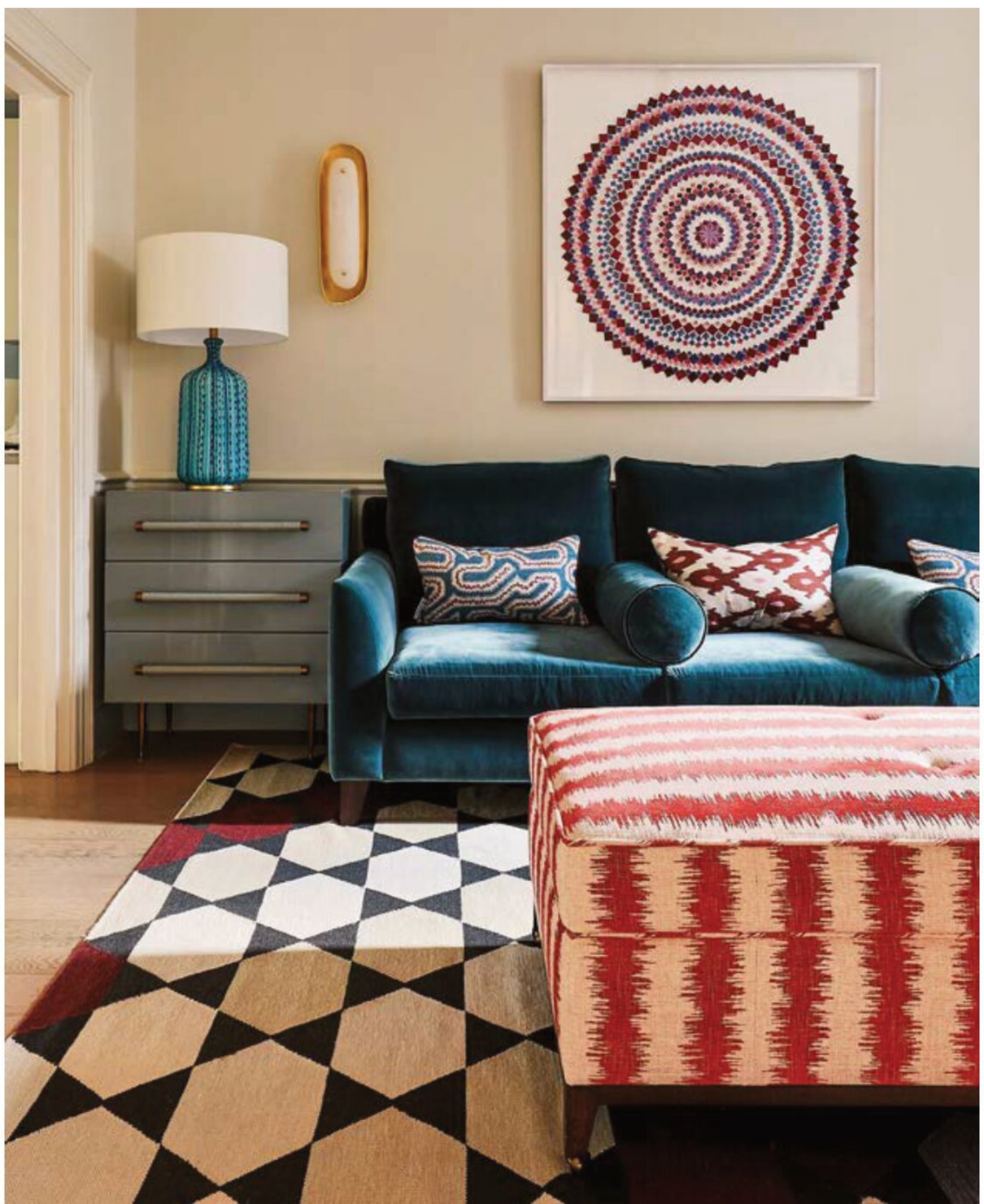


ABOVE LEFT A pair of mid-century timber shelving units makes a striking alternative to built-in alcove joinery in this London sitting room by Gunter & Co.

LEFT An extra-wide leather-finished ottoman echoes the shape of the artwork for structured appeal in this classic room designed by Gunter & Co.

ABOVE Joinery finished in deep aubergine provides a decorative and functional focal point in this relaxed space by Studio Duggan.

BELOW Bold colours and shaping, from geometrics to feathered prints, add scale and depth to this sitting room design by Henry Prideaux.



designer Henry Prideaux. "Shaped cutouts in walls, recessed niches for artwork or other displays, shadow-gap skirting details or more modern glazing between rooms are all creative additions."

Above all, a personal touch benefits this room more than any other. Once the bones – seating, lighting and occasional furniture – are in place, the details will make a scheme sing. Colourful textiles add comfort and warmth, artwork introduces character, and one-off pieces create a talking point. "Avoid schemes where every detail matches," advises interior designer Irene Gunter. "That can feel too perfect and pristine. Adding an unexpected element that may not be an obvious fit is a way of elevating a layout from comfortable to captivating." ■

**FEATURE** EMMA J PAGE **PHOTOGRAPHS** (JOJO BRADLEY) © COLIN POOLE; (STUDIO DUGGAN) © ALEXANDER JAMES; (GUNTER & CO) © MARY WADSWORTH; (EMMA BENYON, SUSAN DELISS)) © RACHAEL SMITH; (KITESGROVE) © MARK BOLTON; (SALVESEN GRAHAM) © SIMON BROWN; (SIMS HILDITCH) © BRENT DARBY; (FENTIMAN) © KIRSTY NOBLE; (NICOLA HARDING) © PAUL MASSEY; (FRENCH-BROOKS) © JAMES MCDONALD; (BENJAMIN MOORE) © JOHN BESSLER

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ABOVE *A statement chandelier brings a touch of grandeur to this formal yet relaxed sitting room by Sims Hilditch.*

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# Tailored TO FIT

The centre of family life, a busy working area and an inviting social space, the kitchen is the ultimate multi-purpose room. We ask the experts how to fit all these functions into kitchens of every dimension

Size is the main issue for many planning a new kitchen, but, whether large or small, rooms of all dimensions have their advantages, and the most beneficial approach is to embrace the reality of what exists and play to its strengths. Make the most of all available space, remembering that when structural changes are out of the question, shortcomings can be improved by good design. "The adage 'bespoke is best' is true of all spaces as no two families are the same," Richard Moore of Martin Moore says. "A custom-made solution will ensure the kitchen suits the owner's individual property, way of life, and style."

Here we look at inspiring ways of enhancing different sizes and types of kitchens with a variety of designs to suit both traditional and contemporary tastes.

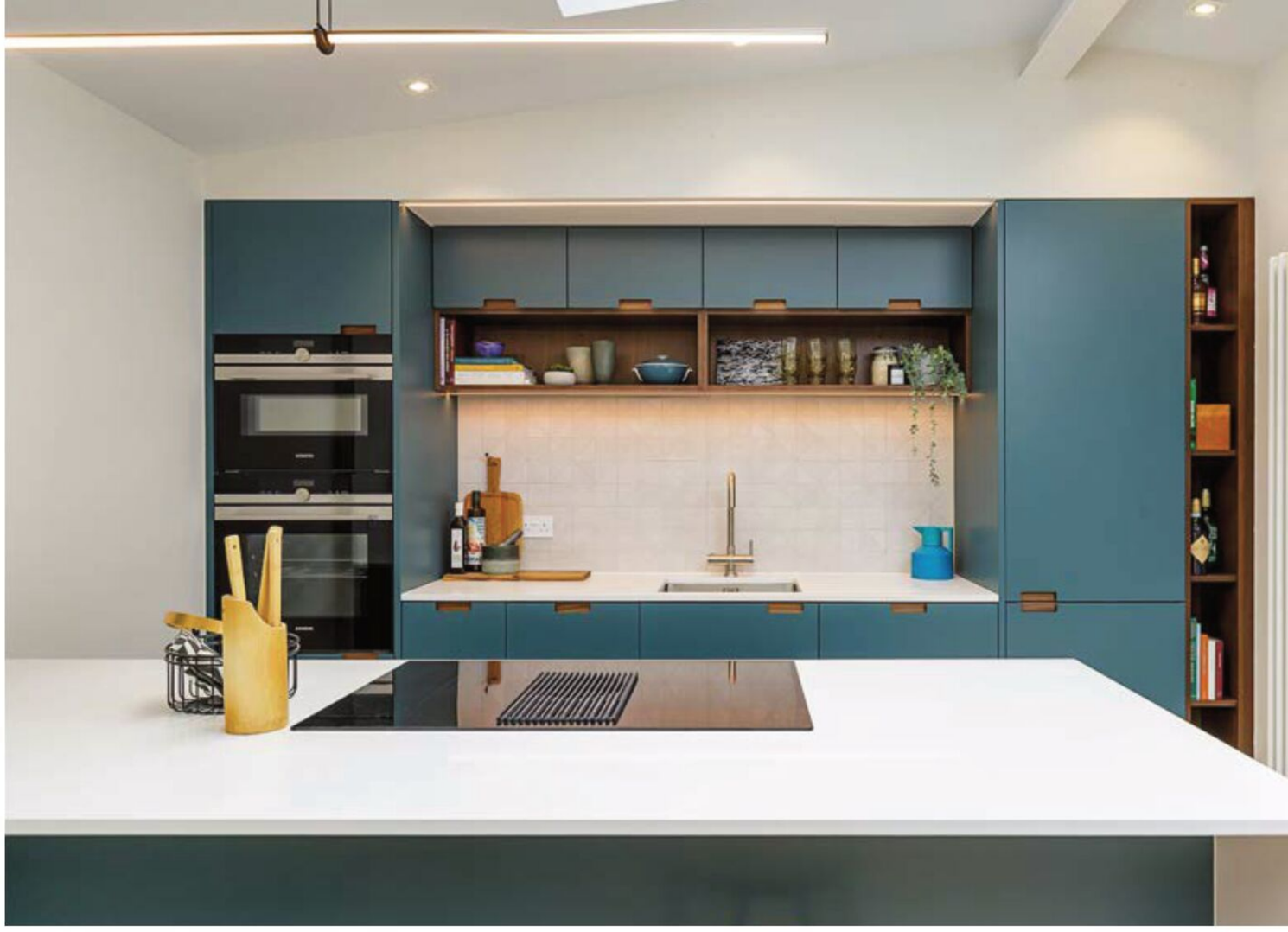
LEFT Classic kitchen in Cashmere Grey with Organic White work surfaces and an antiqued mirror splashback. The extra deep island with integrated banquette seating provides a link to the dining area.
*Kitchen from £30,000, Roundhouse*











# Compact kitchens

ABOVE Sleek doors with cut-out handles help cabinetry recede when part of an open-plan room. *Midgard kitchen, from £12,000, Naked Kitchens*

TOP LEFT Curved cabinet doors give easy access to corner cupboards. *Kitchen from £9,000, The White Kitchen Company*

LEFT Tom Howley's Hartford cabinetry in Chickory brings character to a narrower kitchen. *Kitchen from £20,000, Tom Howley*

FAR LEFT Clever storage is of prime importance when space is at a premium. *Seven-slot in-drawer bamboo knife block, £25, ProCook*

LEFT A space-saving jar and spoon. *Kossi storage jars, from £30, Nkuku*

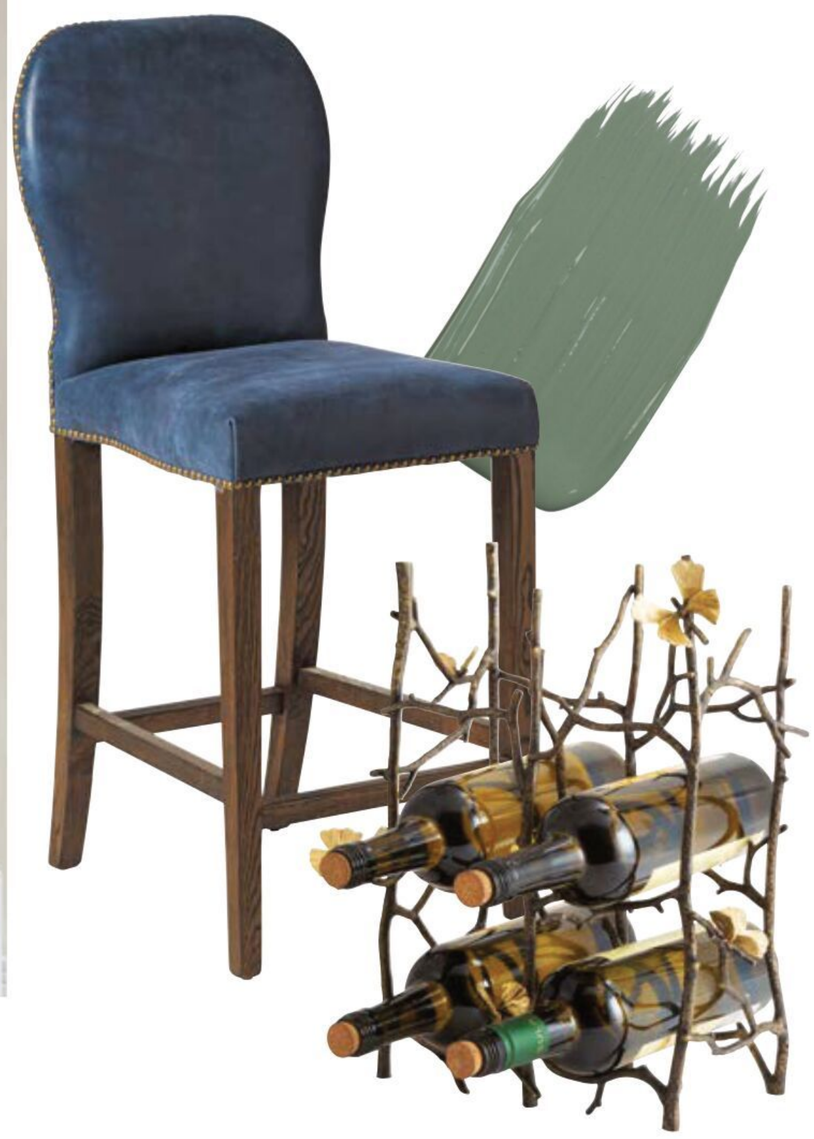
RIGHT This sleek kitchen in oak with Breccia Capraia marble would blend seamlessly in a chic open-plan area. *Intersection kitchen, £POA, Dada*

Planning a kitchen in a compact space can be challenging but working within fixed parameters can help hone priorities and stimulate creativity, resulting in a well-considered, efficient design. Small kitchens take many forms and are generally either separate, self-contained rooms – of the kind found in a modest country cottage or a terraced townhouse – or part of a larger living area, where less space is allocated to cooking than other activities.

The latter is the ideal situation for what Al Bruce of Olive & Barr describes as the one-wall kitchen. "Here, one needs to think vertically and fully utilise the height of the walls," he says. A bank of tall cabinets with integrated appliances and an eye-level oven maximises storage and, teamed with an island unit, is the core of a highly efficient workstation with a neat footprint. Choosing cabinets with a sleek door design in a finish that co-ordinates with other furnishings will allow the kitchen to recede visually when it is not being used.

Small separate kitchens can feel enclosed, but, as Helen Parker of deVOL points out, "Small can be interpreted as intimate, cosy, glamorous and petite – not something to be disappointed by." If the aim is to create an impression of more space, avoiding wall cabinets and leaving space around the windows can be effective.

As most kitchens contain rarely used items, an audit of the contents is likely to reveal equipment and utensils that can be re-homed to make way for frequently used items. Reducing the depth of base units and worktops is a practical way to save space, especially in a galley kitchen, and will make it easier to open cupboard doors and drawers. Depth is needed for the sink and appliances, but elsewhere a shallow countertop can double as a breakfast bar with stools that tuck neatly under it.



ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
A bar stool provides slimline seating.
*Stafford leather bar stool, £750, Oka*
Cabinets painted in a single colour lend a seamless look.
*Sage Advice paint, £49.99 for 2.5l Eggshell / Supreme Matt Emulsion, Dowsing & Reynolds*
Decorative practical items add character to small kitchens.
*Michael Aram wine rack, £399, Amara*

RIGHT The design of this Suffolk kitchen painted in Driftwood incorporates open shelving for a relaxed, individual look.
*Suffolk kitchen, from £14,000, Neptune*
BELOW RIGHT This galley kitchen in a city apartment maximises light and minimal space with shelving and a narrower breakfast bar counter by the window.
*The Real Shaker Kitchen, from £12,000, deVOL*

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *Tips for compact kitchens*

Consider what appliances are needed at the outset. Compact models such as a slimline 450mm-wide dishwasher are good for saving space.
*Jayne Everett, design director, Naked Kitchens*

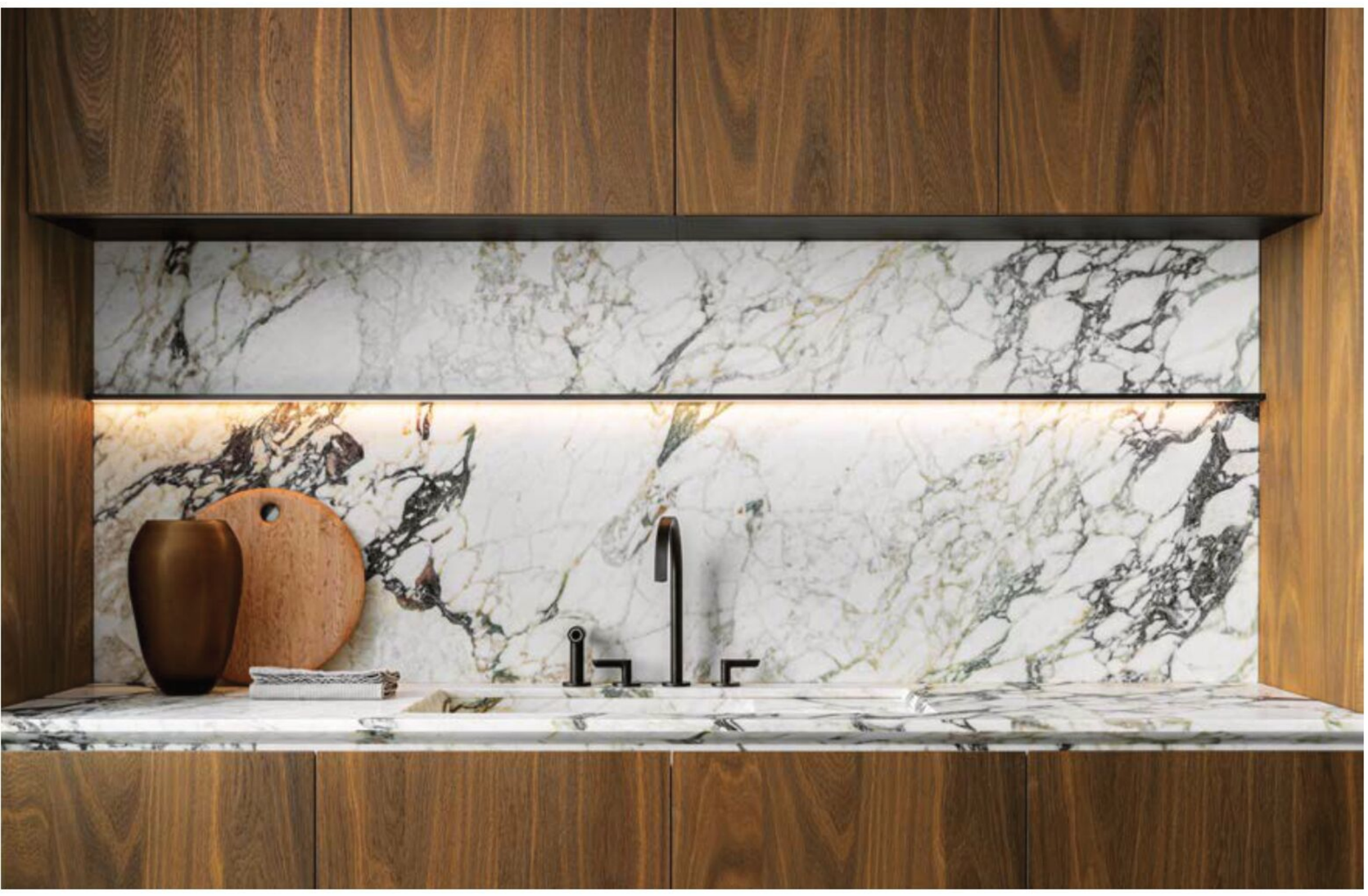
Opt for a single colour throughout to create the illusion of more space. The subtle tonal changes created by combining eggshell or gloss on the joinery and woodwork will add interest.
*Adrian Bergman, design manager, British Standard by Plain English*

Do not crowd the room with cupboards. Avoid wall cabinets and leave plenty of space around windows to allow daylight to flood in.
*Helen Parker, creative director, deVOL*

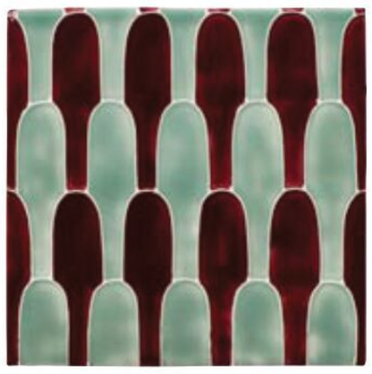
Homeowners with smaller kitchens often assume they do not have room for an island but that is not always the case. Even a narrow island will add extra surface space and a preparation and cooking area.
*Al Bruce, founder, Olive & Barr*







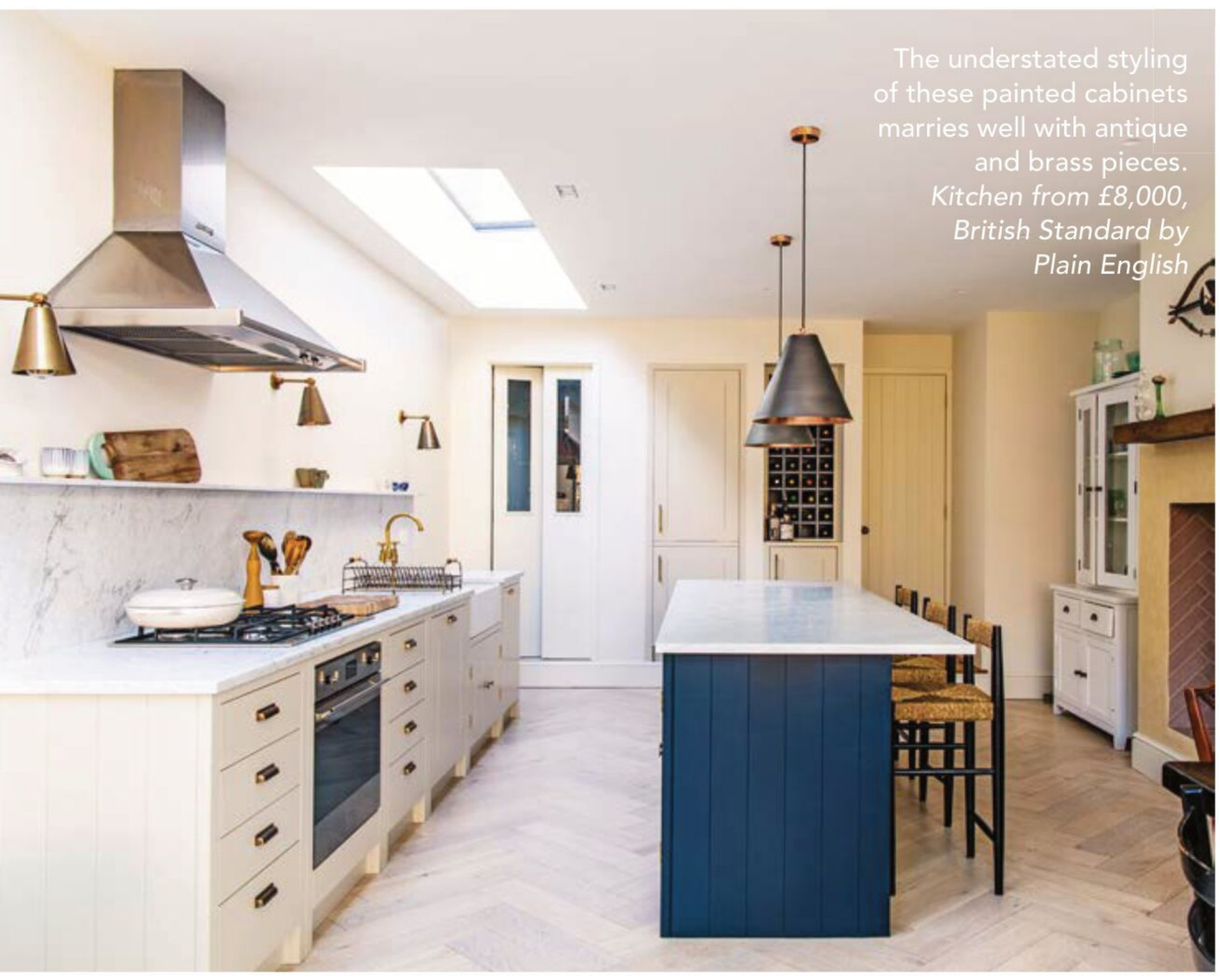
Panelled cabinets from Tom Howley's Hartford range are painted in Tansy, a warm neutral that creates a calm centre of family life. *Tom Howley kitchens from £20,000*





LEFT Smart countertop appliances are must. *Artisan K400 blender, £299, Kitchen Aid*

FAR LEFT Add decorative interest with colourful tiles. *Decorative 9 tile, £23.28, Hanley Tube Lined tiles collection by Balineum*



The understated styling of these painted cabinets marries well with antique and brass pieces. *Kitchen from £8,000, British Standard by Plain English*

# Family kitchens

There is no defined design formula for the ideal family kitchen. "The size of individual families and how they use their space varies so much that I could draw 10 different plans for the same room," admits Neptune Tonbridge designer Jamie Whitcher. However, if that room is well proportioned and of average size, there is always the potential to create a practical kitchen that feels welcoming and is the heart of the family home.

Family kitchens are hard-working, multifunctional places that need to adapt to changing needs. "Zoning is key, in terms of getting the work/play balance right within the room," says Julia Brown, design director at Mowlem & Co. Analysing the family's lifestyle and determining what is required of the space – from storage requirements to what appliances are needed and even where pets will be accommodated – is essential to the design process and should be considered from the start.

Appliances have a large impact on convenience, and, counter-intuitively, greater provision can make a kitchen easier to negotiate. For example, in the home of a large family or one where entertaining is a regular event, a second dishwasher near the sink or an additional smaller refrigerator in the food preparation



ABOVE Gold-coloured handles and a beautifully figured marble work surface give this kitchen a touch of glamour.
*Linear kitchen from £25,000, Harvey Jones*



area can make everything run more smoothly. Be realistic about lifestyle and the level of convenience needed. Whitcher has noticed that more clients now choose closed cupboards and solid doors for cabinets; this avoids the extra time it takes to keep open shelving clean and attractively arrange the contents of glazed cabinets.

Of all kitchen features, an island unit is one of the most sought-after additions to a family kitchen; it provides more storage, extends the work surface and allows the opportunity for cooking to become a convivial group activity. Combine it with bench seating or a breakfast bar to provide a focal point for the room and a relaxed place for dining, studying and socialising, but ensure enough space is allowed between neighbouring runs of cabinets for cupboard doors and drawers to be opened and people to move around freely.




LEFT Painting the perimeter cabinets in a lighter colour than the island gives this kitchen a spacious feel.
*Kitchen from £30,000, Middleton Bespoke*

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *Tips for family kitchens*

A family kitchen is probably the most hard-working room in the home and it is the little things that make it perfect. A fridge that is easily accessible when you are cooking, a special place nearby reserved for chopping boards and an integrated dual bin for general waste and recycling all improve its function.
*Al Bruce, managing director, Olive & Barr*

A designated admin station where keys and school paperwork can be put down and phones and tablets charged will keep kitchen surfaces clear for food preparation and effective cleaning.
*Tom Howley, design director, Tom Howley*

Banquette seating takes up considerably less room than a separate table and chairs and is incredibly practical especially if you incorporate storage under the seat.
*Annie Ebenston, lead designer, Blakes London*

ABOVE A separate utility room and larder allow this family kitchen to be devoted to cooking and family life.
*Edwardian kitchen from £12,000, Unfitted Kitchens*

ABOVE INSET Add a focal point with pendant lights above an island.
*Walter Size 1 pendant light, £435, Original BTC*

BELOW Keep things tidy with this wall basket, which can be fixed wherever convenient.
*Putlar seagrass wall-hung basket, £40, Nukuku*

BOTTOM Made with responsibly sourced acacia wood, this egg rack will add a traditional touch to any kitchen.
*Natural Elements acacia wood egg rack, £16.99, KitchenCraft*



# Expansive kitchens

"When embarking on the design of a large kitchen, one's mood can quickly shift from feeling excited to being overwhelmed," says Louisa Eggleston of Humphrey Munson. Confronted with a space that offers so many possibilities can increase the pressure to get it right. Eggleston's advice is to "break the job down into smaller portions taking each aspect of the design in turn – from storing glassware to positioning artwork – and revise it until it is perfect".

Designating space for different functions will make the cooking and living areas work better in busy homes. Where space allows, creating a separate walk-in larder, utility room and laundry will divide cooking and eating from other household chores. Where it does not, consider purpose-made cabinets within the kitchen that fulfil the same purpose. For instance, in the food preparation area, a baking zone – with a stone or marble surface for pastry-making and worksurface-level cabinets for storing food mixers – will make the cook's life easier. Similarly, a pantry cabinet containing a kettle, coffee maker, toaster, and perhaps a small sink and refrigerator allows family members to prepare their breakfast without crowding the main cooking area. Meanwhile, in the living area, a desk cabinet provides space for menu planning and household management. The living space in an open-plan kitchen-dining-sitting room needs careful planning to make it look and feel

ABOVE Symmetry is key in this fully bespoke kitchen by Guild Anderson where twin islands make practical use of the space and frame a large Aga cooker. *Kitchen from £60,000, Guild Anderson*

RIGHT This baking workstation in Mowlem & Co's Rhapsody kitchen shows how activity-specific zones can be a valuable part of a layout. *Kitchen from £30,000, Mowlem & Co*

RIGHT Chic taps provide an essential finishing touch. *Gold reeded kitchen tap, £262.99, Dowsing & Reynolds*





LEFT Add character and charm with a glass cabinet for displaying favourite pieces. *Glass display cabinet, £245, Summerill & Bishop*







## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *Tips for Expansive Kitchens*

Think about lighting early in the design process and you will reap the rewards of a cosy, inviting atmosphere. Task lighting is important but a ceiling littered with downlights can make a kitchen feel clinical. Also consider the height of the room at the outset. We like to leave a gap above our furniture, so it does not feel too fitted and allows the room's interior architecture to display its own identity.
*Louisa Eggleston, creative director, Humphrey Munson*

Opt for larger appliances such as range cookers and American-style fridge/freezers to ensure the amount of cabinetry needed in a larger room does not overshadow the design.
*Luke McHardy, director, Luke McHardy*

It is key to ensure that cabinetry is in proportion and has a consistency of line; there should be no irregularities. Achieving this is down to instinct and judgement as much as good design.
*Nick Anderson, director, Guild Anderson*

ABOVE LEFT Instead of crowding it, the islands in this large extension seem to organise the space and bring order to the layout. *English Collection cabinetry kitchen from £45,000, Martin Moore*

ABOVE RIGHT This bespoke kitchen has been designed to honour the period property's Georgian architecture and proportions. *Kitchen from £25,000, Luke McHardy*



ABOVE Match light fittings to the scale and style of the kitchen. *Lucia double rise and fall light, from £1,626, Hector Finch*



Use rugs to define different zones of an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area. *Jute corner rug, from £345, Nordic Knots*

LEFT Create a characterful and contained workspace in a kitchen with a handsome bureau. *Briolette bureau, £4,595, Oka*

BELOW Placed in the centre of a huge open-plan living area, this kitchen is a bright and sociable hub of the home. *Kitchen from £50,000, Barnes of Ashburton*



comfortable. It will be home to large furniture, from a dining table to a sofa or two, as well as additional smaller pieces and plotting the positions of these items is key to ensuring nothing hinders the flow through the room. Consider how the space will be navigated, so there are natural routes to access the garden and neighbouring rooms. This should ensure food can be carried safely from kitchen to table. ■

**FEATURE** MAGGIE STEVENSON **PHOTOGRAPHS** P26 (NAKED KITCHENS) © SQUARE FOOT; P29 (MIDDLETON BESPOKE) © POLLY ELTES; P30 (MOWLEM & CO) © JAKE FITZJONES PHOTOGRAPHY; P31 (BARNES OF ASHBOURTON) © PAUL RYAN GOFF

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ABOVE *The Virtuoso kitchen, quotes available on application, Mowlem & Co*

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**FEATURE** CHARLOTTE DUNFORD

# NAKED
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Eye-catching pendant lampshades create a decorative synergy. *Special edition Scallop Woad pendants, £390 each, David Hunt Lighting*

RIGHT In this Grade I* listed property, warm LED lighting has been chosen by K&S Lighting Designers to highlight the building's architectural details.







# *Designing a* LIGHTING SCHEME

A practical necessity, lighting, when carefully planned, also highlights interesting textures and pieces, enlivens colours and sets the mood in a room. Our guide outlines key considerations and design options

Without well-designed lighting, even the most exquisite home will look dull and lifeless. As Lee Lovett, founder of the Soho Lighting Company, says: "Lighting has the power to ignite an interior design scheme. It can totally change the feel of a space by means of the colour temperature, brightness or clarity." Planning a permanent lighting scheme – which includes not only ceiling and wall lighting but also sockets and switches in the right places – can be a complex process, with many factors to take into consideration, both functional and aesthetic, from the positioning of a ceiling pendant to the choice of dimmable bulb. By focusing on the main features, and adding ambient light, it is possible to create layers of light, contrasting brightness and shadow. Which, says Sally Storey, creative director of John Cullen Lighting, "is the magic of light."

## *First steps*

In an ideal world, lighting should always be planned in detail at the outset of any building or renovation project. Hollie Moreland, creative director of David Hunt Lighting, advises giving lighting the same importance as selecting kitchen units or bathroom fittings, and prioritising it well before any decorative finishes are installed. "My top tip is that, if in doubt, put more lighting in. It makes life much easier if you over-specify than under-specify," she says.

Start by considering the various uses of each space at different times of the day. Ally Dowsing-Reynolds, CEO at home decor brand and lighting specialist Dowsing & Reynolds, says: "Create a list of what's involved in your daily routine and you'll get a good picture. For example, you might need a kitchen for working in during the day, and for cooking and catching up with the family in the evening, so it would be best to plan lighting for multi-use."

Experts advise including a mix of the three types of illumination: ambient lighting for general illumination, task lighting for specific activities, such as reading, chopping vegetables or working, and accent lighting that focuses on specific features, such as a work of art or vase of flowers. This can be achieved using a wide variety of fittings, including downlights, uplights, spotlights, wall and floor washers, LED strips, picture lights, pendants, table lamps and floor lamps. This layering effect from multiple light sources is practical and flexible, and also offers an appealing visual impact.

At the initial planning stage it is, of course, essential to request input from a qualified electrician and/or lighting designer. Even basic schemes are likely to need checking over, while more complex requirements, such as additional circuits (perhaps 5-amp outlets that control plugged-in lamps via a wall-mounted light switch) and pre-set 'scenes' with dimming and multiple controls, will definitely need technical expertise. Electricians must have certification from the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC), and new work should comply with Building Regulations (find more information on the Planning Portal).

ABOVE LEFT John Cullen Lighting's Wallace picture light provides an even distribution of light. A high colour rendering index (CRI) of 97 ensures a painting's true colours are seen at night.

LEFT An Edwardian-style lantern brings classic charm and a warm, welcoming light to an entrance hall in a period home. *Fyfield brass lantern, £713, Vaughan*

For bedside lighting, low-hung pendants are an alternative to table lamps. In this room by ND Studios, the lights are Mezzo pendants, with an Italian retro feel, from CTO Lighting.

# Key considerations

One of the first things to think about when planning a lighting scheme is the positioning of fittings, switches and also the sockets that will be needed to plug in decorative lamps.

With a good idea of how each room will be used, the features to be highlighted and a plan of where furnishings will be placed, it should be possible to work out where light is needed most. Consider what is being lit and that will lead to where the fitting should be (not necessarily symmetrical within the ceiling, says Storey) and where sockets should be positioned – with a failsafe option of double sockets in the corners of each wall.

Interestingly, lighting style is moving away from central pendants or chandeliers in favour of wall lights supplemented by table lamps, perhaps with the addition of slim LED strip lighting concealed within coving. Conversely, in bedrooms, low-hanging pendants above bedside tables, in place of conventional table lamps, are becoming more popular.

For architectural lighting, the illumination provided is key, while the fitting itself is usually invisible, tucked within coving, behind battens and under shelving, which has become more easily achieved in recent years with the development of increasingly tiny LEDs.

BELOW CENTRE A floor lamp with a curved arm set next to an armchair is a simple and elegant task lighting solution.
*Hugo floor lamp with Hugo Fez custom lampshade, £1,395, Porta Romana*

BELOW RIGHT The leaf motif on this light is inspired by archive pieces but the modern design creates a striking interplay with traditional furnishings.
*Bramshaw chandelier, £3,440, Vaughan*



This sculptural uplighter is cast in Herculite, a durable plaster with an atmospheric patina.
*Scallop Shell wall light, £4,524, Cox London*









## OUR LIGHTING EXPERTS

Leading designers share their advice on how to create the best lighting schemes



Ally Dowsing-Reynolds, Dowsing & Reynolds



Hollie Moreland, David Hunt Lighting



Lee Lovett, Soho Lighting Co



Margit Wittig, lighting and furniture designer



Sally Storey, John Cullen Lighting



Kate Wilkins and Sam Neuman, K&S Lighting Designers

ABOVE LEFT A dramatic focal point, the Elowen chandelier by designer Margit Wittig and Studio Peake, in brass, epoxy resin and glass, is crafted by hand in bespoke colours, and costs from £20,800.

LEFT A combination of eye-catching pendants and wall lights can work well in hallways. These pendants are in a shape reminiscent of the 1930s skyscrapers. *Tiered lights, from £635, Rothschild & Bickers*

# Design details

Choosing the right decorative fitting for the right place involves many considerations, including size, shape, style and material. Some of these may depend on what works best in terms of the architectural style and existing or proposed decorative scheme, others will simply be personal preference, but there are technical aspects, too. "Consider the size of the lighting piece in balance with ceiling height, room size or table surface, and always take advice on lampshade proportions," says designer Margit Wittig. Kate Wilkins of K&S Lighting Designers advises choosing glass fittings for maximum illumination and linen or silk shades for soft, flattering lighting, while Moreland points out that a shade with a white laminate or reflective silver lining will provide bright, cool light, whereas a bronze or gold lining will be warmer and softer.

It is worth seeking exactly the right material to complement a room scheme. Inset ceiling downlights, for example, can be found in a variety of metal finishes to complement handles or knobs, and shades can be made bespoke in any choice of fabric or, if painted, custom colour-matched. Environmental concerns are also driving innovation, with unusual options such as pendants made from recycled fishing nets (The Soho Lighting Company), grown from mycelium (Sebastian Cox), or made from sustainable, steam-bent wood (Tom Raffield).



ABOVE RIGHT Clear glass provides the greatest illumination and can easily be kept clean. *Sir John Soane hanging lanterns (small) in bronze, from £1,764 each, Hector Finch*



RIGHT The lighting in this Grade I listed house features concealed LED strips to create a focal point in the shelving. Scheme by John Cullen Lighting and interior designer Louise Bradley.

## EIGHT OF THE BEST TABLE LAMPS

A table lamp is the ideal solution for extra light and additional decorative flair.



*Karaffel leather table lamp in Brushed Red, £250, Oka*



*Smartie desk lamp, £1,357, Besselink & Jones*



*Brass Leather Cuff table lamp in Dark Tan, £124.99, Dowsing & Reynolds*



*Hoffman striped lamp base, £275, India Jane*









ABOVE A vintage Murano glass chandelier is the focal point of this drawing room by ND Studios, with Pooky's Wisteria table lamps and a Mondrian 600 picture light from Astro.

LEFT Choose light switches in a material and style to work with door handles for cohesion. *The Lombard Collection Brushed Crome three-gang toggle switch, £69.98, The Soho Lighting Company*

ABOVE RIGHT For a modern take on statement lighting, consider a contemporary chandelier to position above a dining table. *Touraine chandelier, £648, Vaughan*

RIGHT A slender, directional spotlight can be the ideal bedtime reading solution. *Large Jordan wall light in bronze with integrated LED light, £498, Porta Romana*



*Edith Nature Motif lamp, £225, Sweetpea & Willow*



*Rattle lamp (regular), £104, Pooky; Straight empire shade (35cm) in Liberty Quill fabric in Jade, £178, Pooky x Liberty*



*Bombazine two-light table lamp in natural brass and opal glass, £150, Där Lighting Group*



*Montmartre table lamp, £1,235, Paolo Moschino*





# Considered position

The size and type of lighting and where it is sited is essential from a practical as well as an aesthetic point of view. It is generally advised to hang wall lights at around eye level to avoid glare from light bulbs, though this may need to be adjusted if ceilings are particularly high, and to avoid protruding wall lights in narrow spaces such as entrance halls. Pendant lights and chandeliers should be suspended high enough for a tall person to walk beneath them – although they can be hung lower over a dining table or kitchen island.

In the bathroom, fixing wall lights either side of a mirror at face height gives the most flattering light, while a statement chandelier is a dramatic option over a bath. As electrics and water are a dangerous mix, bathroom light fittings are regulated by zones (depending on how near they are to water) and given an Ingress Protection (IP) rating. This requires that only low-wattage, immersion-proof lights at IP67 can be used within baths and showers, IP65 fittings directly above baths or showers, IP44 fittings around baths, showers and sinks, and IP20+ fittings elsewhere in a bathroom.

ABOVE LEFT A manoeuvrable lamp head keeps task lighting practical. *Ledbury adjustable table lamp with Ribbed Glass shade, £405, Fritz Fryer*

ABOVE RIGHT Lighting within showers or baths must be low voltage. *Usk bath, from £4,710; Grand hand-shower and wall bracket, from £426, Drummonds*

RIGHT Concealed LED strip lighting works equally well within shelving and inside wardrobes. *Anthracite built-in dressing table, from £1,100 a linear metre, Neatsmith*



**FEATURE** KATHERINE SORRELL **PHOTOGRAPHS** P35 (K&S DESIGN) © PHIL BOORMAN; P36 (ND STUDIOS) © HELEN CATHCART; (COX LONDON) © ALUN CALLENDER; P37 (MARGIT WITTIG) © SIMON BROWN; (HOLLIE MORELAND) © SEBASTIAN DEVENISH; (K&S LIGHTING) © ALEXANDER O'NEAL; P38 (LOUISE BRADLEY) © RAY MAIN; P39 (ND STUDIOS) © HELEN CATHCART; P40 (NEATSMITH) © DOMINIC BLACKMORE P41 (REBEKAH CAUDWELL) © SIMON UPTON





# Light-bulb moment

Crucial to each light fitting is, of course, the type of bulb that is used, for aesthetic as well as functional reasons. Key features to consider are not only size, shape and wattage, but also the colour temperature – from cool blue and white to warm yellow – and the colour quality, or colour rendering index (CRI), which measures the light given compared to natural daylight. Colour temperature is measured in Kelvins and best kept at 2,700K for most architectural lighting, with decorative fittings at a more atmospheric 2,200–2,400K. The CRI, meanwhile, should be above 90 if possible (100 is daylight-equivalent).

In recent years, technology has led to a much greater use of dimmable and colour-changing bulbs that can be operated via remote control, app or voice command – perhaps linked to other smart systems within the house. Simple dimmers are essential – every professional recommends them, and they are a straightforward improvement to retro-fit – while cordless, battery-powered LED lights can be placed almost anywhere in the home, and kinetic switches offer a wire-free solution to adding or changing the position of any light switch. ■

ABOVE LEFT In this sumptuous bathroom, designer Rebekah Caudwell has chosen art deco-inspired wall lights from Hudson Valley Lighting in the USA.

ABOVE RIGHT When a clear glass shade is chosen, fitting an aesthetically pleasing light bulb is of the utmost importance. *Sellack lantern, £345; pear-shaped LED spiral filament bulb, £22; both Fritz Fryer*

RIGHT Adding wall lights in strategic places creates a flexible, functional and attractive scheme. *Oxford double wall light, £329, Original BTC*





*Classic Traditional glass pendant light fixture, £POA, Curiousa & Curiousa*

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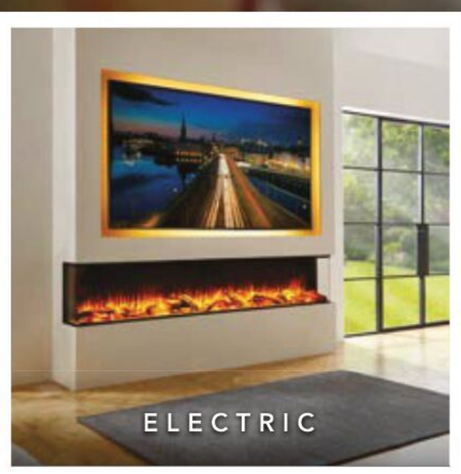
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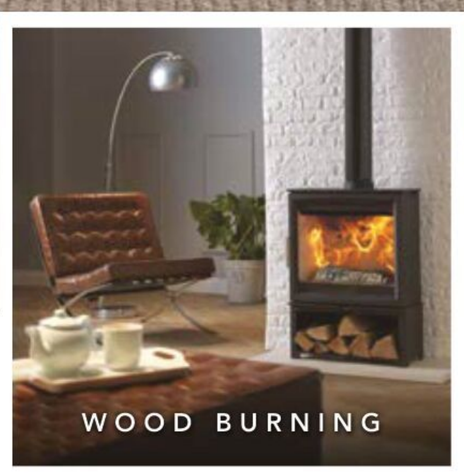
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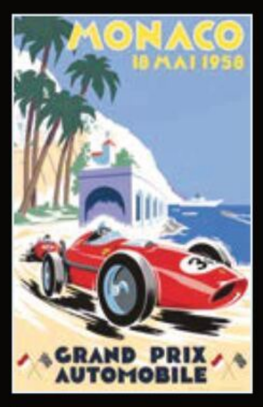
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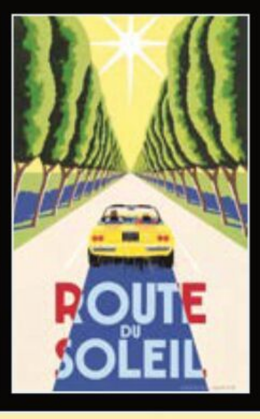
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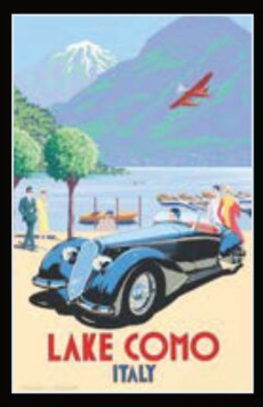
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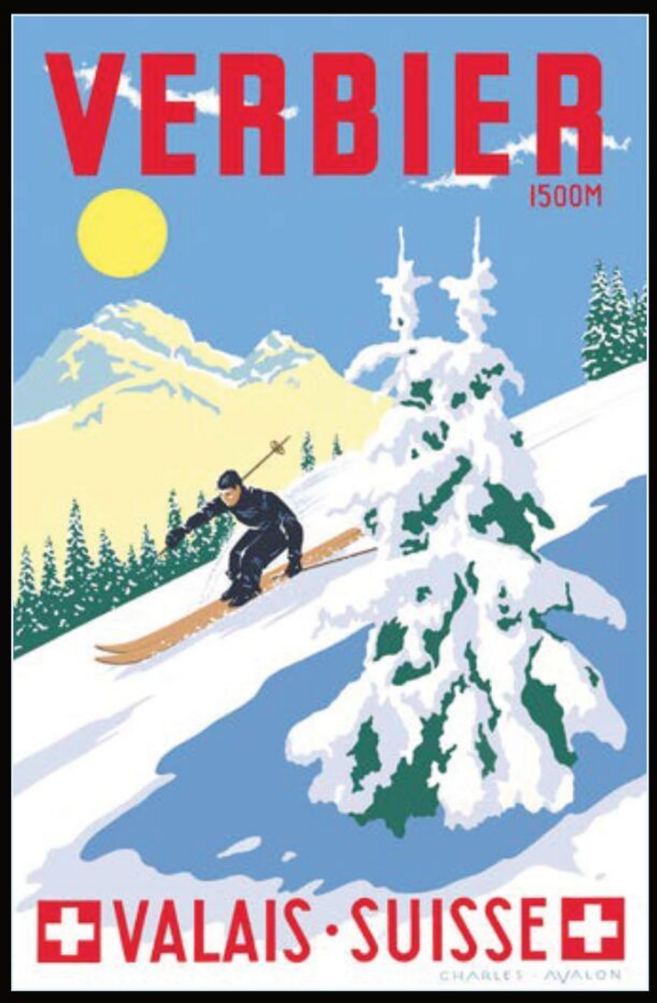
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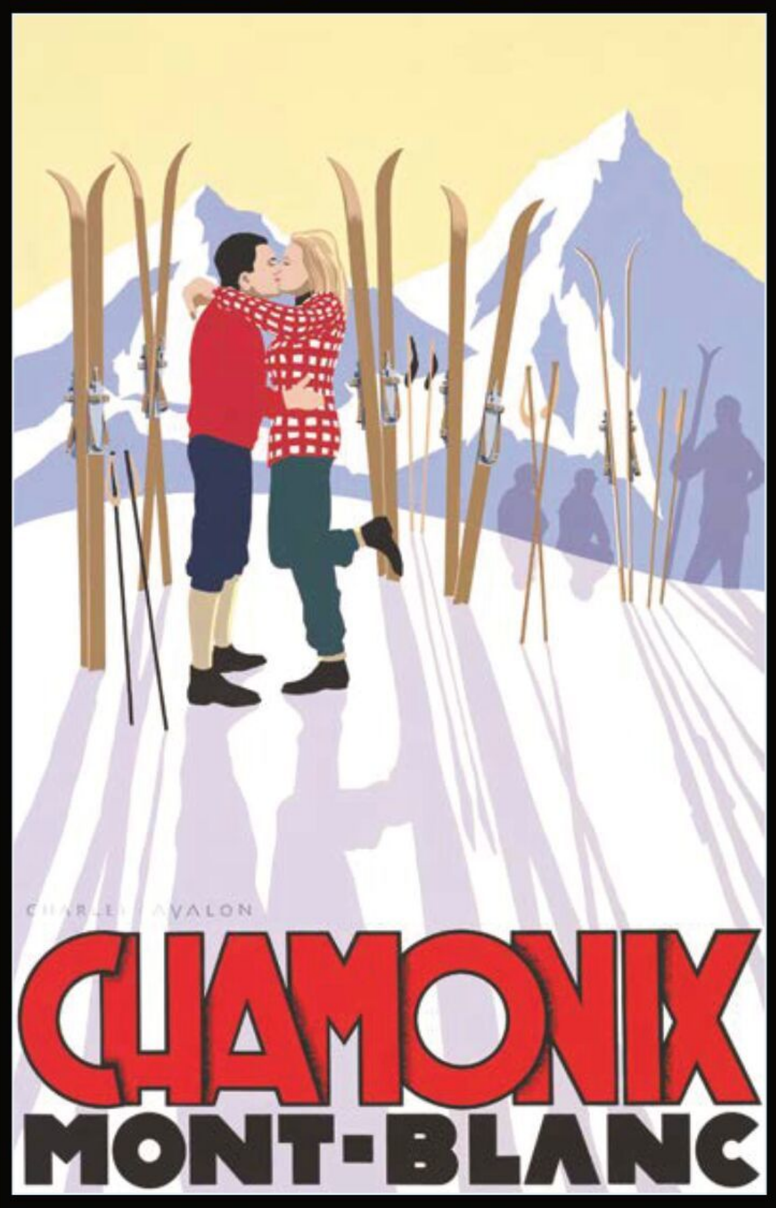


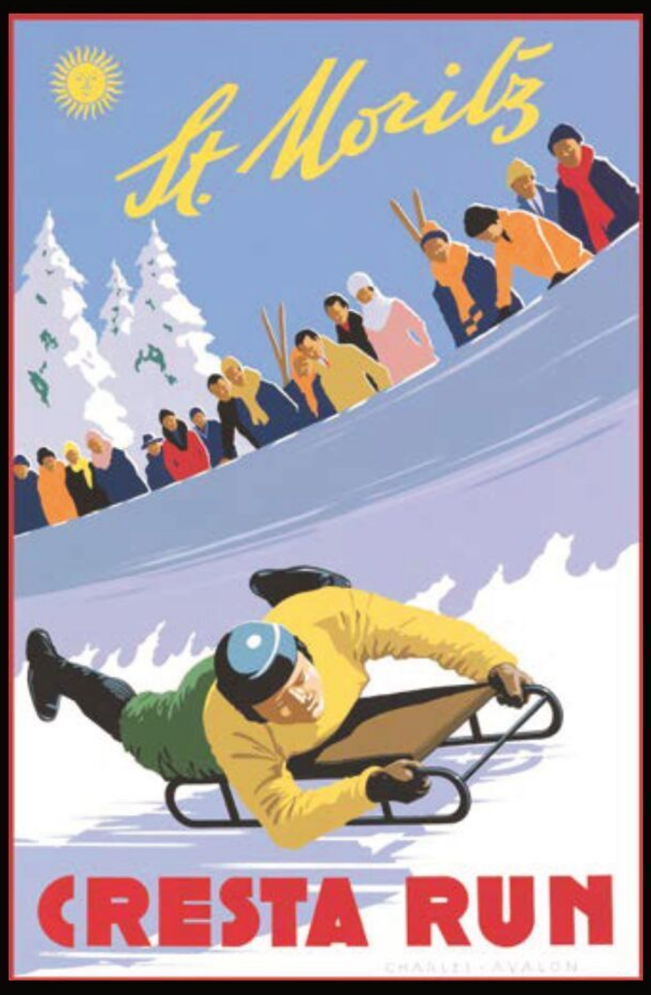



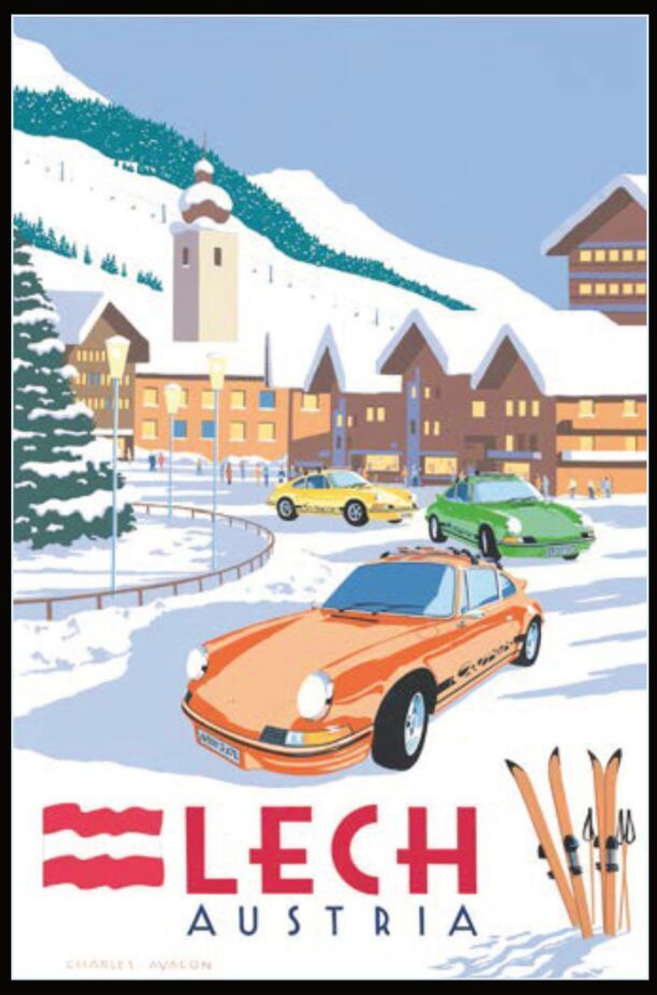



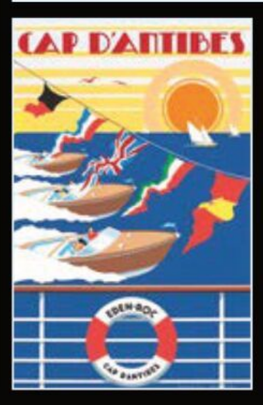



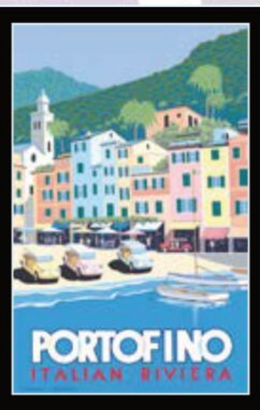



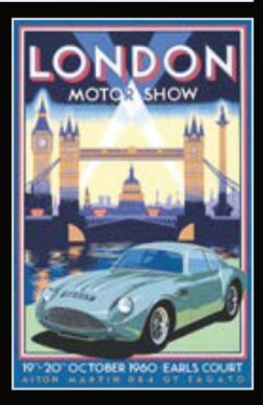




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# CREATING THE *Ultimate* TOWNHOUSE BATHROOM

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

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

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



# Colour

Strong colours and bold patterns make a huge impact in a large bathroom and can be a good choice in a smaller room, too. Simply choosing a lively colour to paint the walls (and perhaps ceiling) is the straightforward option, while including blocks of different, toning colours can be hugely rewarding. Consider other areas where colour and pattern can be added – perhaps in the form of towels, rugs or window treatments, or the sanitaryware itself. Many baths, for example, have the option to be coloured during manufacture or painted in the home.

Wall and floor tiles are, of course, often dominant features in a bathroom and, says Louisa Morgan, marketing director of Mandarin Stone, the boldest approach is to choose one patterned tile and use it on both floors and walls. "Alternatively, use patterned floor tiles and opt for a plain-coloured wall tile in a complementary shade," she says. "For a more subtle approach, use patterned tiles just in feature areas such as in the shower or as a splashback." There are other methods of creating interesting pattern, too, she points out: "Marble, or marble-effect porcelain tiles have their own patterns of veining and shade variation, or you could employ mosaics, chevrons or hexagon shapes, or interesting ways of laying brick-shaped tiles."

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *On tile designs*



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

*Louisa Morgan, marketing director, Mandarin Stone*





TOP LEFT Here soft-hued tiles complement a bold colour scheme. *Carnaby Mint ceramic wall tiles, £55.20 a square metre, Mandarin Stone*

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

LEFT This ribbed bath in a soft rose-pink, ties in with gold finishes and shape of the basin. *Casini bath by BC Designs, £3,850; Angelica basin, £849, The London Basin Company*





# Small spaces

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

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

ABOVE This Victorian-inspired compact design with a modern twist will be a focal point of townhouse bathroom. *Chatsworth 1300 short roll-top bath, £799.95, Victorian Plumbing*



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

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *On custom vanities*



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



*Freestanding Marina bath, £3,972, Aston Matthews*

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

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

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *On sleek fixtures*



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

# *Streamlining*

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





## SIX OF THE BEST VANITIES (*from left*)

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

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

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

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

*Clyde single metal vanity, £6,198, Porter*

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










RIGHT *Wall & Decò Wetsystem waterproof wallpaper in Domestic Cathedral, £240 a square metre, West One Bathrooms*

BELOW LEFT *Carrara White Jenga marble mosaics, £125.13 a square metre; Jerusalem porcelain tiles in Silver, £62.67 a square metre; Kyoto bath, £2,600; Empire bath and shower mixer, from £2,500; all Fired Earth*

BELOW RIGHT *Riad Green and Riad Sea Green Gloss porcelain tiles, laid in a herringbone pattern, £73.60 a square metre, Mandarin Stone*

# *Tiles*

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





ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

## *On wallpaper*



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



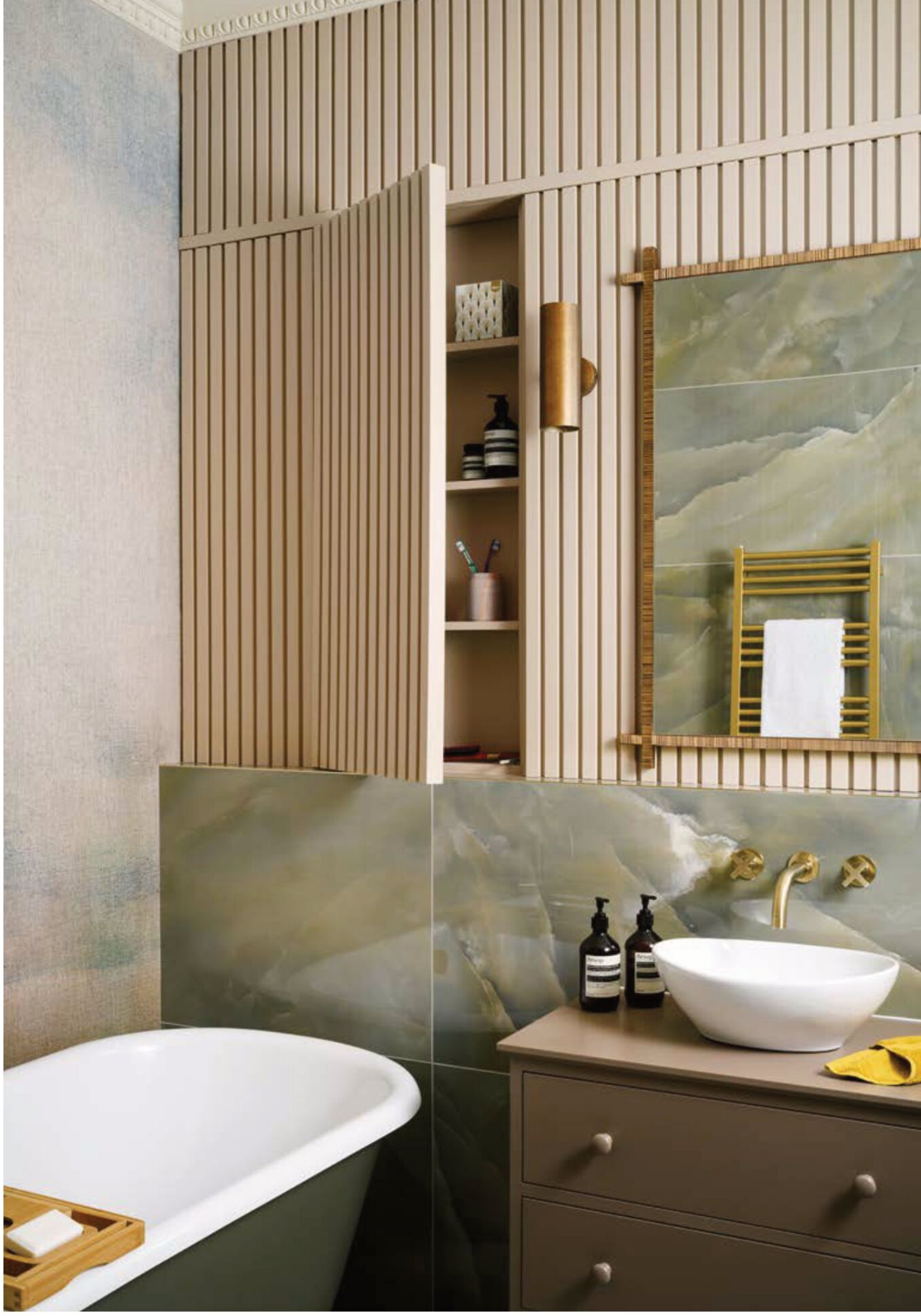




# Storage

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

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



RIGHT Concealed cupboards with push-release mechanisms work wonders in this room by Jeffreys Interiors.
BELOW RIGHT The Edinburgh double washstand from Neptune (£3,165) includes storage.
BOTTOM RIGHT This bathroom by Q Design House includes cupboards, drawers and a glass-fronted cupboard for displays.





## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *On storage*



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



# Details

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

BELOW LEFT In this room by Jeffreys Interiors, a softly textured wallcovering contrasts with smooth tiles and a satin brass bath filler.

BELOW RIGHT Smart 1930s-style Janey Mac basin mixer, with levers and pop-up waste, in silver nickel, from Lefroy Brooks.

BELOW FAR RIGHT A pair of Ming steel enamel basins from Kaldewei are teamed with sleek, wall-mounted mixer taps.

ABOVE Elegant Carrara honed marble tiling features throughout this beautiful bathroom by Porter, in which a series of superbly co-ordinated fittings is finished in antique brass.

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

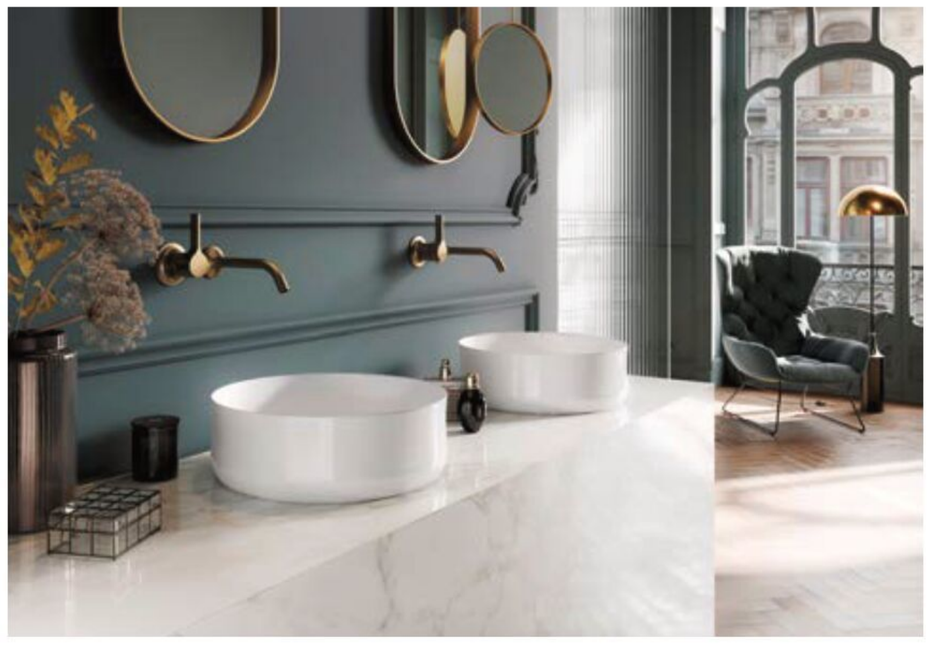
### *On materials*



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







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# CREATING THE *Ultimate* COUNTRY BATHROOM

Whether for a charming cottage or a grand manor house, we look at the key elements that contribute to the successful design of a beautiful, relaxing and functional bathroom that reflects its rural location

Large or small, traditional or contemporary, one thing most country bathrooms will have in common is a connection with the natural world. Making the most of a view will often be the starting point for a design, perhaps by placing a bath near or facing a window so the scenery beyond can be enjoyed while relaxing at the end of a long day.

Another factor to be considered is the relationship to the house's architecture, with the possibility of period features such as fireplaces or ancient beams being an intrinsic part of a bathroom scheme. These can be emphasised with traditional-style fixtures and fittings, but modern elements, whether subtle or bold, can also enhance them.

A well-planned country bathroom should also include pleasing textures and plentiful storage for a sense of uncluttered calm and luxurious relaxation.

Draw inspiration from this bathroom in the Mansion House Premium Suite at Coworth Park hotel, Ascot.

Placed under the window, the roll-top bath in this bathroom at Coworth Park hotel, Ascot, enjoys lovely views without being overlooked. A pair of towel radiators makes the most of the space to the sides.

# Layout

Since many country bathroom windows are not overlooked, soaking in a bath by the window while enjoying the view can be the ultimate luxury. When drawing up a floorplan, this is not a bad start – though it is always important to consider the positioning of the WC, doors and other architectural features, too. "Where possible, locating a freestanding bath under the window makes great sense," says Yousef Mansuri, director of design at CP Hart. "Some properties may have extra architectural details which are crying out to be put in the spotlight, such as archways, niches, or blocked windows. Utilising what is already there can make the room unique."

Mirrors always bounce light around a room and make it feel larger. "For a country or classic bathroom, adding decorative wall lights either side of a mirror helps to dress up a vanity area," says Mansuri. "It also provides an even wash of light across the face, as opposed to ceiling lights, which create shadows."

RIGHT Shelves filled with books and plants make this washstand niche feel cosy and more like a living space than a bathroom.
*Cielo freestanding Catino Ovale basin, £3,270; Samuel Heath Landmark Pure basin mixer in Urban Brass, £1,824, both from CP Hart*



## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *On layout*



"Incorporating a seating area, be it an armchair or chaise longue in a large room, or simply a stool and side table in a more compact space, can make a bathroom feel more like a living space, adding softness and warmth, inviting the user to spend more relaxation time in their own sanctuary."
*Yousef Mansuri, director of design, CP Hart*

# Proportions

Often been converted from former bedrooms, country bathrooms tend to be either grand and spacious or, conversely, tucked into a roof space with sloping ceilings. “In a small bathroom, choose a short bath or a bath on feet and either wall-mount the basin or use a basin stand. When you can see a little more floor, it makes the room feel larger,” says Phil Etherden, managing director of Albion Bath Company. “You can bathe in a 1200mm-long bath in complete comfort if it’s deep enough. If there’s an area where the ceiling is low, this is the best place to put the bath.” Smaller fittings, in general, are a good idea, but, says Etherden, a shower area less than 800mm x 800mm is not advisable.

With the luxury of a large bathroom and higher ceilings, scaling up the fittings, such as having a grand bath on a pedestal and either a wider basin or a pair of basins, will better suit the proportions of the space. “If a large room has nothing above about three feet high, it can look a little empty and open. If this is the case, consider adding a high-level cistern and a tall towel rail,” says Etherden.

ABOVE Converted agricultural buildings can offer plenty of space but require grand fittings to suit their proportions. This is The Barn bathroom at The Pig at Bridge Place hotel near Canterbury.

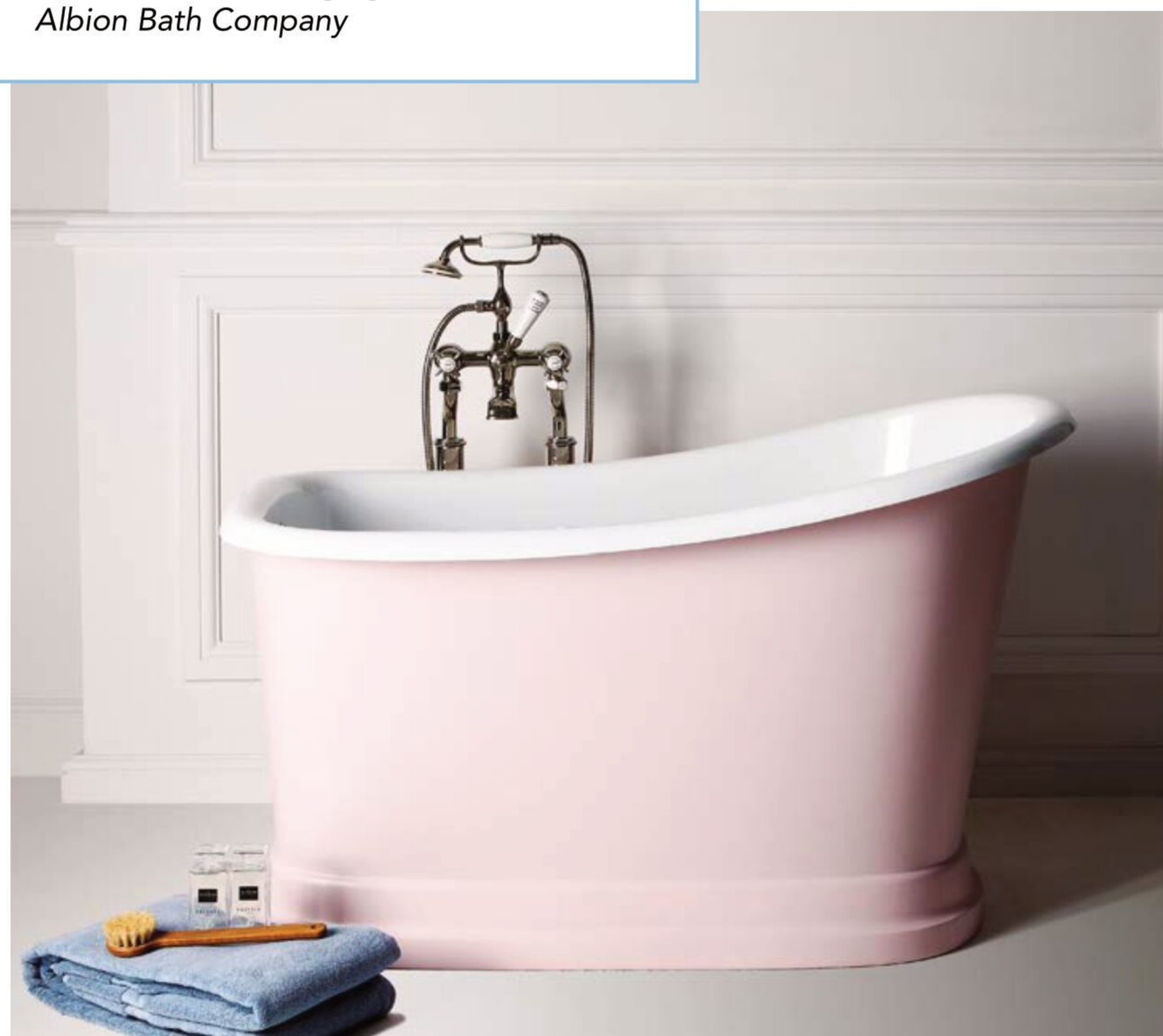
## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *On scale*



“It is important to match the size of the fittings to the size of the room. In a small bathroom, a short bath can be the perfect solution.You can bathe in a 1200mm-long bath in complete comfort.”
*Phil Etherden, managing director, Albion Bath Company*

BELOW A small bath, if deep enough, is comfortable to bathe in and perfect for compact spaces. *Tubby Torre bath, from £2,541, Albion Bath Company*





## Texture

In a room which can be full of hard, white surfaces it is important to include a range of different materials and textures. On the floor, for example, using old timber boards or an Oriental rug can create a lovely softness underfoot, or the more adventurous may opt for pebble tiles in a small area, while polished plaster – which can be highly polished or more rugged – adds wonderful richness.

Features such as wicker storage baskets, tiled splashbacks and upholstered seating all contribute to the textural range, while a bath or basin made from an alternative material can be a dramatic focal point. "For country houses and converted agricultural buildings, using materials such as copper and tin introduces historical integrity but brought right up to the 21st century," says Joanna Wakelin, head of PR and marketing for William Holland. "It's taking industrial style but adding a luxurious modern edge. Copper, for example, is so vibrant and aesthetically warm, but it also holds heat well, reflects light around the room and is very, very glamorous."

### ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *On materials*



"We love to incorporate texture in our country bathroom designs through subtle details in the window treatment. Drawn-thread linen with a hem-stitch row, for example, will enhance the textural palette and, as a bonus, when light passes through the hemstitch it casts beautiful shadows into the room. Similarly, using a cotton sheer provides a beautiful layer of texture to a scheme."
*Katie Glaister, co-founder, K&H Design*

ABOVE A polished metal bath makes a dramatic focal point, and creates lovely reflections. *Bateau bath in nickel, £6,889.20, William Holland*

BELOW LEFT In this country bathroom by Pippa Paton Design, bronze plaster is used on the walls and complements the dark bronze taps.

RIGHT This elegant curved washstand with a smooth Carrara marble surface contrasts with the rustic terracotta flooring and oak shutters to bring a touch of luxury to the bathroom. *Chichester undermount curved washstand, from £2,780, Neptune*





**FEATURE** KATHERINE SORRELL **PHOTOGRAPHS** P55 (THE PIG) © JAKE EASTHAM; (ALBION) © PHILIP ETHERDEN. P56 (WILLIAM HOLLAND) © BEN PIPE PHOTOGRAPHY. P57 (ND STUDIOS) © HELEN CATHCART

# Modernity

A determinedly modern scheme can work extremely well in a country bathroom, with a pleasing combination of simple, striking sanitaryware, traditional architecture and glorious views of the natural world outside. "Sleek, contemporary fittings create an uncluttered look that adds to the feeling of serenity and luxury, while also providing the latest technologies and excellent storage space," says designer Pippa Paton.

"In an older country property, we would expose and enhance the materials of the building itself, perhaps an old stone wall or beautiful beams," she adds. "Alternatively, simply using natural materials such as a timber floor or a linen-covered stool will soften contemporary shapes." To create a seamless look, Paton recommends finishes such as resin, polished plaster and very large-scale porcelain or marble tiles, rather than typical bathroom tiling, which creates a background of grout lines. ■



ABOVE This new-build bathroom by Pippa Paton Design features sleek, modern fittings combined with interesting textures for a feeling of comfort and luxury.

LEFT Natascha Dartnall of ND Studios has included contemporary and traditional elements in this bathroom, which focuses on a dramatic freestanding bath, finished in black. The pea green chair adds a smart dash of bright colour.

## ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

### *On contemporary style*



"To let the individual pieces in a modern country bathroom shine, try to keep the floor and wall finishes in the background, with relatively few materials that are as seamless as possible."
*Pippa Paton, founder, Pippa Paton Design*

# *Bathroom design resources*

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*albionbathco.com*

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*anniesloan.com*

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*artisansofdevizes.com*

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BURLINGTON
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*burlingtonbathrooms.com*

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ABOVE *Bespoke marble bathroom counter inset with a hand-painted basin, quotes available on application, K&H Designs.*

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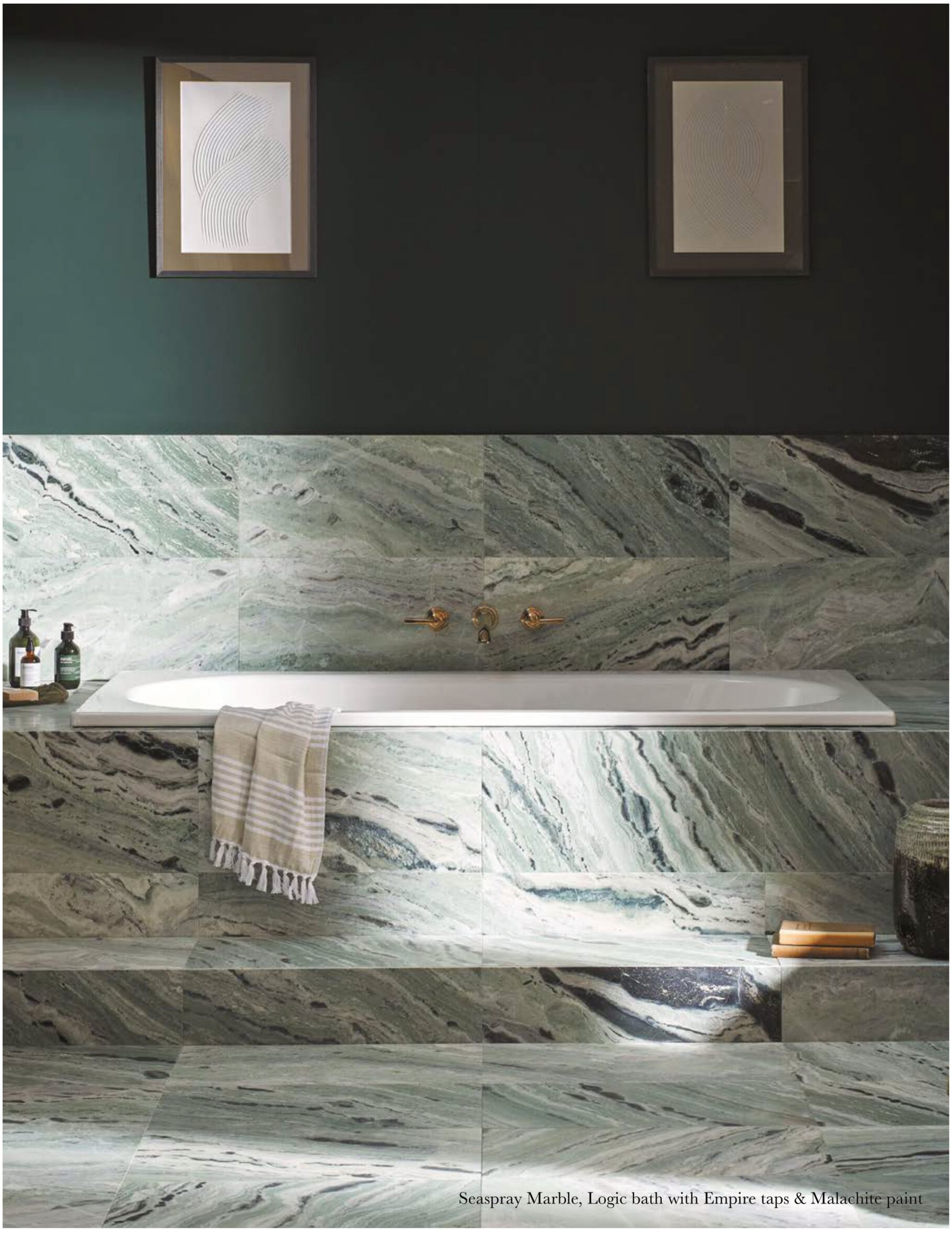
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**FEATURE** CHARLOTTE DUNFORD **PHOTOGRAPH** SIMON BROWN

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# FLOOR *Show*

Plain or patterned, tough or luxurious, fully fitted or striking stand-alone piece, the right carpet or rug can be the foundation of a successful room scheme

A significant element in a room's decorating scheme, soft flooring should, of course, be practical, particularly in high-traffic areas of the home. However, that need not mean it cannot fulfil other priorities. With options ever increasing, while style and colour will often be the first consideration, factors such as materials, performance, sustainability and a desire to support traditional industries and unique collaborations might feature, too. Carpets and rugs are a significant investment, so choose with as much care as any wallcoverings or window treatments and ensure they will keep their looks as time goes by.

*Kanoko wool and silk hand-tufted rug, from £4,920 for 170cm x 240cm, Zoffany by Riviere Rugs*





# Natural assets

The appeal of natural floor covering made from plant fibres is easy to see. Undyed, its warm tones and pleasing texture complements other interior finishes such as wood, stone and wool. Stylistically versatile, it can be fitted wall to wall like carpet or made up as a rug – often with fabric-bound edges – and fits easily in both traditional and contemporary settings.

The most familiar types are sisal, seagrass, jute and coir, and each material has its own distinctive texture. Sisal is perhaps the most durable and, therefore, as suitable for stairs and hallways as it is for living areas and bedrooms. By comparison, jute feels soft to the touch and is a comfortable choice for bedrooms.

Less widely seen are the wonderfully coloured and textured tropical plant materials, such as those found in Flock Living's Gaia range of carpets, rugs and home-grown rush matting. If considering the suitability of designs made from rush, the natural material comes in an attractive green-brown shade and the hand-plaited range from Rush Matters is a traditional choice for authentic period interiors.

*'When their textures are juxtaposed with modern concretes or historic encaustic tiles, natural floor coverings become warm, inviting and beautiful'*

Claire Kimble, senior design manager, Crucial Trading

ABOVE *Seagrass Herringbone carpet, from £35 a quare metre, Kersaint Cobb*
ABOVE LEFT *Runner in Aztec Alabaster sisal, £145 a square metre, Crucial Trading*

## OUR FLOORING EXPERTS

Carpet and rug industry specialists divulge their top tips for selecting designs with the right qualities.



Andy Guard, creative director, Roger Oates Design



Christopher Mould, director, Bazaar Velvet



Claire Kimble, senior design manager, Crucial Trading



Jennifer Manners, founder, Jennifer Manners Rugs



Lorna Haigh, creative director, Alternative Flooring



Tasha Green, co-founder, Weaver Green





# *British heritage*

"Instances of consumers making a conscious choice to select and buy British-made products have increased considerably within the interiors industry," says Andy Guard of Roger Oates Design. British carpet weaving is part of the national tradition, with Axminster Carpets able to trace its history back to 1755, but there are other sound reasons for buying home-produced flooring. Heritage brings with it skill and expertise that can only be acquired and refined over time, and when carpets are made using British wool, they become an even more worthwhile investment as fewer air miles mean a reduction in environmental impact.

A classic choice of broadloom carpet is the 80/20 wool and nylon mix in a hardwearing twist or a luxurious cut pile. Smart flatweave rugs and runners, often seen in hallways and staircases, are also part of the great British weaving tradition, too, with those crafted by Roger Oates Design being woven in Yorkshire on looms adapted to modern production.

*'Every piece you choose for your home tells a story; that's the way it should be'*

Andy Guard, creative director, Roger Oates Design



ABOVE *Morella Amber flatweave wool runner, 71cm wide, £149.50 a metre, Roger Oates Design*

ABOVE RIGHT *Hazy Days wool carpet in Rock Pooling, £99 a square metre, Axminster Carpets*

RIGHT *Pimlico wool-rich loop-pile carpet made using 50 per cent New Zealand wool in Pavilion, from £35 a square metre, Cormar*

# *Sustainable style*

Nowadays, all industries are trying to minimise their impact on the environment, and carpet manufacturers are no exception, but the imperative to recycle and re-use must be met with no sacrifice of visual or tactile appeal. Happily, designers have responded to the challenge enthusiastically by transforming fibres produced from waste products into desirable floor coverings. There is a ready supply of recyclable waste materials, and plastic water bottles are one of the primary sources. Cleaned and processed they make PET (polyethylene terephthalate) polyester fibres that are soft, colour-fast, water resistant and ideal for producing carpet and rugs that can be used inside or out. Nylon recovered from discarded fishing nets is also suitable for recycling and turned into new nylon yarn for carpets, as seen in the Origin and Ardent Saxony carpet ranges at Carpetright. In addition, waste wool from the carpet weaving industry can be re-spun and woven into rugs such as those in Nanimarquina's Re-Rug and Floor Story's Wasted collections.





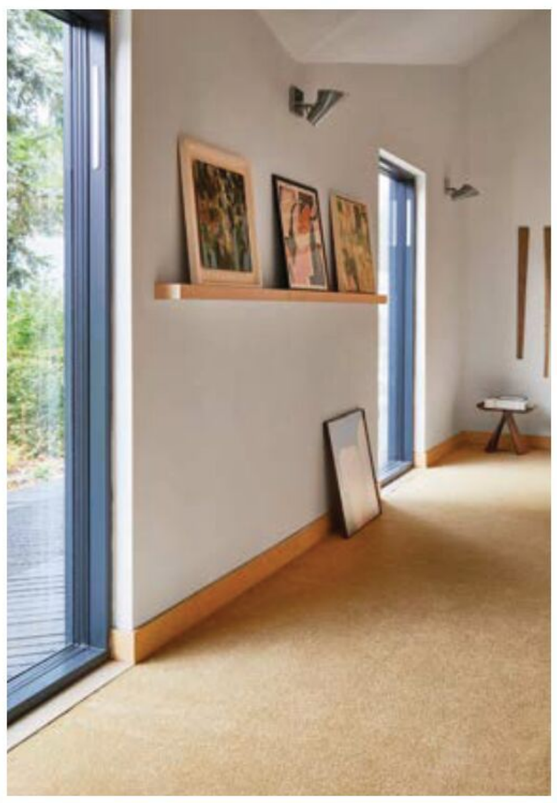

*'Rugs made from recycled plastic bottles are stylish, soft to the touch, but robust, and ideal for a family home'*

Tasha Green, co-founder of Weaver Green

**ABOVE** *Regimental Stripe rug made using recycled bottles, 180cm x 120cm, £210, Weaver Green*

**LEFT** *Re-Rug rug made from 50 per cent recycled wool and 50 per cent New Zealand wool, from £1,240 for 170cm x 240cm, Nanimarquina*

**RIGHT** *Ardent Saxony Econyl polyamide carpet, £39.99 a square metre, Carpetright*



## EIGHT OF THE BEST LARGE RUGS

Make a statement while delineating an area within a scheme

**FROM LEFT**

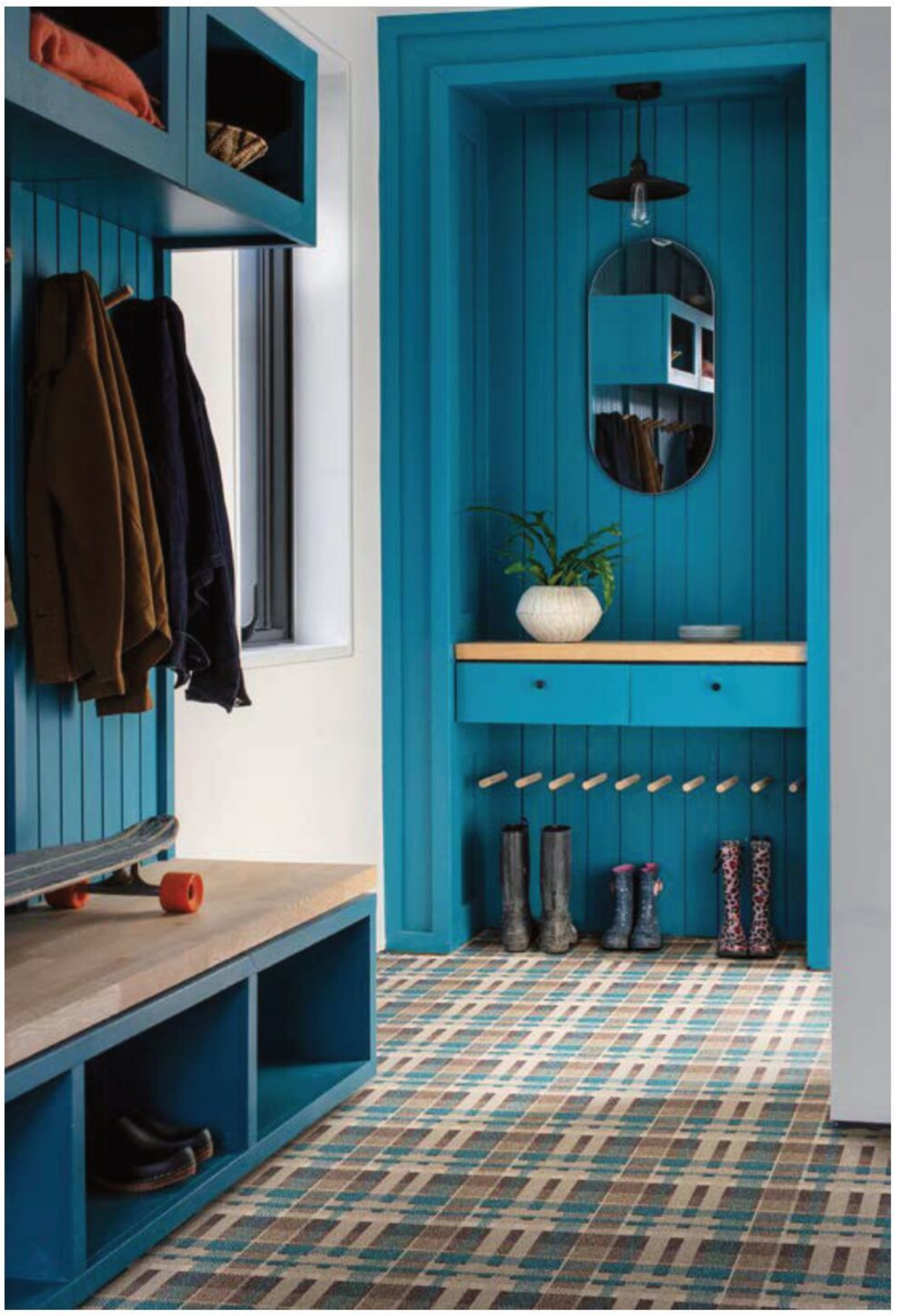
*Sunlit bespoke rug hand-knotted in wool or silk, £1,380 a square metre, Deirdre Dyson*

*Shyrdak felted wool rug, 205cm x 305cm, £2,100, Felt*

*Flux flatweave New Zealand wool rug in Lido, from 160cm x 230cm, £1,060, A Rum Fellow*

*Refined Smoke hand-knotted or hand-tufted New Zealand wool, silk or Tencel rug in Silver, from £810 a metre, Jacaranda*







*'Collaborating with young talent and established designers brings innovative design to the world of flooring.'*

Lorna Haigh, creative director, Alternative Flooring

# Design matters

The cross-pollination of ideas between makers and artists is nothing new, and collaborative relationships between top independent designers and flooring manufacturers are increasing. Aside from bringing a new perspective to a manufacturer's output, collaborative design offers clients the chance to buy the work of an artist, craftsman or interior designer whose style they admire in a form that will become a permanent part of their home.

Choosing a rug produced in this way can create a standout feature that works particularly well as a centrepiece in a room. Meanwhile, a carpet in an all-over pattern can imbue a space with a sense of the designer's as well as the homeowner's style. Alternative Flooring has developed collaborations with a stable of designers resulting in a diverse range of products. Creative director Lorna Haigh says, "Artist and weaver Margo Selby has the ability to change a standard stripe into something with depth and character, and Sophie Campbell, the winner of a student competition, has produced a striking tartan design that is fresh, contemporary and full of colour." The only task is to decide which designer's 'handwriting' most appeals.

**ABOVE LEFT** *Quirky Tartan Gallant Weaver 80 per cent wool and 20 per cent nylon carpet, £120.65 a square metre, Sophie Campbell for Alternative Flooring*

**ABOVE** *Lily Pad Autumn hooked wool rug, 240cm x 300cm, £1,295, Kit Kemp x Annie Selke at Andrew Martin*









**FROM LEFT**

*Vintage Beni Ouarain pile Berber rug, 205cm x 350cm, £4,200, Larusi*

*Tones 3 hand-tufted wool rug, 300cm x 400cm, £6,515, Nanimarquina*

*Large Valois Aged rug in Blue, 300cm x 400cm, £6,495, Oka*

*The Dee Maxi flatweave rug, 3.21m x 3.21m, £3,656.93, Peter Page x Turner Pocock*





*'Using colour in gentle, almost muddled tones means the rug will look even better with time, creating elegance with age'*

Jennifer Manners, Jennifer Manners Rugs

# Contemporary classic

"Handmade, high-quality rugs are investment pieces and so keeping these choices contemporary yet timeless makes them last for generations," says designer Jennifer Manners. "Of course, this means the pattern and colours must be appealing for years to come, too."

Rugs occupy such a conspicuous space in the room that people often take the safer option of neutral tones, thinking that they won't tire of them, but colour adds visual interest. Manners advises using a palette one loves and has returned to over time, and which will look considered throughout changes in fashion.

If using lots of colours is not appealing, Manners suggests, "Select one or two tonal colours so there is a subtlety that makes the rug almost whisper rather than shouting." A tip she shares for testing the versatility of a rug is to imagine it in both classic and modern settings. "A rug that feels right in both settings will likely stand the test of time and be gorgeous for generations to come."

**ABOVE LEFT** *Herbs power loom wool-blend rug, from £349.99, Agnella*

**ABOVE RIGHT** *Abstract Patina hand-knotted rug in Himalayan wool and bamboo silk, 180cm x 240cm, £4,148, Jennifer Manners*

**RIGHT** *The Velvet Collection wool-mix dense-pile carpet in Benedict Cream, from £80.99, Brintons*



**FEATURE** MAGGIE STEVENSON **PHOTOGRAPHS** P61 ANDY GORE. P62 (CRUCIAL TRADING) JAKE FITZJONES; (KERSAINT COBB) JON DAY PHOTOGRAPHY. P63 (AXMINSTER) JAN BALDWIN. P64 (WEAVER GREEN) PAUL RYAN-GOFF. P65 (ANDREW MARTIN) DOMINIC BLACKMORE. P66 (JENNIFER MANNERS) REI MOON / MOON RAY STUDIO; (BRINTONS) JON DAY PHOTOGRAPHY





*'When choosing an antique rug, look for a well-executed design, a good colour combination and don't be put off by repairs if they are skilfully done'*

Christopher Mould, director, Bazaar Velvet



# Enduring attraction

When thinking of traditional rugs, Persian carpets are often first to spring to mind. They have had a place in British homes for centuries, and their rich patterns have inspired new rugs and broadloom carpets that suit traditional and contemporary interiors alike.

Antique oriental rugs are a favourite of interior designers. "We often use them as a starting point for a room," says designer Henriette von Stockhausen, "because they help clients envisage the colour scheme from the beginning." Choosing a traditional rug can be confusing as similar pieces are described in different ways. Christopher Mould of Bazaar Velvet explains: "Anything older than 100 years is antique, and, for us, vintage rugs are between 50 and 70 years old."

Meanwhile, antique-looking rugs may be newly manufactured in a traditional design, or they may be distressed and sometimes over-dyed. Bazaar Velvet's Persia Reloaded collection offers examples of the latter. Mould explains that this technique results in, "Beautiful faded carpets, created from original vintage Persian pieces which are processed to produce elegant decorative designs in contemporary hues, and no two are the same." ■

**ABOVE LEFT** *Katrasi rug in jute, cotton and wool, 244cm x 305cm, £3,295, Oka*

**ABOVE RIGHT** *Morocco runner in Tetouan, made from sisal, £68 a metre, Kersaint Cobb*

**LEFT** *Antique, one-of-a-kind Sultanabad Silverwash wool rug, 250cm x 300cm, £2,900, Bazaar Velvet*

# *Suppliers of carpets and rugs*

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**ALTERNATIVE FLOORING**
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**ABOVE** *Andalucia Zahara rug, from £155, Weaver Green*

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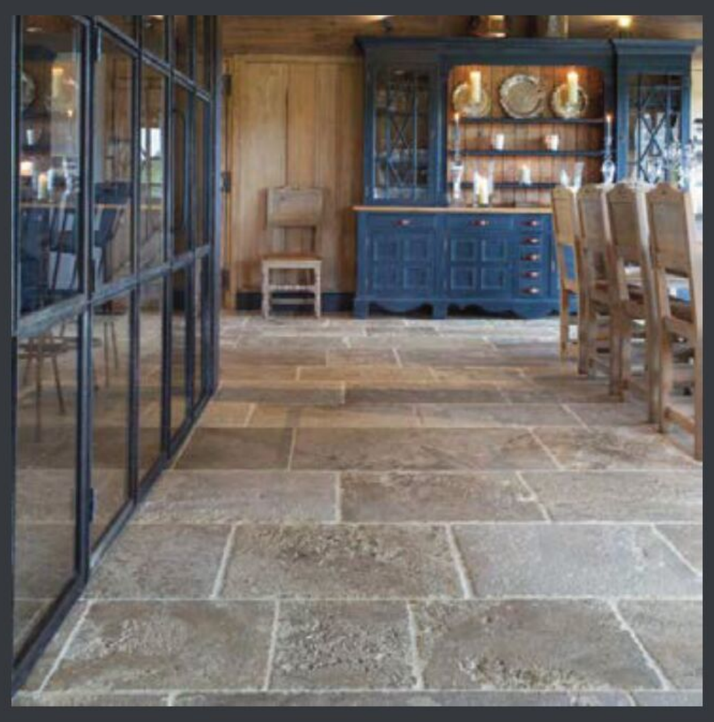
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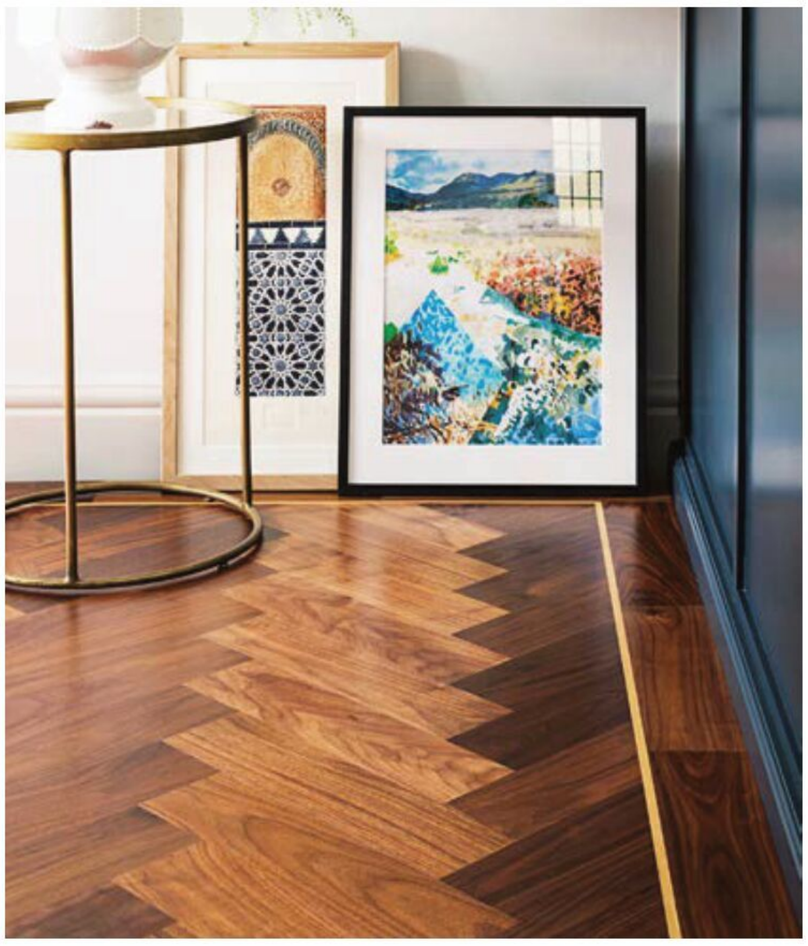
# FIRM FAVOURITES

Hard flooring, from timber to porcelain, serves as an important backdrop to any room, so it pays to choose carefully, both in terms of form and function

For centuries, properties – from country estates to cottages – have featured hard flooring. Today, classic stone, tactile timber, handcrafted tiles, reclaimed surfaces, and even manmade alternatives, can benefit the traditional home, bringing both comfort and warmth to bedrooms or living areas and low-maintenance resilience to kitchens and hallways.

Expert guidance and a careful appraisal of size, style and function to guarantee suitability for specific spaces should help ensure all the right elements are considered when tailoring choices to individual rooms. After all, a well-fitted hard floor will typically last a lifetime, so it is important to get it right both in terms of style and practicality, as well as ensuring a sympathetic fit to surroundings.

Hardwearing oak flooring is a perennial favourite and popular chevron or herringbone patterns add decorative appeal. *Prime Grade Oak Chevron in Canvas, from £144 a square metre, Trunk*





This laser-cut timber design pays homage to the work of master cabinetmakers. *Intarsia engineered oak with wenge inlays, from £354.55 a square metre, Devon & Devon*

# *Sitting room floors*

Busy reception rooms require a fine balance of durability versus comfort, so those looking for traditional, warming wood floors should choose durable hardwoods.

Versatile solid boards are the authentic option here, and can be sanded and refinished as required, but engineered floors may prove easier to install and more stable. Opting for wider widths or reclaimed floor boards will lend a traditional feel in most homes.

"Timeless herringbone, chevrons or block parquet inject character and make a statement," says Robert Walsh, CEO of Ted Todd. "Just bear in mind room size as, while larger areas can visually accommodate geometric patterns or panels, such as Parquet de Versailles, small spaces often benefit from free-flowing designs."

For those requiring a flexible all-round timber, mid-toned oak provides a versatile backdrop in all settings. Alternatively, sophisticated darker tones or walnut can be employed to bring drama and a sense of presence to formal areas, while softer wax or oil finishes impart a more natural lived-in quality and lacquers offer a classical elegance.

Thanks to its warming, mellow tones, "Natural stone can bring a soothing quality to living areas," suggests Isabel Fernandez, director of Quorn Stone. Along with replica porcelains, natural stone is also a hardy yet smart choice in rooms that lead out to the garden or where continuity demands flooring carries through to a conservatory or orangery.

Buff sandstone or limestone flags, teamed with a cosy rug, are a staple of the country home. By contrast, uniform, etched, honed or machine-cut stones work well in formal or urban environments, and decorative cut or slab marbles inject an air of luxury and gravitas.

ABOVE LEFT Parquet lends an air of formality to a room. *Walnut Premier unsealed parquet wood blocks, from £96 a square metre, The Natural Wood Flooring Company*
RIGHT The surface of this natural grade engineered oak floor has been handscraped and the grain enhanced with white oil for extra definition and texture. *Handscraped Light Smoked Hardwaxed Oiled Oak, from £66 a square metre, Beswick Stone*
RIGHT Replicate the look of traditional timber with low-maintenance, high-quality porcelain tiles, teamed with underfoor heating for warmth underfoot. *Chianti Rovere wood effect porcelain, £142.80 a square metre, Lapicida*







# Hallway floors

In entrance halls, highly resilient, characterful stone and timber is likely to be considered the traditionalist's choice in most settings and will only improve with age.

Favouring hardwoods, such as versatile oak, over softwood should help avoid marks and dents in these high-traffic areas. Meanwhile engineered timber can prove a more practical option than solid wood, as "the multi-layer core of an engineered board creates an incredibly robust and stable surface," says Keane. Look to premium or select grades of timber for a sophisticated knot-free finish and natural or rustic grades for a more relaxed aesthetic. Those looking to improve on smaller proportions, may wish to follow Walsh's advice to "introduce a herringbone or chevron laying pattern to draw the eye through the space and make it feel bigger".

When it comes to stone, practical tumbled or riven flagstones remain an enduring rustic option, but for a more formal feel, consider crisp chequerboard or honed tiles, or intricate, decorative inlaid and border designs. Definitive surfaces include granite, marble, travertine and slate.

"Limestone is a great all-rounder, as it is naturally non-slip when left unpolished and brings a wonderful tactile quality to any space," says Roselind Wilson, owner and creative director of Roselind Wilson Design. Look for variegated finishes and formats to imbue depth and character, and add interest in larger entrance halls; or by contrast, install tiles in diagonal patterns to enhance narrower areas.

For those preferring colour and pattern, resilient Victorian encaustic or geometric tiles, by the likes of Original Style and Craven Dunnill Jackson, will define and bring character to townhouses.

Look to equivalent porcelain patterns in replica stone or wood finishes for a truly maintenance-free option in all settings.



ABOVE LEFT Well-sealed, classic flagstones should resist all conditions and be easy to clean. Tumbled surfaces are a forgiving, non-slip option. *Tumbled antiqued ash limestone, £60 a square metre, Floors of Stone*

ABOVE Honed marble tiles are ideal for recreating classic chequerboard flooring which visually expands more restricted spaces. *Fitz honed marble tiles, £90 a square metre, Mandarin Stone*

BELOW An entrance hall is can be an ideal place to experiment with more decorative designs. Interior design by Mark Gillette. *Bespoke floor in PPX Honed Stone, £POA, Stone Age*







# Kitchen floors

Flooring that shrugs off the dirt and rigours of everyday life is essential in the hub of the home, and stone has long been a perennial favourite in the English home. Robust granite, high-density limestone and water-resistant slate are the traditional stone choice here. Marble is best avoided as it is easily damaged by anything acidic.

Safe, non-slip, textured, tumbled or riven finishes will prove ideal for classic kitchen styles. "And can be more forgiving when it comes to everyday crumbs and dirt," points out Fernandez. Larger tile formats with minimal grout lines offer easier maintenance. "We often suggest using a versatile 900mm by 600mm tile as it tends to work well in both small and larger areas," Fernandez adds.

Alternatively, tactile terracotta and brick offers warming appeal particularly suited to older country-style properties, although both will require regular sealing to prevent staining. So, as is the case for more precious stones or timber, do consider replica porcelain alternatives, which, unlike decorative ceramic floor tiles that may break on impact, are an almost indestructible and more versatile design option. "Porcelain can also be a fantastic choice when extending onto a terrace or patio to create a seamless flow between house and garden," suggests Colin Roby-Welford, creative director at Fired Earth.

Higher maintenance timber floors can be used to impart character to any setting and are particularly effective when looking to bring unity alongside an injection of warmth to larger, open-plan schemes. Opting for engineered flooring over solid boards might be preferable as it should avoid movement or possible warping due to moisture. Ideally choose a design with surface texture to provide extra grip underfoot.

ABOVE LEFT Durable clay-baked geometric tiles can be used to create infinite patterns and create flow between a kitchen and hallway. *Victorian Geometric floor tiles in Harrogate, from £115.95 a square metre, Original Style*

ABOVE RIGHT Larger format stone tiles in tonal variations add interest underfoot in large kitchens. *Farrow Grey Limestone tiles, from £49 a square metre, Quorn Stone*

RIGHT A hand-distressed, rustic finish helps recreate age-old patina. *Shanklin Rustic Hand Grade extra-large oak engineered planks finished with hardwax oil, from £262.74 a square metre, Havwoods*







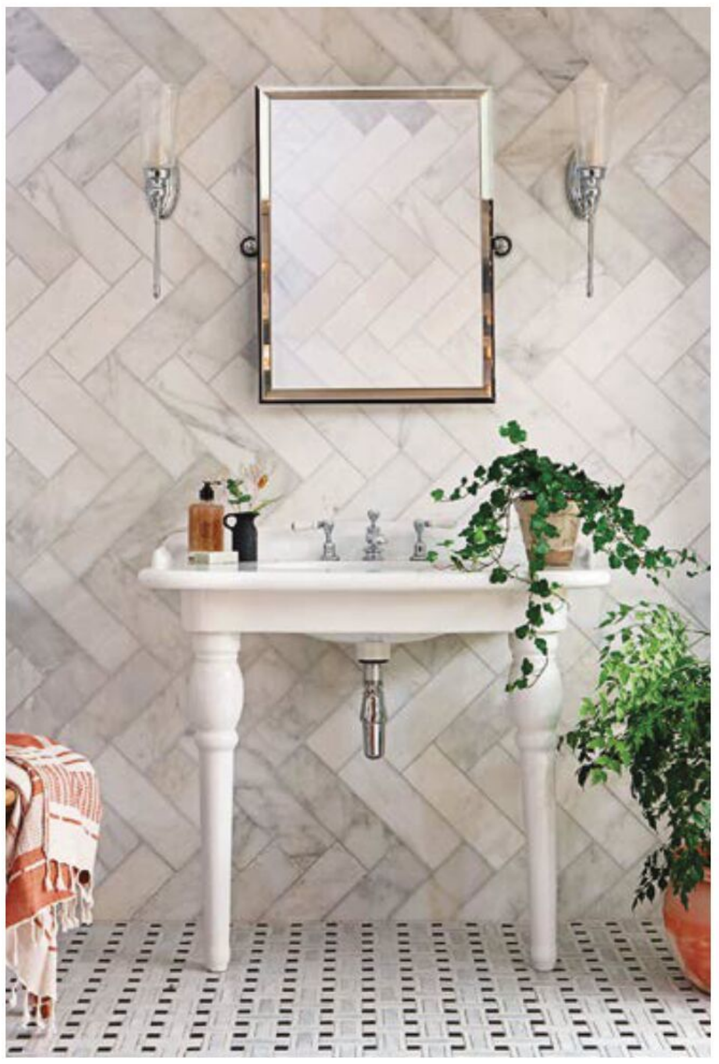
# Bathroom floors

It pays to be practical in the bathroom. Where possible choose hard flooring that can be teamed with underfloor heating to ensure warmth and comfort underfoot, alongside compatibility with the latest energy-efficient solar panels and heat pumps.

Well-sealed stone is a natural companion to most house styles as well as to underfloor heating, and traditional travertine, limestone or slate are popular options, while marble is best for a luxurious hotel look according to Hamish Smith, managing and creative director at Artisan of Devizes. "As, whether crisp white, dramatically dark or perfectly pink, each tile offers unique intricate veining," he says. Whatever the choice, "do be aware that matt and textured finishes are more slip-resistant than polished stone," advises Jason Cherrington, director at Lapicida. Decorative mosaics offer natural grip underfoot, however, opting for larger tiles and uniform finishes will help compact areas appear larger.

Where weight is an issue and reinforcing floors is not possible, stone can be substituted for robust, lookalike porcelains, with precision-cut tiles offering an almost grout-free finish in grander or urban homes. Timeless timber planks that defy eras or more formal parquet are also prime candidates for porcelain replication. "However, don't dismiss the real thing," says Ted Todd's Robert Walsh, "as with the right care and finish, engineered hardwoods are a viable option and suited to underfloor heating. Select wide boards to stretch smaller rooms visually."

Investing in reclaimed ceramic, encaustic or terracotta tiles can also bring added detail and authenticity to rural or smaller properties. Patterned ceramic, geometric and border tiles tend to work well in cottage-style or Victorian homes. "The key is to think about scale and balance," says Roby-Welford. " As a general rule, larger rooms can take bolder designs that might otherwise crowd a smaller space."



TOP LEFT & ABOVE Digitally printed porcelain tiles can recreate the meless quality of stone or marble plus they are lighter and can be easier to maintain.
*Mimica Iceberg rectified porcelain tiles (top left), from £38.40 a square metre, Mandarin Stone*
*Bathroom designed by Obsidian Interiors (above) with Antique Marble porcelain tiles in Macchia Vecchia, from £58.80 a square metre, Lapicida*



ABOVE Marble brings opulence to bathrooms, with mosaics offering slip resistance underfoot.
*Diamond Sawn tiles, £126.16 a square metre; East Hampton basketweave honed mosaic marble, £164.22 a square metre, Fired Earth*
RIGHT American designer Kirsten Blazek used Vejer reclaimed tiles for this feature floor.
*Reclaimed patterned tiles, from £198 a square metre; Reclaimed terracotta tiles, from £158 a square metre, Bert & May*





# Bedroom floors

With warmth and comfort a priority in the bedroom, traditional timber is the natural choice, and ideal for those with allergies or asthma. Both softwoods and hardwoods in solid or engineered formats are an option here, and those worried about noise, should look to deep-pile rugs to dampen footfall and provide extra comfort underfoot.

Taking cues from surroundings or structural timbers can help determine floor styles, with European oak and Douglas Fir tending to be popular choices, as they combine texture, depth and warmth with a versatile neutral palette. "Opting for paler, neutral tones can also create the illusion of a larger, brighter area which is crucial to well-being," says Walsh. Whereas darker wood tones, such as walnut or teak, instil a feeling of sophistication and charm in grander settings.

Specifying an oiled or waxed finish should enhance any timber's warm appearance, natural texture and grain, and tends be more fitting in most bedrooms than glossy lacquers. Selecting floating, engineered boards can negate the need to lay structural boards across joists, allowing for the direction in which the flooring is laid to positively influence proportion. "In a narrow room, for example, laying boards horizontally will help create an illusion of additional width," explains Peter Keane, director of The Natural Wood Floor Company.

For an authentic time-worn patina, consider sourcing period appropriate antique and reclaimed timber. "Which, incidentally, is often harder than new, as it is already weathered," says Alex Main, director of The Main Company. Alternatively, where new is preferred, look to specialist finishes and textured surfaces akin to an aged floor.

Alternatively, tiles offer an opportunity to inject pattern, depth and character in more relaxed settings, particularly warm-to-the-touch terracotta, stone, cement or clay encaustics. ■



ABOVE LEFT A natural, oiled oak floor in a mid-hue is ideal for a more traditional look. *Guildhall oak flooring finished in hardwax oil. Solid boards, from £94 a square metre; engineered boards, from £93 a square metre, Broadleaf*

ABOVE RIGHT Sustainable antique or reclaimed timber has a warmth and resonance all its own. *Dark Colonial Teak solid boards, £POA, Rare Finds Collection by Ted Todd*

LEFT Modern decorative motifs on handmade encaustic tiles bring a new dimension to a classic bedroom. *Sunset patchwork encaustic cement tiles, £138 a square metre, Otto Tiles & Design*

FEATURE PAULA WOODS **PHOTOGRAPHS** P70 © GYORGY KOROSSY. P71 (DEVON & DEVON) © BIEKE CLAESSENS. P73 (HAYWOODS) © RORY GARDINER. P74 (BERT & MAY) © VIRTUALLY HERE STUDIOS

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ABOVE *Terracotta tiles, £46 a square metre, Floors of Stone*

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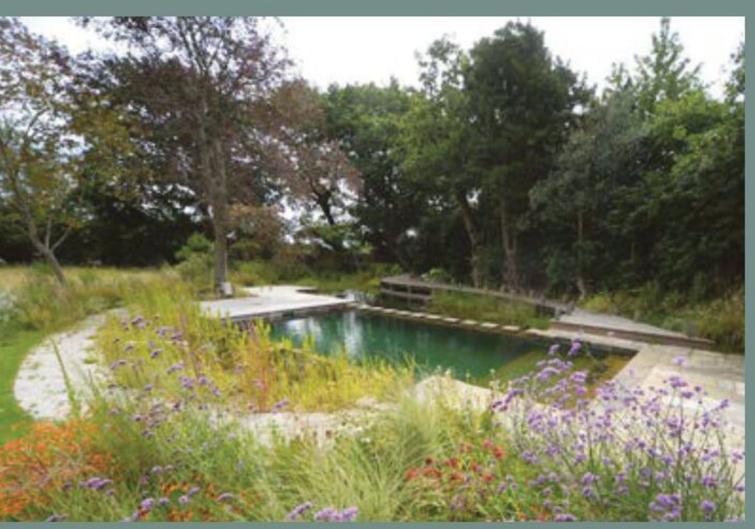
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# *Heritage* REVIVAL

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

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

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

# *Walls & Ceilings*

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

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

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





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

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

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

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



## WALLS & CEILINGS STYLE GUIDE

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

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

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

# *Knobs, handles and other interior ironmongery*

## GEORGIAN

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







**1** *Pair of Georgian door handles on plate in polished brass, £30.69, Heritage Brass*
**2** *Georgian plain rim lock, from £294, The Period Ironmonger*
**3** *Regency drawer pull in aged brass, £34.50, Willow & Stone*

## VICTORIAN

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



**4** *Acanthus cupboard pull handle in nickel pewter, from £7.37, The Victorian Emporium*
**5** *Merrick knob in satin brass, £18.84, Armac Martin*
**6** *Pair of Claverley door handles on square rose in black iron, £28.50, Heritage Brass*

## EDWARDIAN

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



**7** *Pair of antique Edwardian brass pull door handles, £90, Architectural Decor*
**8** *Pair of Edwardian Oaken lever handles on a square rose in polished brass, from £125, The Period Ironmonger*
**9** *Pair of solid ebony and brass Beehive door knobs with brass rose, £69, Willow & Stone*

# *Fireplaces & Radiators*

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

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

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

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





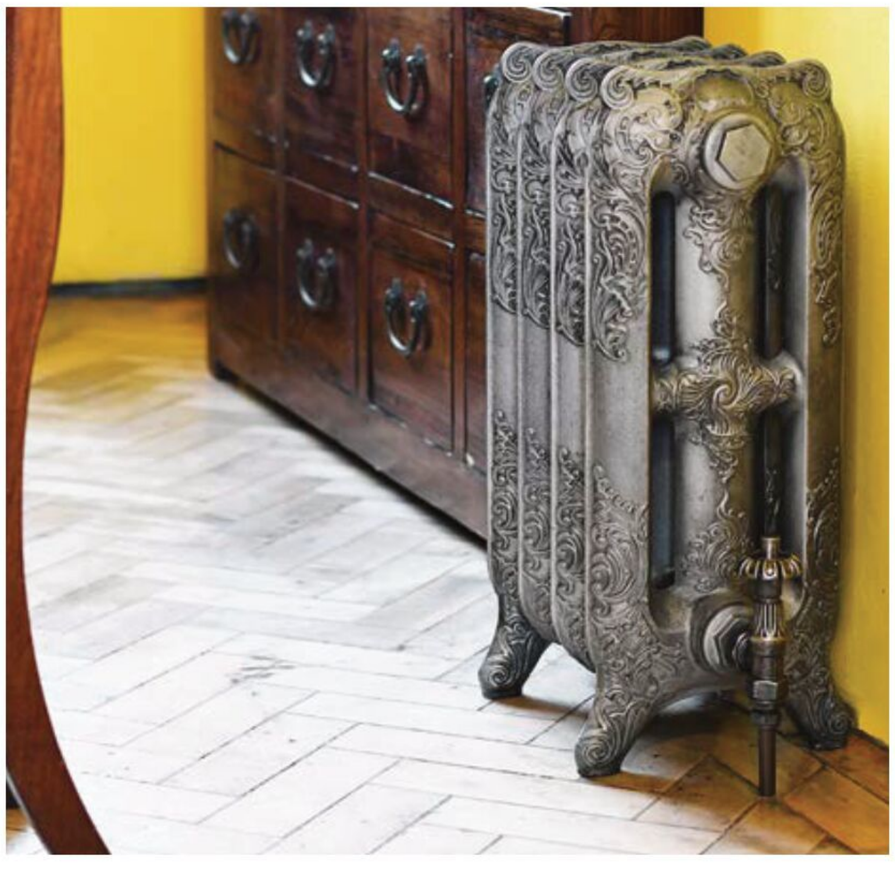



## FIREPLACES & RADIATORS STYLE GUIDE

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

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

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



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

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

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

**FEATURE** KATHERINE SORRELL **PHOTOGRAPHS** P81 (ND STUDIOS) HELEN CATHART. P83 (JAMB) SIMON UPTON / THE INTERIOR ARCHIVES

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ABOVE *Argyll Georgian marble fireplace, price available on application, Jamb*

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# *The Considered* COUNTRY HOME

Leading designers and experts share their advice on how to work with period features and incorporate practical elements in rural abodes great and small

## *Heart of the matter*



### HENRIETTE VON STOCKHAUSEN – VSP INTERIORS

A core part of the country house is the kitchen. In my opinion, the first thing to consider when decorating a country kitchen is how you can make it feel like a room and not just a practical space. Treat it like a drawing room or principal bedroom; pay attention to fabrics, lighting and comfort as well as practicality and suitability to lifestyle. By doing this, the kitchen will feel more inviting. I adore incorporating antiques like dressers along with picture lights, fine art and furnishings that one wouldn't expect to see in a kitchen so that it feels more like a room. Add antique rugs to soften the space and help with unwanted echoes in larger spaces, unless you have young children or dogs, in which case, stay away!





## *A sense of proportion*



### FLORA SOAMES

This lovely, lofty sitting room with great proportions and plenty of light is in an 18th-century country house which had last been decorated 20 years prior to me working on it. The clients were keen to make it work for entertaining first and foremost, so circulation around the room was key.

Large-scale furniture (and not too much of it), with accents of colour and pattern, make this quite neutral palette feel airy and sophisticated. The central ottoman, sofas and slipper chairs make the mantelpiece the main focal point, but with many opportunities to pull up other occasional chairs. Behind the sofa is a console which acts as a table but also houses a mechanised pop-up television for comfortable film nights. The clients had lovely artwork and *objets*, so my job was relatively straightforward in making the room flow and their collection breathe and not feel too overcrowded or formal.

# *Period features*



**JESSICA BUCKLEY**

Often a country house has distinctive period features to work with and be sympathetic to. In this charming early 20th-century country house, we were invited by the clients to transform a large, unused and rather formal drawing room into one which was colourful, comfortable and inviting.

With oak-panelled rooms it can be very tempting to follow a more traditional and formal approach to decor, but we wanted to make sure that the room was used on a more everyday basis, so the trick was to create a cosy and informal feel through the introduction of layers of bolder colours and patterns: Swedish blues, raspberry reds and a vibrant multi-coloured print on the armchairs provide a striking counterbalance to the walls.

*'Often a country house has distinctive period features to be sympathetic to'*



# A smaller scale



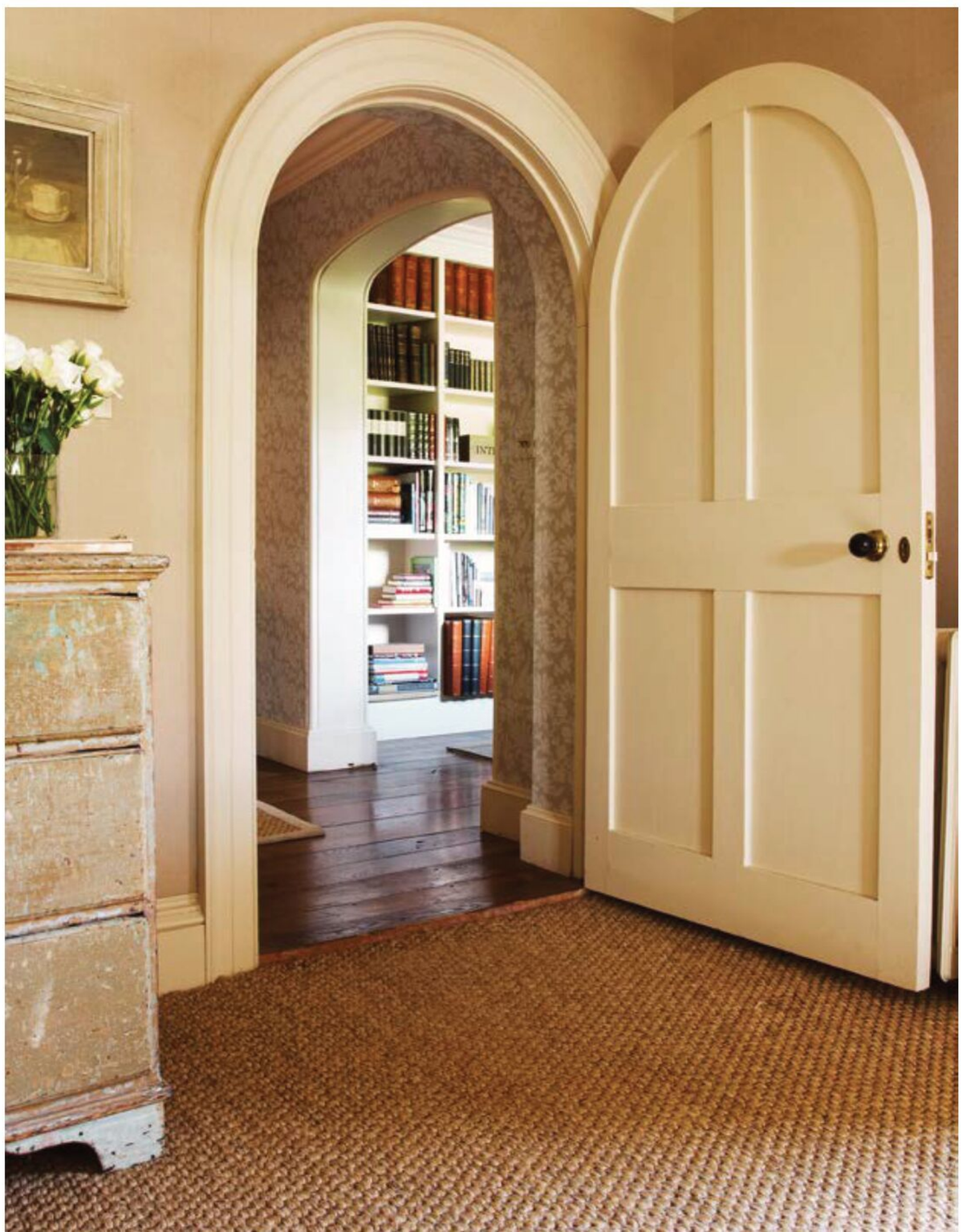
**CARLOS GARCIA**

Smaller country homes might not have the luxury of space for a dedicated boot room, but a small hall, a window seat or an alcove under the stairs can all be suitable areas to create a versatile space to accommodate the needs of a boot room, the perfect spot to enjoy a cup of tea after your walk or to read a favourite book.

Here (*right*), an antique Hungarian bench offers seating space to comfortably take your boots off after a walk along with storage to place your dog's lead and towels to dry your canine walking companion. The hard lines of the bench have been softened with a feather French mattress made with a suzani, and several floral cushions. This may be a practical space, but it certainly need not be dull.

Reclaimed pamment or terracotta tiles are a most suitable flooring for high-traffic and muddy areas and instantly add age and patina to the space.

I am also a big fan of curtain doors with casual headings and heavily interlined. Make sure the fabric is suitably robust. I tend to wrap the bottom part of it with leather to avoid fraying and getting dirty with mud. A thermometer by the door makes sure you'll be suitably clothed before leaving for your morning walk.



# Practical flooring



**SUSIE ATKINSON**

It is so important to get flooring right in the country – being practical is key. I never a use dark grey or black slate on floors in boot rooms, kitchens or laundry rooms. I really like the look of it, but the problem is that when mud or water dries, it leaves obvious marks. I love a brick floor for a boot room, perhaps in a herringbone pattern – mud simply dries and can be brushed away. I love oak timber floors and tiles, too, if the house is old. It's always fun to try and find flooring from a reclamation yard – old terracotta sets, or tumbled marble or stone. I often use a combination of brick and timber to form a pattern in hallways as it can look really interesting.

I have a thing about striped or patterned runners on staircases – especially if the walls are painted in a plain colour. I have used antique kilim runners and joined them together, which looks great. I also like using sisals as they're strong and wear well. Traditional woven rush matts look fabulous in country houses – especially over stone or timber floors – they add texture and a welcoming cosiness.



# An *indulgent bed*



## GUY GOODFELLOW

The four-poster bed was invented to insulate the occupant from the cold country house bedrooms of the medieval period. Eventually, insulation in the form of panelled walls, lined and interlined curtains, and eventually central heating, enabled country house owners to escape from the mass of curtaining.

At its peak, in the 18th century, the 'state bed' was a status symbol in the more important stately homes. It was the grandest interpretation of the four-poster bed and was installed in case a king or queen, or other member of the royal family announced they were coming to stay while travelling the country.

Today, the four-poster bed remains the ultimate luxury and can be a very expensive investment. This antique mahogany frame (*below right*) is hung with fabrics and metallic trimmings. Hiding the tracks (if the curtains are required to function) is always tricky – try utilising a second internal pelmet behind which the curtains can run. Here, though, the curtains are on short, fixed tracks, eliminating the need for the second internal valance.

The pink and grey bed (*right*) in a Bennison printed linen, is a much simpler constructiona design made popular by David Hicks, where a lightweight wooden frame is suspended from the ceiling and fabric is stretched over it (known as the 'tester roof'). From this, hangs the simple plain valance to the three exposed sides, and the curtains are hung from fixed tracks around each corner and also across the headboard wall. This means there are no posts at all. My own bed is the same and I cannot tell you how nice it is to wake up in each morning.





# *Awkward angles*



## SAMANTHA TODHUNTER

Embracing quirky features – in the eaves of this country house (*opposite*) for example – is a charming way to maximise otherwise lost space and create pockets of interest brimming with charm and character.

Putting the bath underneath the eaves in the principal bathroom allowed us to enhance the sense of space and volume in the room and has the lovely bonus of great views from the bath. Dressing the windows with soft floral blinds take that sense of the utilitarian out of the room and make it feel more like a cocooning haven. ■

**FEATURE** KATY MCLEAN **PHOTOGRAPHS** P86 © PAUL MASSEY. P87 (HENRIETTE VON STOCKHAUSEN PORTRAIT) © STEVE KELYNACK.P88 (SITTING ROOM) © ZAC AND ZAC. P89 (SUSIE ATKINSON PORTRAIT) © JAKE SUGDEN; (SUSIE ATKINSON HALLWAY) © ROWLANDROQUES-O'NEIL. P90 © JONATHAN BOND. P91 (GUY GOODFELLOW PORTRAIT) © ROBERT BARBER; (BEDROOMS) © SIMON UPTON; (SAMANTHA TODHUNTER PORTRAIT) © JONATHAN BOND.



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# DECORATING

Inspiration, tips and ideas for choosing and updating fabrics, paints, furniture and more



## WELL DRESSED

With the groundwork in place and major decisions made, it is time for the fun to begin: choosing a palette of fabrics, wallpapers and paints to achieve a polished new look. We always advise getting the largest samples possible and seeing the full scale of the pattern in photographs, too – what is overpowering on a hand-held square can be divine on the full-height expanse of a wall. Take swatches along to showrooms to build a mood board of tones, patterns and textures for a cohesive, layered scheme.

*Wallpapers and fabrics, all from The Cotswolds Manor collection, Zoffany*

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN

Fabrics, papers and trims from a selection at Design Centre Chelsea Harbour showrooms. *Background wallcovering, Pierre Frey; fabrics (top to bottom): Colony, George Spencer Designs, GP & J Baker, Alton Brooke, GP & J Baker, Manuel Canovas, Pierre Frey; table, Gallotti & Rice*

# *Creating a* JOYFUL HOME

Celebrate colour, pattern and textures with interiors designed to uplift, raise a smile and create a sense of joy



ABOVE *Happy Flower Autumn rug, £1,495, Annie Selke for Kit Kemp Rugs*

Following the events of recent years and as life returns to a sense of normality, there has been a noticeable shift in attitude towards decorating the home. Perhaps because we have learnt to embrace our homes for the sanctuaries they are, perhaps because of a need for more joy, and perhaps because of the time designers were able to spend directing their creativity in new ways during lockdown, there is a palpable sense of excitement, renewed vigour and confidence in decorating. Being able to visit showrooms again and touch, see and fully rejoice in textile, wallpaper, furniture and accessory offerings after so long is joyous indeed.

This happiness is captured over the following pages, exploring inspiring ways to use colour, pattern and texture to express character and make home an uplifting place that comforts through indulgent luxuries, excites through use of pattern, and brings cheer through confident use of favourite colours, no matter how bold. Be brave, be unabashed and take delight in decorating.





*Walls, Mustard Jar, from £25.20 for 2.5l Matt, Crown*

LEFT (*from top*): *Joyful Orange, Joyful Green and Passionate Pink, from £24 for 1l, YesColours Paints*

FAR LEFT Designer and colour enthusiast Minnie Kemp. See below for her advice on using colour to bring joy.

*The Bobbin Mirror, Blue, £957, Susie Atkinson Studio*





# PLAYFUL COLOUR

Whether adding just a pop of colour, painting the walls or layering a host a favourite hues, embrace tones that make you happy and have fun with expressing character through colour. Here we offer ideas for bringing vibrant tones to interiors – pick and mix, or just add a single accent to draw the eye and boost the spirits.

*Minnie Kemp, of Kit Kemp Design Studio, is an advocate of colourful, fun and happy interiors*

"Colour is all around us, and not something to be afraid of. I am most happy walking my sausage dogs surrounded by nature enjoying the tapestry of colour the natural world has to offer – from forest greens to purple heathers and yellow gorse, set against opal blue skies. I strive to recreate that excitement in an interior. People can tend to think natural colours are drab and boring, but they most certainly aren't! Think of a wildflower meadow and all that vibrancy.

I personally love bright, bold colour and contrast – fuchsia pinks in particular. I'm working on a residential project in Palm Springs at the moment. The desert landscape is littered with pink bougainvillea and I'm trying to recreate that excitement and juxtaposition inside the home by using dramatic block colours on the upholstery against fresh, neutral-painted walls for that sense of calm.

You don't always have to choose the brightest of the bright. Paint a colour wheel and see how different hues work together and play with the gradients. Just using different shades of blue can look very interesting and create a layered interior with depth – though I will say if you are using one colour, do add a really lovely bright contrast piping on upholstery, just to bring it all together and add some definition.

I hate the idea of being boxed in by rules but there are fundamentals in colour that can make it less daunting. Do your homework. There are lots of books

ABOVE *Lily Pad spring wool rug, £1,295, Kit Kemp x Annie Selke at Andrew Martin*

ABOVE LEFT *Mustique box, small, £75, Jonathan Adler*



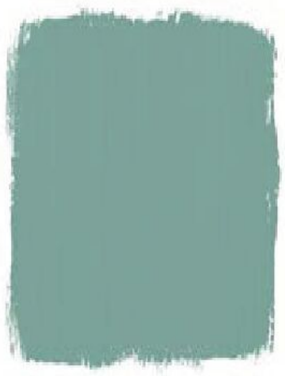


ABOVE *Nouveau Open light, Denim, £450, Rothschild & Bickers*

LEFT *Marlia armchair, from £1,030, Ercol*

BELOW *(from left): Barcelona Orange and Provence, from £23.95 for 1l Chalk Paint, both Annie Sloan*







LEFT *Watercolours outdoor cushion, Ochre, £21, Fy*

BELOW *Tangier coffee table, Wedgewood and Yves Blue, £2,950, by Suzanne Sharp for The Lacquer Company*





*Florence bed, Rhubarb, £1,150; Amalfi drawers, £890; Oliver drum shade, Mustard, £87, all Sofa.com*

**STYLE NOTES:**

- Use a colour wheel to see how different colours and shades work together
- Use a patterned piece to combine colours with confidence and pull out block colours in accessories
- Transform a room with a bright rug and accessories







ABOVE LEFT. *Fabric swatch, Cinchona, Tropical, £202 a metre, George Spencer Designs*

ABOVE *Ted table lamp, £91 with straight empire shade in pink block-printed cotton, £69, Pooky*

LEFT *Cushions, Arlo (various colours), £42 a metre, Jane Churchill*

out there dedicated to colour theory: *Color* by Betty Edwards is a particular favourite of mine.

Master weaver Mary Restieaux once told me that adding just a strip of black to a colour scheme or weave will lift the colours and make them dance. It's a bit like alchemy. We all strive to create that perfect blend. Add a little black, or dark wood to your interiors to make your colours sing.

If you are nervous, start small. Add some lovely cushions or a bright lamp and go from there – or a rug. A rug can transform a plain interior. Interiors that are too 'chic' and matchy-matchy can be stuffy and boring. Take a walk on the wild side and embrace a life with colour. There is no end to the joy it brings."



Artist Diane Hill, showcasing wallpaper and fabric from her collaboration with Harlequin, provides advice on using pattern (*below*).



# UPLIFTING PATTERN

From botanical designs to chic geometrics, patterns offer a creative and imaginative outlet for design. Whether taking a maximalist approach or just adding a feature piece, adding pattern will enrich and bring cheer to any room of the house. Here we have curated a scheme in co-ordinating colours so the whole does not overwhelm. Choose colours and patterns that speak to heart and attract the eye.

*Diane Hill, chinoiserie artist, celebrates the beauty of pattern in her collaboration with Harlequin*

"For me, pattern is everything. I could not be surrounded by plain walls – I would at least have to have big, patterned artwork on a plain painted wall. I've just had my bedroom completely decorated with murals on all four walls, as well as full-on pattern on all the furnishings. It is very maximalist, and I think a bedroom is a perfect place to really embrace pattern. No one is coming in to make a judgement; it's just for you and not the entire family. I was conscious of this in my designs for Harlequin, and we have created matching fabrics and wallpapers. I think they will look spectacular used on walls, a headboard and curtains to really envelop the room in pattern.

For rooms downstairs, I might be a bit more reserved. I'm thinking of having one of the wallpapers put in two large frames on either side of the fireplace, so it has impact but doesn't have to take over the room....of course, I'll be layering in more pattern through accessories, and the curtains too!

Chinoiserie is my main love. It is so classic and beautiful and has been popular since the 18th century. It is so versatile and can work from very traditional, grand settings to cottages to very chic, minimalist interiors where it is a feature wall in a room of white.

So many textile designs are inspired by nature, and I think chinoiserie brings that joyous feeling of nature inside; the style and the colours are just so happy. I'm

ABOVE, FROM TOP

*Poplin and Vivid Geranium paint, £50 for 2.5l Emulsion, Warner House*

*Clam Shell mirror, round, £1,812, Porta Romana*

*Fern wallpaper, £127 a roll, Cole & Son*

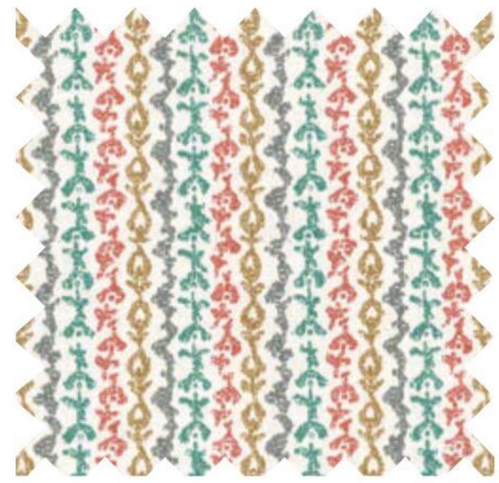
*Anatolia chaise longue, Susie Q linen, £2,640, Mind The Gap*



ABOVE *Panarea side plate, £56 for two, Aeolian collection, Mila-London*

RIGHT *Bobbin hand-painted lamp, £425; Tamahu hand-painted lampshade, £165, both Newall x Wicklewood*















ABOVE *Sofa in Velvet Wonderland Double Dragon, Green, £139 a metre, Linwood*

RIGHT *(from top):*

*Eze, Rose/Noisette, £63.50 a metre, Marvic Textiles*

*Trapeze, Jardin, £276 a metre, Pierre Frey*

*O-Gee Whizz, Echinacea, £POA, Britannia collection by Zandra Rhodes for Gainsborough*



**STYLE NOTES:**

- Embrace maximalism, layering floral patterns with stripes and geometrics
- Create a statement with one patterned piece or by framing a wallpaper
- Add pattern in small details such as frames, cushions and lampshades

ABOVE *Crystalline and Cherry Wine paints, from £20 for 0.94l, Ben Interior Matte, Benjamin Moore*

LEFT ABOVE *Trellis rug, Natural Wool/ Racing Green, from £396 (92cm x 153cm), Cosy Coco*

LEFT *Papillon Chinois cushion, Teal, £90, Designers Guild*

RIGHT *Wallpaper, Aspa Green, £94.50 a metre (minimum order 15 metres), Penny Morrison*



classically trained, in China, and wanted to capture the artistry of painting on silk in the designs for Harlequin, which we have done, but we've made it accessible as a wallpaper and adjusted the proportions for a family home, and refined the styles and colours for a brighter, modern feel. [Florence shown on walls in portrait photo, opposite page, top left.]

Chinoiserie is great on walls and allows more patterns and colours to be layered. I like to add a contrast to the organic nature of it with geometrics – lattice or trellis – or more vertical, orderly designs. Pull out some of the colours to really make it sing and add lots of contrast. Just go for it and be maximalist. There are endless possibilities to working with pattern."








ABOVE *Balboa tall pendant light, £3,695, Andrew Martin*

LEFT *Splendid Mohair in various colours, £259 a metre, Zimmer + Rohde*

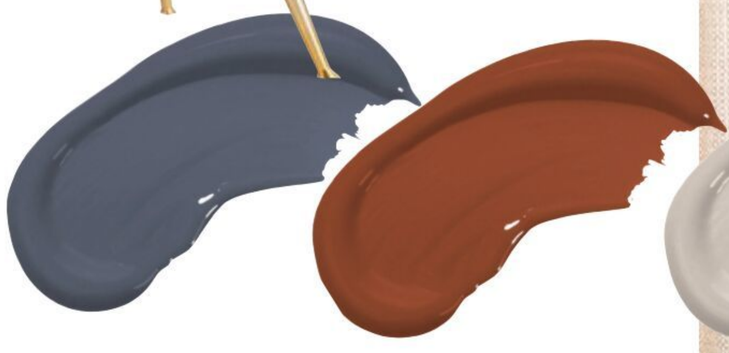
FAR RIGHT *Selection of fabrics from The Golden Age collection, from £174 a metre, de Le Cuona. Thibier Chair by Cox London*

RIGHT *Birkdale small stone bust, £25, One World*





LEFT *Leandro lounge chair in Paprika velvet, £3,933, Arteriors*





# INDULGENT TEXTURES

The way a room feels is important for creating comfort and luxury. Layer plenty of tactile textures – from opulent wools, silks and linens through to hard surfaces such as carved stone, polished wood, and smooth and patinated metals. We have showcased how neutrals can be full of interest and enriched through deeper touches of colour.

*Bernie de Le Cuona, founder of de Le Cuona, knows the importance of combining exquisite textures throughout the home*

"Interiors should feel as beautiful as they appear. Visually layering harmoniously coloured textures creates a sense of comfort, and selecting natural, organic materials can bring a sense of well-being and happiness at home.

Linen is my favourite fabric and one of the most versatile as it lends itself to elegant layering. It can be used to make the sheerest, finest curtains as well as the heaviest, textured upholstery and everything in between. Consider combining a stonewashed slubby linen with a lustrous cashmere velvet – our most popular linen, Vintage Canvas, is a painted raw linen, and in the shade of Cement is the ultimate matt contrast to our more lustrous cloths, such as Old Hollywood. Both are from The Golden Age collection.

The softer textures of linen, wool, silk and cashmere contrast with the harder surfaces of wood, stone and handcrafted ceramics, but all have the common thread of beautiful natural materials. The hand of an artisan also imbues pieces with a sense of luxury. Having beautiful pieces of craftsmanship in a room brings a little bit of joy into it.

Colours are also important, whether bringing in richer tones or keeping things pared back. You can create restful moods by limiting colour to naturals and emphasising and elevating textures. If you use several shades of the same hue, the pattern is created in the textures.

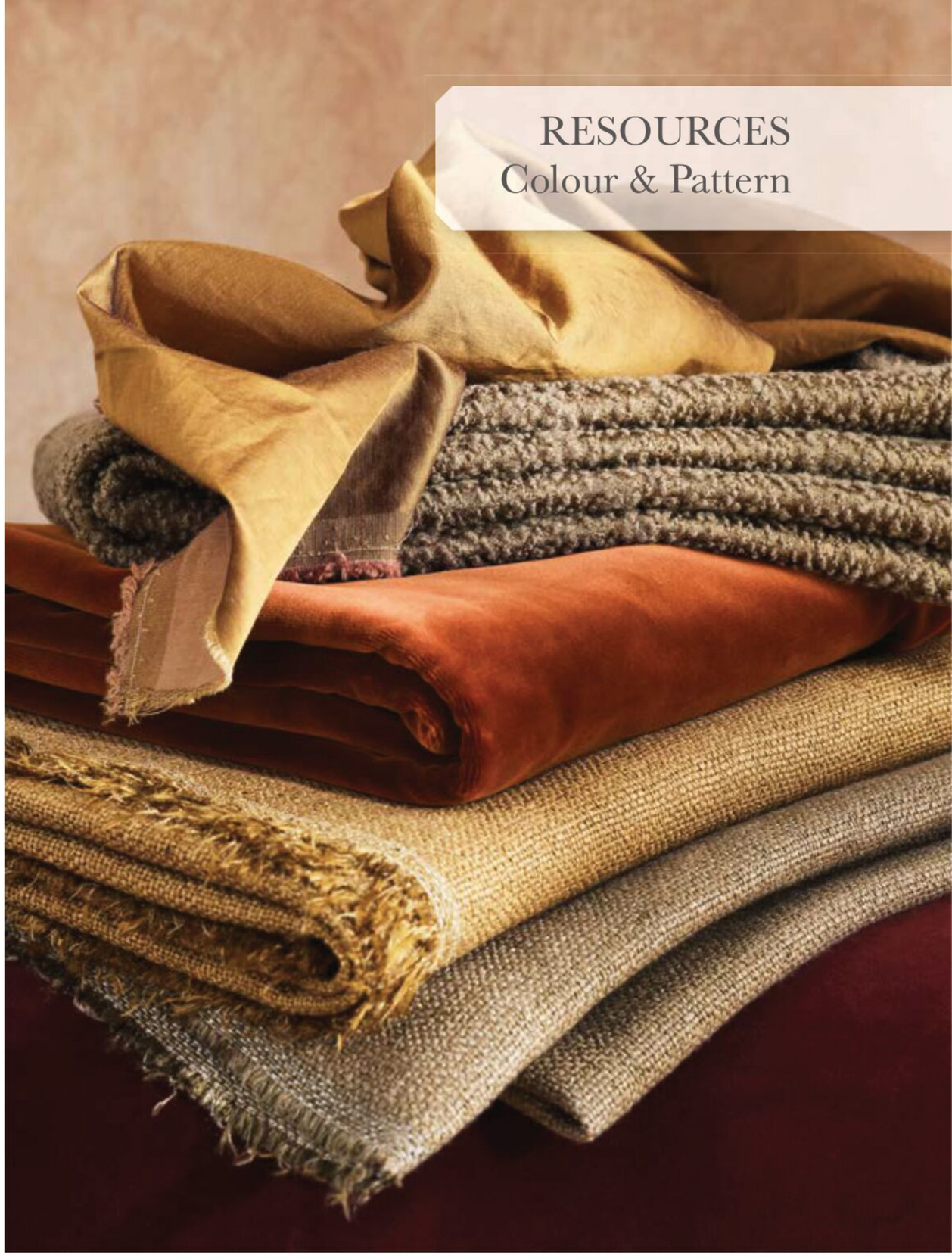
Designing a sophisticated neutral scheme takes an expert eye and a layered composition of textures and tones. For excitement, add a touch of contrasting colour. I love terracotta, old gold or black; just a little makes a beautiful neutral scheme exciting.

Really indulging in textures that add comfort and calm can remove the need for further ornamentation. Fabrics should always be a joy to touch and bring a sense of well-being. Touch connects us to life and our homes should be living spaces." ■

ABOVE RIGHT *Curtain, Tango, Ivory, £150 a metre, Larsen*

ABOVE LEFT *Paint swatches in (from left): Royal Sapphire, Urban Fox and Tumbledown, all £41.95 for 2.5l Matt Emulsion, Victory Colours*

**FEATURE** KATY MCLEAN **PHOTOGRAPHS** P96 (CROWN) © JON DAY. P97 (THE LACQUER COMPANY) © WING CHAN; P98 (PORTRAIT) © ANDY GORE. P99 (NEWALL & WICKLEWOOD) © JONATHAN BOND; (ZANDRA RHODES) © PAUL BURT.



ABOVE *Fabrics from The Golden Age collection, including linens, silks, superfine merino and wool bouclés, from £174 a metre, de Le Cuona*

## *Everything for a colourful, uplifting interior*

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*Wallpaper, Belinda Misty Blue, £29 a square metre, Sandberg*



# *Dressed for* DINNER

The formal dining room is back in vogue, so decorate it with ornate wallcoverings, lighting and tableware and create a space to enchant and delight

There has never been a better time to make dinner parties and soirees more memorable with a dining room grand enough for the occasion. From elaborate suppers to leisurely Sunday lunches, serve a feast for everyone to enjoy in the splendour of a room decorated to impress.

Indulge in a decadent wallcovering such as an exquisite hand-painted wallpaper in rich hues or be bold and choose a dark, dramatic colour for the walls; either will make a grand statement night and day, even when the room is not in use. Remember the visual impact that can be gained from painting the ceiling a rich colour too.

Factor in a lighting scheme that delivers on style and practicality with a combination of light sources to provide an ambient mood suitable for eating in. Invest in furniture that brings a requisite air of formality but is luxurious and sufficiently comfortable for guests to feel relaxed.

A smart dining room also offers the perfect excuse to set the table with extra special tableware, serving bowls and platters, and elegant glasses and decanters, so enjoy adding the finishing touches to a room fit for any banquet.



LEFT *Claverton dining chair, £895; Ruffelen extendable dining table £3,395, both Oka.*

RIGHT *Walls, Beyond Blue; Highlight stripe, Blue Vein, both £54 for 2.5l Pure Flat Emulsion Paint & Paper Library*







ABOVE *Dunloe dining chair in Ochre velvet, £595, Soho Home*

LEFT *Rider dining bench in Rialto Peacock velvet, £1,895, Jonathan Adler*

FAR LEFT *White-painted beech and linen seat Romsey dining chair, £1,267.20, Vaughan Designs*



ABOVE *Vault chair in Ebony oak with leather, £2,280, Edward Collinson at The New Craftsmen*

RIGHT *Wallpaper, Brodsworth, Empress, £110 a roll, Little Greene*



## *TABLES AND SEATING*

A formal dining room is ideal for showcasing statement pieces of furniture. For period homes, source heritage styles that are in keeping with the era, or combine an antique table with contemporary chairs for a twist on tradition. Source tables with ornate wood carving or inlay detailing and are as beautiful to behold when not in use as they are when dressed for the occasion. Alternatively, invest in the antiques of the future with handcrafted pieces that are beautiful and bespoke in their design.

Bear in mind that tables come in many styles, shapes and sizes, so shop strategically. Round tables are ideal for smaller rooms, whereas a rectangular table will make a statement in a grander room. If in doubt, opt for an oval table, where the length-to-width ratio offers a sense of space but with nicely rounded corners providing some softness. For very small spaces, consider a combination of a drop-leaf table with chairs that neatly tuck underneath when not in use.

Create a comfortable dining experience with seats and benches in sumptuous velvet or soft leather. Or select chairs with arms, ideal for ensuring good ergonomic support at extended leisurely gatherings.

## *BAR AREA*

Why not make the most of a corner of a room by creating a bar area and avoid any unnecessary dashes to the kitchen mid-entertaining? Source a specially designed cabinet or transform an unused alcove with a flamboyant pattern, a cupboard and a set of shelves for bottles and glasses, as well as buckets for ice and shakers and stirrers.





RIGHT *Hand-painted Sans Soucis chinoiserie wallpaper on Deep Rich Gold gilded paper, from £961 a panel (915mm width), de Gournay*

BELOW *Antique Style Gold Metal Drinks Trolley, £260, Rockett St George*



FAR LEFT *Gold banded glass decanter, £19; Gold banded wine carafe £17, both Dibor*

LEFT *Tortoiseshell handle bottle opener, £20, Rebecca Udall*







FAR LEFT *Crystal Cut Glass tumblers, £28 for a set of two, Ella James*

LEFT *Brass ice tongs, £10, Layered Lounge*

ABOVE *Pascali bar cabinet, £579, Atkin and Thyme*

RIGHT *Pembroke champagne coupe, £65 for set of four, Soho Home*





LEFT *Stainless steel ice bucket, £25, Pro Cook*

RIGHT *Wallpaper, Baxter Swirl, Nerine Blue, £30 a roll, John Lewis & Partners*



ABOVE *Olive linen sateen tablecloth, £255; Allée de Cyprés dinner plates, £110 each; Jardins de Shalimar dessert plates, £460 for a set of four; Bamboo four-piece cutlery set, £280, all Bonadea*

BELOW *Silver Meadow large platter by Francesca Kaye £395, The Shop Floor Project*





## *PLACE SETTING IDEAS*

Build a collection of tableware, linen, cutlery and accessories that can be mixed and matched to suit any occasion. Team classic designs with contemporary motifs and be bold with pattern, incorporating elaborate styles alongside the simplicity of white. Use texture to add interest with crisp, freshly laundered linen layered with fabric or natural woven placemats. Source co-ordinating tablecloths and napkins in rich, opulent colours and fashionable designs for a modern take on formality and to add a dash of sophistication to any gathering, lunchtime or evening. ■

LEFT *Fern tablecloth, from £260, napkin, £25; Alix D Reynis dinner plate, £75, dessert plate, £55, bread plate, £40; small ceramic gold bowl with spoon, £45, all Bertioli at Thyme*

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BELOW *Eloise tablecloth, £130; Burgundy placemats, £92 for a set of four; Flower dinner plate, £30; Scallop napkin, £86 for a set of four, all Maison Margaux*

RIGHT *Cornucopia covered vegetable dish, £275, Wedgwood*







ABOVE *Marble tablecloth, from £295; Marble napkins, £27.50; Porcelain/ Gold Glaze napkin ring, £48; Leaf plate by Astier de Villatte, £130; Seven-piece cutlery set, £125; Moss Green glass, £42; Gold Rim wine glass, £13.50; Gold Rim Olive Green bowl, £42.50, all Summerill and Bishop*

RIGHT *Rattan and Gold servers, £35, Hudson Home*





ABOVE *Set of four Sherwood Emerald dinner plates, £95, side plates, £65, and bowls, £70; Sherwood Emerald giant charger, £85, all Oka*

RIGHT *Twilight tablecloth, £45; Twilight napkins, £22 for a set of two; Bourbon Blue velvet ruffle placemat, £22; Navy velvet napkin bows, £13 for a set of two, all Truffle Tablescapes*



# *Resources for dining rooms*

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*atkinandthyme.co.uk*

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Tel 020 7259 0422
*diningchair.co.uk*

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ERCOL
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*johnlewis.com*

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ABOVE *Kaleido and Floyd fabrics, £48 a metre, Jane Churchill*

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*sandbergwallpaper.com*

SANDERSON
Tel 020 4575 5862
*sandersondesigngroup.com*

THE SHOP FLOOR PROJECT
Tel 01229 584537
*theshopfloorproject.com*

SOANE BRITAIN
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*soane.co.uk*

SOHO HOME
Tel 020 7851 1160
*sohohome.com*

SUMMERILL AND BISHOP
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*summerillandbishop.com*

SUNDAY LIVING
*sundayliving.co.uk*

SWEETPEA & WILLOW
Tel 0345 257 2627
*sweetpeaandwillow.com*

THYME
Tel 01367 850910
*thyme.co.uk*

TRUFFLE TABLESCAPES
*truffletablescapes.co.uk*

VAUGHAN
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*vaughandesigns.com*

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**FEATURE** CHARLOTTE DUNFORD




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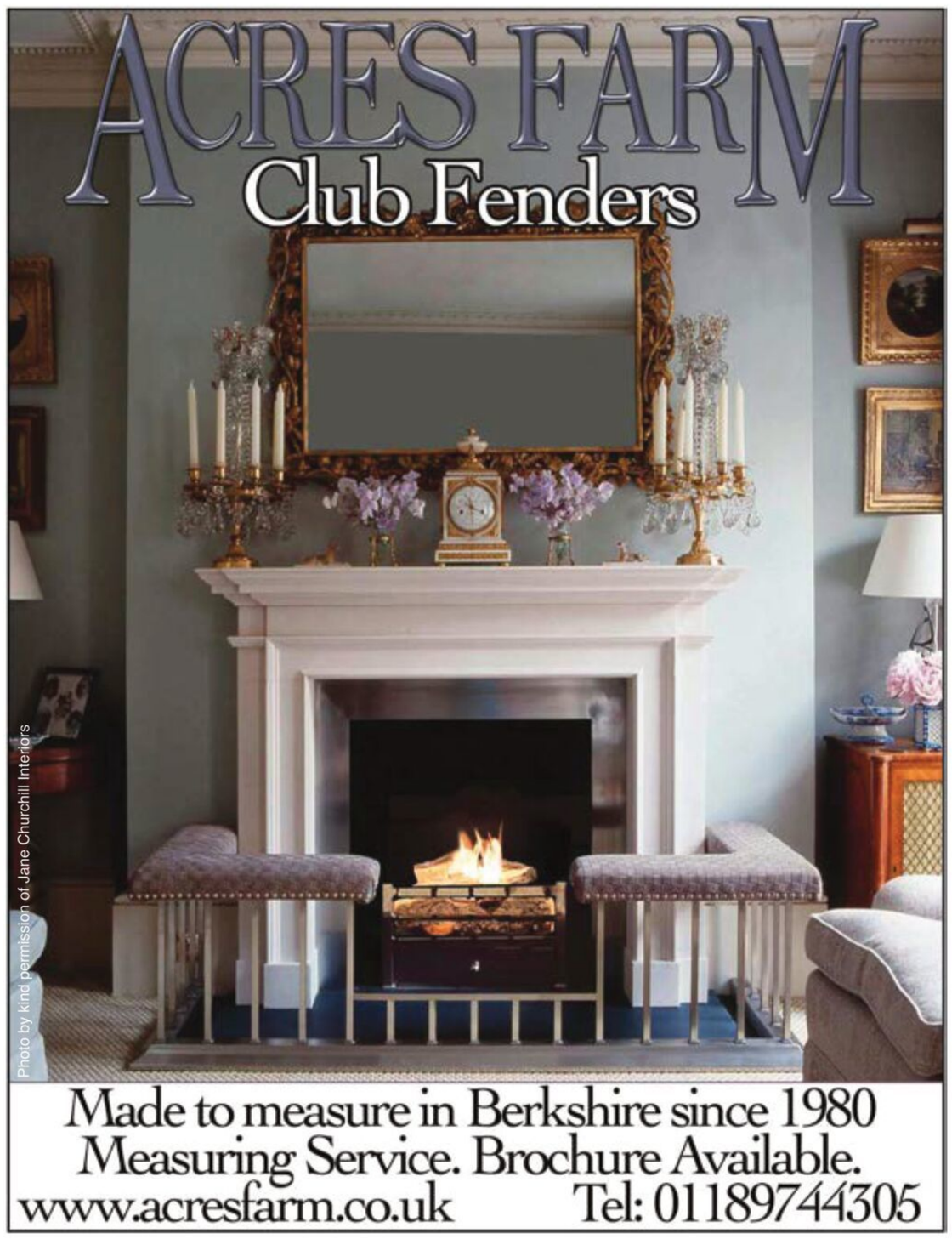
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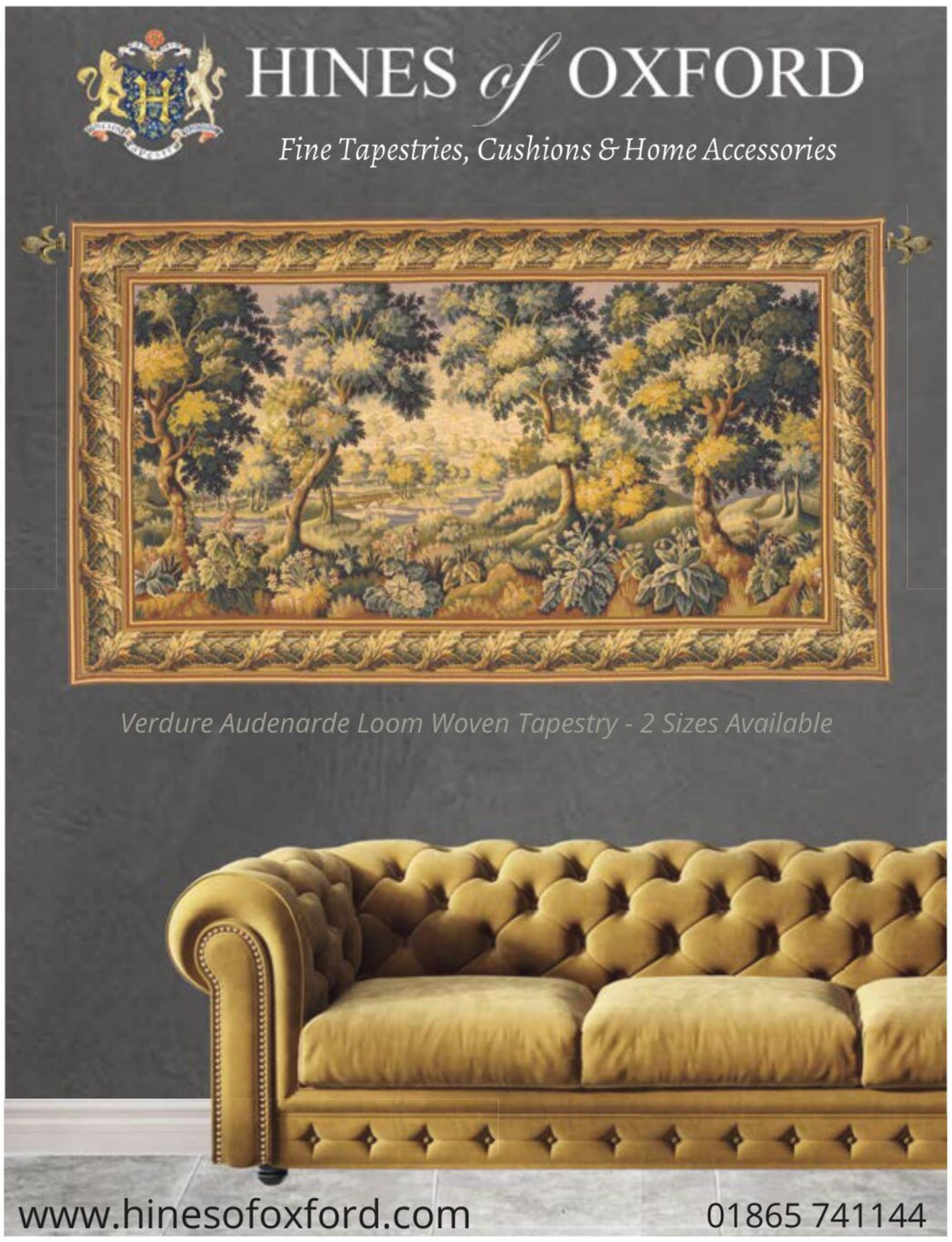
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# Bedded Bliss

Ensure the best night's sleep possible with soothing, stylish decor, a comfortable bed and cossetting, sustainable soft furnishings and accessories

The desire for a good night's sleep should be the requisite behind every bedroom design. Mattresses that provide the right level of support for the neck and head, combined with pillows and duvets made from sustainable materials, should be the foundation for quality rest and relaxation.

Take a cue from timeless looks and combine beautiful shades of colour, furniture designs and accessories to give the bedroom a seasonal refresh. Be inspired by the calming effect of soft neutrals, the reassuring charm of classic heritage designs or the fanciful exuberance of a romantic style and prepare to dress the bedroom with finesse.

ABOVE *No2 The Icon Felix bed, £32,270, Savoir Beds. Headboard, Malmo linen, £250 a metre; Cream Wool Waffle bedspread, £891, and all other items, de Le Cuona*

# Calm

Create an environment conducive to good sleep and relaxation with colours, textures and materials that are calming to behold.

White is often seen as a safe option for walls, bedding and accessories, but its ability to induce a sense of order on the senses means it is an excellent choice for creating a welcoming sanctuary to retreat to at the end of the day. To maximise the effect, use a palette of off-whites and pale neutrals in rooms that are blessed with natural light, ensuring, of course, that windows are sufficiently covered for blocking out any light at night. As Dr Rebecca Robbins, Savoir Beds sleep expert, points out, "Whereas bright light wakes us up, darkness is what allows the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin to secrete in the brain, so ensure your curtains can close and your bedroom can be completely dark when you are attempting to sleep."

Natural materials also have a calming effect, so source furniture and accessories in pale oak, ash or whitewashed pine. Rustic-style benches, side tables and baskets provide a relaxed, summer coastal-style bedroom that is light and airy. Use bedlinen and accessories to add hints of soft colour and for a seasonal update. Pale aqua, duck egg and blush pink will feel refreshing in a predominantly white bedroom, whereas darker, muted lilacs, soft greys and taupes will add warmth in the cooler months.

Introduce subtle decorative detail with a simple pattern such as a utilitarian or nautical stripe or a contrasting trim. Even a textured white throw or a knitted cellular blanket will add interest yet keep the look light, bright and beautiful without being visually overbearing.



ABOVE *Charlie headboard, from £1,285 for a double, and other products, Neptune*



TOP *Hatton 3 Pendant £379, Original BTC*
RIGHT *Osaka seagrass storage baskets, £165 for a set of two, Ella James*
FAR RIGHT *Axel cream rug, £499, Danetti*



LEFT *Natural oak Teramo wardrobe £2,000, Ercol*
RIGHT *Emilia bed, from £975 for a double; Taylor side table, £240, both Sofa.com*



ABOVE *Natural Ticking Stripe linen bedding bundle, from £224, Chalk Pink Linen Company*





ABOVE *Lana II dressing table in European Oak, £5,600, Pinch Design*
BELOW *Limewashed Parquet chest of drawers, £850, Cox & Cox*



LEFT *Bed linen from £25 for an Oxford pillowcase, The White Company*
BELOW *Bedroom designed by Albion Nord*





ABOVE *Rose Blush Pink Merino throw, £134, Tolly McRae*

# Classic

Apply a modern approach to traditional design for a bedroom style that is classic, comfortable and full of heritage charm with rich, indulgent colourways and opulent textures.

Dark shades of grey, blue and green work particularly well in period homes. Team with antique furniture that is luxurious in design and detail, such as traditional bedsteads in iron, brass or pewter whose generous proportions will work well in a room with high ceilings.

An oversized headboard in sumptuous velvet or wool will have a similar effect. "A large headboard helps to ground the room whilst also acting as an attractive focal point," Adam Black, co-founder of Button & Sprung, explains. "Curved or winged designs with luxurious upholstery will add interest whilst contributing to a classic, hotel-inspired look and feel many homeowners desire."

Add oak and mahogany cabinetry, antique carved mirrors and dressing tables, and artisan pieces such as charming bobbin tables and consoles, and use symmetry to add an element of formality when hanging pictures or positioning lighting.

Dress the bed with crisp Egyptian cotton or soft pure linen sheets, opting for a top sheet and a cashmere throw during the warmer months as a seasonal alternative to a heavy duvet.

Introduce pattern with soft furnishings and accessories in classic ikat, Indian floral and kilim designs in rich colourways of saffron yellow, paprika, teal and gold to bring an exotic and exuberant element to the mix.

*Glamorous velvet bed, from £1,695 for a double, Rockett St George*





*Pod table lamp, £128; Brasso shade, £57, both Pooky*



ABOVE *Mahogany and gilt landscape mirror with gold-leaf scallop shell and Prince of Wales ostrich feather, £POA, Titchmarsh & Goodwin*

RIGHT *Avirai rug in Antique Green, £1,495, Oka*

FAR RIGHT *George double bed, £2,595, Wrought Iron and Brass Bed Company*





TOP *Eclectic dressing table, from £2,250, And So To Bed*

ABOVE *Saray Ottoman in Zold linen, £1,120, Mind The Gap*

BELOW *Billington swing-arm wall light, £448.80, Vaughan Designs*

TOP RIGHT *Camelia king-size bed in Mercury velvet with Ebony legs £1,475, Button & Sprung*

RIGHT *Montpelier chair, £2,495, plus three metres of fabric, David Seyfried*













RIGHT *Elodie printed bedspread, £290, and cushion, £80, Sweetpea & Willow*

ABOVE *Cushion, Sonnet Sateen Jacquard in Oasis, £122 a metre; pillows, Fresco Alaska, £122 a metre; Reversible Cashmere bed throw in Silver/White £975, all Johnstons of Elgin*

# Romantic







TOP *Knightsbridge chandelier, £4,931, Christopher Hyde*

ABOVE *GingerLily silk double duvet cover, £470, The French Bedroom Co*

Create a dreamy bedroom full of romantic charm with furniture and accessories inspired by the glamour of times gone by. From the indulgent art deco era to the extravagantly lush rococo style, period designs can inspire colour, texture, furniture and accessories for a bedroom sanctuary that is decadent in every way.

Soft shades of powder pink, peach, mint green and pale blue work particularly well with the rich gilt, gold and metallic tones of these iconic looks.

Source furniture that is indulgent in shape and style, such as upholstery with heavy fluted detailing or ornately shaped headboards, which can be upholstered in any fabric to suit, for example, silk, satin or damask. Accessories such as mirrors carved and gilt-edged detailing and opulent glass chandeliers add further decadence.

For an ethnic twist introduce chests of drawers and cabinets with intricate inlaid patterns made from mother of pearl or flowery carved wood panels.

Floral patterns are ideal for making a romantic statement in a bedroom. Consider a bold, graphic rug design creating a focal point in the centre of a room, a pretty floral print for bed linen or simply a posy of scented flowers on a boudoir-style dressing table. As Joanna Ross, general manager of design at Sheridan, says, "Utilise nature. Bring the outside in and add flowers and perhaps a spring-inspired floral bed linen or wallpaper to add a lovely romantic feel to a bedroom." ■



ABOVE *Scalloped bedspread, £250 for a double, Katharine Paravicini x Sarah K*

LEFT *Atika grey carved chest of drawers, £699, Atkin and Thyme*

BELOW *Broadway console desk, £429; Carnaby footstool in Champagne Pink velvet, £149, both Atkin and Thyme*





RIGHT Lexington Fuchsia two-line satin-stitch cotton sateen double duvet cover, two pillowcases and fitted sheet bedlinen bundle, £205, The Fine Cotton Company

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ABOVE *Natural Flora boudoir cushion, £55, Julian Charles*
RIGHT *Constance headboard, from £7,950, excluding fabric, Ensemblier*





ABOVE *Bedroom design by VSP Interiors*
RIGHT *Caprini bedlinen, from £159, Sheridan*
BELOW *Peonia Grande Zinc rug, £2,250, Designers Guild*





*Delphis wall light, £2,592, Beaumont & Fletcher*



RIGHT *Margaux velvet bed, from £1,539 for a double, Pepper Sq*

# *Bedroom furniture and accessories*

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*christopherhyde.com*

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*cornishbeds.co.uk*

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*coxandcox.co.uk*

DANETTI
Tel 020 3588 1380
*danetti.com*

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*davidseyfried.com*

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*ensemblierlondon.com*

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*thefinecottoncompany.com*

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*theheadboardworkshop.co.uk*

HERDY SLEEP
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*herdysleep.com*

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*hypnosbeds.com*

JOHNSTONS OF ELGIN
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*johnstonsofelgin.com*

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*juliancharles.co.uk*

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*julianchichester.com*

MAKER & SON
Tel 0800 024 6100
*makerandson.com*

M.M LINEN
Tel 01858 810023
*mmlinen.com*



ABOVE *Scalloped super-kingsize woven rattan headboard in green, £650, Birdie Fortescue*

NEPTUNE
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*neptune.com*

PEPPER SQ
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**FEATURE** CHARLOTTE DUNFORD



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# Open-air STYLE

Create the perfect setting with furniture and accessories to suit the proportions and backdrop of an outside space, whatever its size

When creating outdoor living and dining areas, whether for evenings with friends, family lunches or simply to relax in the sun with a good book, the key to making them work is to ensure they complement their surroundings. "You don't want to fight against the style of your house – both the architecture and interiors – so find garden furniture that suits your design language and blends into the surroundings," advises Alan Morley, head designer at Alexander Rose.

Comfort and being fit for purpose are also key. Consider a foldable canvas deckchair or timber benches with cushions for a townhouse garden; reclining loungers and drinks tables for a relaxing afternoon on a large lawn; or a smart bistro set for morning coffee next to some beautifully scented roses in a cottage garden.



LEFT Modular furniture sets help make a small outdoor area more flexible. *Terrazzin modular garden furniture, from £1,695 for an armless chair, Oka*

ABOVE Make it an informal gathering with this luxurious outdoor sofa set. *Monterey Dove Grey rattan modular sofa with coffee table, £3,999, Bramblecrest*



# Country expanse

When space is abundant, the choice opens up to include furniture suitable for entertaining on a grander scale – from outdoor sofas with coffee tables to poolside loungers. "It helps to approach furnishing an outdoor space the same way you would any room in the house," advises Lyndsey Goodger, founder of Rose & Grey. "Look for pieces that complement the style of the property and fit with what you already have. Daytime will see the most use, so plan areas with that in mind. Patterned umbrellas add style, while practical table and chair sets mean you can enjoy all your meals outdoors in comfort. For evenings, introduce lanterns and textiles in the form of rugs, cushions and throws to create ambience."

Traditional country gardens are well suited to timber and Lloyd Loom furniture. Wood weathers to a lovely silvery grey, blending in beautifully with its surroundings, and colour can be added with accessories. "We recommend colours that reflect the flowers you find in a summer garden," confirms Rachael Rose, head of interior design at Susie Watson Designs. "In a larger garden, a separate area with more relaxed seating is great for pre-dinner drinks."

The key is to take advantage of all that space and have furniture that can stay in situ. "Consider dining chairs with an open-weave textile seat or removable cushions that can withstand the wet English climate," advises Will Massie, co-founder of McKinnon and Harris, "and keep maintenance to a minimum. For a dramatic contrast against lush greenery, select a white finish to complete the dining ensemble."

ABOVE Shelter from the sun in decorative style. *Bali garden parasol, £195, Ella James*

RIGHT Create an outdoor room for a holiday feel at home. *Indoor Outdoor Chevron dining table, £550; Vanta dining chairs, £395 for two, Cox & Cox*





LEFT Zone an area and add colour with a rug. *Blue Mosaic reversible outdoor garden rug, £48, Rockett St George*

FAR LEFT Recline in stylish comfort. *Fontelina double lounger, £1,995; Sydra side table, £195, both Oka*

ABOVE Dine in the garden with this wrought-iron furniture that gains a weathered patina over time. *Large wrought-iron bench, £895; wrought-iron chair, £425; and table linen and tableware, all Susie Watson*






RIGHT For a relaxed drink or bite to eat, this sofa set brings the living room look outdoors. *Four-piece outdoor lounge furniture set, £1,250, Rose & Grey*



# DECORATING
## Outdoor Living

TOP Make light work of carrying food outside. *Milky Way Pink tray, £29, Cambridge Imprint*

ABOVE Keep drinks chilled stylishly. *Silver-plated wine cooler with six flutes, £299.99, Annabel James*

RIGHT A revolving centre is a highlight of this round table. *Broadwalk oak table, from £13,300, Gaze Burvill*

BELOW High-grade aluminium is corrosion-resistant too, enabling furniture to remain outdoors all year round. *Albemarle dining table with stone top, from £13,130; Beaufort Yacht dining chairs, from £5,410 each, McKinnon and Harris*





RIGHT Swing serenely in a gentle breeze. *Rattan hanging chair, £595, Cielshop*



# Rural cottage

A country cottage garden will traditionally be small and therefore require more compact furniture, such as a two-person bistro set perfectly positioned at the end of a winding pathway or placed on the patio to enjoy a morning coffee or brunch. Benches are also a good option, with and without arbours, as well as wooden seating surrounding trees and swing seats with a fabric canopy to offer shade on hot day.

"A bistro table is perfect for dining in small spaces," says Tim Pennell at Bramblecrest. "If space allows, consider a mini corner sofa set or two-seater designs. These are space-efficient and extremely versatile. Cocoon chairs can also provide the perfect vantage point for admiring garden blooms, while a teak bench will always lure you outside, whatever the season." As with all outdoor furnishings, look for weather-resistant materials and fabrics. To keep pieces in good condition for longer, invest in covers if moving them into an outbuilding is not an option.

The ornate style of many aluminium designs is particularly fitting to echo the rambling planting classically seen in cottage gardens. "Aluminium is a great option because it is non-wearing, so it can be kept outside year-round without weathering, meaning it needs no maintenance," confirms Simon Hudson, managing director at Oxley's. "It is robust enough to last but not so heavy that it is difficult to move around, as wrought-iron and steel options can be."







ABOVE Relax in a scented seating area.
*Charlbury Arch, £185, Garden Trading*
LEFT Add a taste of the tropics to proceedings with elegant glassware.
*Tropical martini glass, £36 for two, Natalia Willmott*

ABOVE Pretty accent pieces are key.
*Jaipur Pink cushion, £45, Effortless Trading*
LEFT Echo the blooms in the garden.
*Floral Madness deckchair, £149.99, Perkins & Morley*



RIGHT Corner sofas are ideal for smaller country cottage gardens as they can fit snugly into a compact space.
*Chedworth casual dining set with firepit table, £4,599, Holloways*



ABOVE Set the table in appropriately rustic style. *Rattan charger, £16, Rebecca Udall*

BELOW Relax with a good book in the cosy enclaves of a cottage garden. *Deckchair with Sunbrella canvas sling, £1,350, The Heveningham Collection*





ABOVE All-weather wicker seats fit perfectly into any rural cottage setting. *Hayburn collection, from £660 for an armchair, Neptune*

RIGHT Create shade in a sunny garden with this charming pergola, which seats up to 10 for dinner or 10–12 on chairs or floor cushions. *2.8m Pergola, from £1,400, Raj Tent Club*

BELOW Enhance the laid-back mood with a eclectic cushions. *Esme cushion, £23, Sass & Belle*





ABOVE Have easily moveable drinks and snacks at hand. *Verdi trolley, £119, Cuckooland*



# Townhouse terrace

For town dwellers, furniture can be sleeker with a modern elegance that suits the urban surroundings. Compact dining and seating sets are ideal for decked areas, while modular sofas fit snugly in a corner. Look for multifunctional items that can be turned from sofa to daybed, for instance, to make the most of a limited space. "I think modular furniture sets are a really clever way to make your outdoor space more flexible," says Sue Jones, co-founder and creative director of Oka. "You can create a long, comfortable sofa for lounging or separate the seats for a more sociable setup. For something more compact, you cannot go wrong with a classic bistro set, which works for patios and balconies alike."

Another increasingly popular solution is to place a dining table and chairs beneath a rectangular open arbour in order to create a smart and adaptable outdoor area with an all-round holiday feel.

When it comes to selecting materials and finish, it is important to invest in longevity wherever possible, as Juliette Thomas, founder and director at Juliettes Interiors, confirms: "Glass, marble and sealed ceramic tops are always firm favourites in terms of durability and looks. They take whatever the weather throws at them. If you want solid wood, teak weathers beautifully and will last for up to 50 years with very little attention. Traditional rattan is not weatherproof so look instead for high-density polyethylene (HDPE) synthetic rattan. Today's modern materials look just like the real thing. Avoid cheap PVC as it quickly becomes brittle and is a false economy. Chair fabrics should be water and UV-resistant to avoid mildew and fading or choose an open-mesh fabric like Textilene." ■

RIGHT Make a statement in a small space with an elegant round reed table and chairs. *Harrington table, £1,010; Stanway carver chairs, £325 each, Neptune*



ABOVE *Smaller squall hurricane lantern, £40, Pooky*





ABOVE Perfect for breakfast or coffee on a sunny day. *Feolin cafe table, from £7,250; Otey dining side chairs, from £5,350 each, McKinnon and Harris*

LEFT Pairing items together in a similar colour palette helps a townhouse garden appear larger. *Outdoor Bistro garden tray table, £20, Nöa & Nani*



LEFT Add interest in the form of sculptural vases. *Simi vase, £50, Abode Living*





FEATURE HAYLEY GILBERT PHOTOGRAPHS P120 © DAMIAN RUSSELL. P121 & P127 (BRAMBLECREST) © NICHOLAS YARSLEY. P123 (GAZE BURVILL) CLIVE NICHOLS; (MCKINNON & HARRIS) © KIP DAWKINS. P126 (NÖA & NANI) © HENLEY BAILEY.

RIGHT Clean-lined and elegant, ideal for a townhouse terrace. *Vilamoura square modular sofa with square teak coffee table, £2,880, Bramblecrest*

BELOW *Indoor Outdoor white window mirror, £195, Cox and Cox*

BOTTOM *Aurielle Sapphire Blue glass jug, £19, Dibor*







Perfect for summer lounging, the lightweight frame makes it easy to move around into the sun. *Bamboo day bed, £450; Ferm Living Desert lounge chair, £315, Rose & Grey*





ABOVE Relax and unwind in the comfort of a cocooning rocking chair designed for outdoor living. *Folia rocking chair, from £1,960; rocking footrest, £495, Indian Ocean*

LEFT *Pete's Oven firepit, £644, Firepits UK*

# *Outdoor furniture and accessories*

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*abodeliving.co.uk*

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*alexander-rose.co.uk*

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*alitex.co.uk*

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HARTLEY BOTANIC
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*hartley-botanic.co.uk*

THE HEVENINGHAM COLLECTION
Tel 01424 838483
*heveningham.co.uk*



ABOVE *Kensington 150cm round dining table with six dining armchairs, £4,299, Bridgman*

HOLLOWAYS
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*holloways.co.uk*

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*juliettesinteriors.co.uk*

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*nataliawillmott.co.uk*

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*naturalswimmingpools.com*

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*noaandnani.co.uk*

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*oxleys.com*

PERKINS & MORLEY
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*perkinsandmorley.com*

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*roseandgrey.co.uk*

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**FEATURE** CHARLOTTE DUNFORD

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PARTNER FEATURE

# *Bespoke & Beautiful*

British brand Thomas Sanderson specialises in crafting bespoke window furnishing and awnings

Starting out in 1991 by making blinds, Thomas Sanderson has been designing, crafting and installing window furnishings that beautifully frame the natural light for more than 30 years now. From wooden and waterproof vinyl shutters to innovative powered blinds, luxurious curtains and motorised awnings, each piece is custom-made to customer requirements.

In recent years, the company has seen a huge increase in demand for bespoke shutters, in particular its UK-made Waterbury vinyl collection, perfect for rooms with high levels of humidity and moisture such as kitchens and bathrooms. These shutters are made by experienced craftsmen with installation in as little as six weeks.

Shutters provide the perfect solution to balancing natural light and privacy, and with this in mind, the brand has developed unique features such as clearview louvres with discreetly hidden tilt rods for a flawless finish.

Thomas Sanderson's wooden shutters are available in a considered selection of natural wood stains and beautiful paint finishes, including its exclusive collection with interiors brand Harlequin. This sees shutters reimagined in a range of colours that are traditional and contemporary, elegant and vibrant, ideal for a truly bespoke finish to interiors.

As to which style of shutter to choose, for some, the sophistication of full-height shutters might be preferable. Crafted as a single panel, these run from the top to the bottom of a window and are a classic design that suit a variety of window styles. Solid full-height shutters are popular not only for their elegance but also for the security and complete privacy they provide when closed. They absorb sound and insulate a room, and make a true focal statement.

Other options include tier-on-tier shutters, which offer two independently operated sections – a clever design configuration that helps maintain privacy while still allowing light to flow into a room. Cafe-style shutters, expertly designed to cover only the lower half of the window, offer reassuring privacy without completely blocking the light. Tracked shutters are the perfect solution for bi-fold doors or floor-to-ceiling windows as they have an innovative and discreet track system that ensures the panels glide back and forth effortlessly, allowing easy access to doors and windows.

Discover how to master the light in your home by booking an in-home consultation with one of Thomas Sanderson's experienced designers who will shape solutions custom-made for you.
*thomas-sanderson.co.uk* ■







**TOP** These UK-made vinyl shutters in Cotton colourway allow sunlight to pervade the room while preventing it from becoming overly hot.
**MIDDLE** From Thomas Sanderson's Harlequin colour collection, these solid, tracked floor-to-ceiling shutters provide sound insulation as well as blackout conditions for a perfect night's sleep.
**BOTTOM** Waterproof vinyl shutters are the perfect choice for bathrooms and kitchens as they will not become damaged by the high levels of moisture and humidity in these spaces.

FEATURE KATE FREUD



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*Boswell sofa in Wicklow - Gorse, with Elektra and Racine couture cushions, and Chatsworth chandelier*

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