

The

ENGLISH HOME



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January 2024 | Issue 227 | £7.99 | UK Edition

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A letter from home

One of the things I love about this special time of year is the opportunity the holidays provide to reflect on the 12 months that have just passed as well as to look forwards with optimism. After we have enjoyed the excitement of celebrating the festivities, there is a deliciously quiet few days to slow down, reflect and plan ahead.

As we embrace 2024 at *The English Home*, we have produced a special New Year's edition for you. Inside, you'll gain insights into how interior designers are planning to approach 2024 as they reveal their design resolutions (page 72), while our guide to statement lighting might just scratch an itch to add a practical piece with impact to update interiors (page 101). As we contemplate the highlights from the interior design world in 2023, we bring you our long-standing, annual New Year Honours Awards on page 83, which celebrates a wide breadth of talent, innovation and achievements in design, craftsmanship and home-grown talent. We hope you find it inspiring and informative.

Elsewhere in this issue, you'll also find ideas for creating those last-minute but all-important final flourishes that make festive celebrations glitter and glow – from our latest Design Discoveries (page 18) to our thoughts on creating the perfect tablescape, both indoors (page 108) and for hosting magical celebrations in the garden (page 122).

Happy New Year!

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor



The English Home festive offer

Stay on the nice list this Christmas. Treat loved ones or yourself to a mouthwatering

riesling, a balanced chardonnay and more standout bottles of red or white wine, all chosen by *The Telegraph* wine writers. Now available at Telegraph Wine Cellar. Visit chelseamagazines.com/CEHXM23

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Reprographics Manager Neil Puttnam

Printing William Gibbons Ltd

THE ENGLISH HOME (UK EDITION) ISSN 1468-0238 (PRINT)

THE ENGLISH HOME (UK EDITION) ISSN 2397-7086 (ONLINE)

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Email theenglishhome@subscription.co.uk
(UK and Rest of World)

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(12 issues) UK £70
Europe £90; €116
ROW £100; USD \$122; AUD \$181

NEWS DISTRIBUTION

Seymour Distribution Ltd
2 East Poultry Avenue
London EC1A 9PT
Tel 020 7429 3667

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**NEXT ISSUE
ON SALE
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NOTEBOOK

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

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Merry Moments At Home

“Jewels for the home” is how Petra Palumbo describes her festive flourishes steeped in nostalgic charm. She created her signature hand-painted glass carafe and tumbler sets as a stylish eco-friendly alternative to having a plastic bottle on the bedside or desk. When her first small batch instantly sold out, she set up her homeware brand in 2019. New festive editions this year are ‘Christmas Flower’ and ‘Mistletoe’. Her limited-edition hand-painted glass baubles are mouth-blown in England, crafted using age-old techniques and topped off with gingham bows in an array of joyful hues. petrapalumbo.com

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Mindfully Merry

Lamp LDN's chic sustainable home goodies

Many of us are trying to buy more mindfully, sustainably and ethically, and Anna McGregor and Lotte Martin are making our lives easier with their brand Lamp Ldn. They hand-pick every item sold at their pink homeware shop in London's Peckham and for their online store – including myriad festive goodies – tracking each product's journey from raw materials to the shop door, ensuring customers' peace of mind.

“We are committed to providing a space where you can shop for beautiful products that have been made in a way that is sustainable for the planet and kind to the people on it,” they explain. “We source our products from independent designers mostly in the UK and Europe, we always look for UK-based options before we look further afield. Most of our products are made in small production runs by artisans or the designer themselves. Where larger manufacturers are involved, we ensure they adhere to a fair and transparent supply chain. We continuously work to reduce our impact on the planet and work with brands who are doing the same.”

Anna and Lotte share over 30 years' experience working across a range of creative projects. Founders of a design and events agency, they pivoted during the challenges of 2020. “We want to help people invest in their home environment and create beautiful spaces, and to do so in a mindful way,” they say. lamplondonhome.com



Scenting the Season

Sisters' hand-poured scented candles

Looking back on their childhood, the seeds were sown early for sisters Abbie Price and Roanna Day to one day cook up fragrance recipes to boost well-being and set the mood for convivial gatherings. “We grew up in an Anglo-Indian family, so mixtures and blends were a fact of life,” they say. “We learned the art of marking every moment with the right scent, with fragrance acting as an antidote, a relief or a celebration. We pour that magic into all of our candles.”

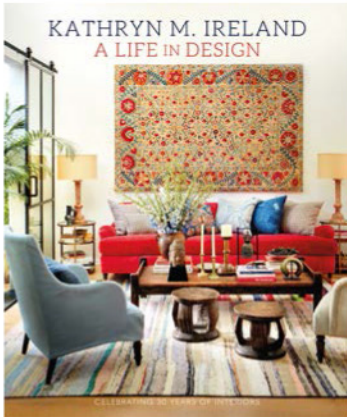
Seeking a slower-paced and more meaningful life, they both swapped city for country in 2020, moving from London and Bristol to a farm in rural Monmouthshire, where they hand-pour luxury candles scented with their own bespoke blends, presented in UK-artisan-made ceramic vessels. Motivated by sustainability and reducing waste, all their vessels are refillable, and they sell candle refills as well as match pots and scented tealights.

’Twas The Night Before is a new seasonal addition scented with mince pies, cinnamon and board games. “The original scent recipe captures the incredible joy of anticipation that arrives come Christmas Eve,” they say. “We believe that what you fill your house with helps define the very atmosphere of your home. Our hope is that by investing in our seasonal candles, you will, in a small but powerful way, shift the atmosphere around you.” geathousefarmstores.co.uk ▶



MAXIMUM VOLUME: Interiors Books to Inspire and Delight

Our curation of recent releases for discerning interior design mavens



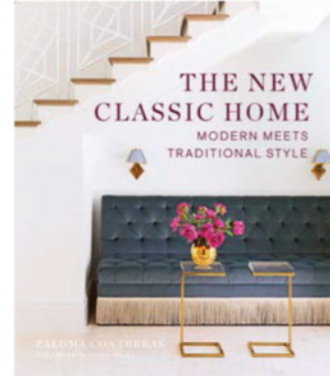
A LIFE IN DESIGN by Kathryn M Ireland (CICO, £40)

Celebrating 30 years as an interior designer, Kathryn M Ireland looks back over her designs, including for own homes. Born in England and raised between London and Scotland, she arrived in Los Angeles in 1986 and started her career by decorating a home for actor Steve Martin, leading to designing interiors for houses all over the world. Full of advice and inspirational ideas, this book shares her design rules, how to create comfort, add colour, hang art and more.



LIVING IN COUNTRY STYLE by Brent Darby and Wink Colville (Lannoo, £45)

Galloping through the countryside visiting dozens of dreamy homes (many never seen in print before), this charming book runs the gamut of country style, from rustic to modern-rustic and cosy to grand, with both natural elements and eccentric accents. Ideas abound, with divine photographs of characterful rural properties fusing comfort with practicality, showing how to preserve and celebrate a home's heritage while making it a personalised sanctuary.



THE NEW CLASSIC HOME by Paloma Contreras (Abrams, £35)

Blending traditional and modern elements in the home can be tricky, and in this book interior designer Paloma Contreras shares her secrets. Learn how to pair seemingly disparate pieces from different eras and styles to create timeless and balanced interiors with layers of interest, fusing elegant antiquity with warmth and glamour. Refresh classic silhouettes and highlight architectural flourishes with colour, texture, pattern, scale, proportion and “tension”.



BLUE AND WHITE DONE RIGHT by Hudson Moore (Monacelli Press, £39.95)

Legendary design house Schumacher celebrates the enduring combination of blue and white in this beautiful book. Discover its historical context and significance, and its full spectrum of shades, from robin's egg to alabaster and beyond. Marvel at countless examples of blue-and-white's elegant expression, from wallpaper and fabrics to tableware, accessories and even this book's jacket, covered in Schumacher's bestselling Exotic Butterfly pattern.



LONDON LIVING by Simon Upton (Vendome Press, £65)

Simon Upton is one of the top interiors photographers and this book proves why. The private spaces of public people are always intriguing – especially interiors insiders – so as well as the likes of Jasper Conran, Bella Freud and Poppy Delevingne, it also unlocks the doors of Brownrigg antiques dealers Jorge Perez–Martin and David Gibson, antiques dealer and interior designer Adam Bray, interior designers John Stefanidis and Maria Speake, among others.



THE GLOBEMAKERS by Peter Bellerby (Bloomsbury, £25)

'Earth apples' is how globes were first known. Gems like this pepper the tale of how Peter Bellerby's unsuccessful search for a globe as an 80th birthday present for his father became a successful business. Deciding to make one by hand, he set out to find the physical and artistic necessities, discovering the history and wonder of globes along the way. This lavish book charts his journey and the craftsmanship that goes into making his globes. ▶



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Encore: Goodies from Glyndebourne

Pitch-perfect Christmas gifts

As befits an English cultural institution where dinner jackets and gowns are worn while picnicking, Glyndebourne opera house's festive gifts range hits the perfect elegant note.

Handcrafted items include the exclusive cheeseboard made from maple and branded using a burning technique by Glyndebourne's props team, and head gardener Kevin Martin's handmade wreaths, which showcase the beauty of Glyndebourne's gardens. In a nod to the opera house's horticultural heritage, the shop also features elegant silk scarves, naturally dyed on-site using flowers grown in the Glyndebourne Dye Garden, plus gardening books, tools and accessories recommended by Glyndebourne's gardeners.

Set within the South Downs and founded in 1934, Glyndebourne has earned international acclaim as one of the world's leading opera houses. All profits from the shop contribute directly to the continuation of Glyndebourne's work, from community projects to spectacular productions. glyndebourneshop.com

Diary



A warm Yuletide welcome awaits at Warwick Castle, with open-air ice skating beneath its towers and turrets, a festive market, twinkling trees and dazzling decorations, with the chance to meet the man in red himself in the castle's library. Until 7 January. warwick-castle.com



Victorian feasting, spellbinding theatre, merry mixology and live music transform Charles Dickens' timeless classic *A Christmas Carol* into immersive experience The Great Christmas Feast. In London until 14 January. christmasfeast.thelostestate.com



Illuminations, crafts, food fairs, winter sculpture exhibitions and more are on display at RHS Gardens across the country: Wisley in Surrey, Rosemoor in Devon, Hyde Hall in Essex, Harlow Carr in North Yorkshire and Bridgewater in Manchester. Until 2 January. rhs.org.uk

Majestic Merriment

Highgrove unveils its festive fundraising fare

'Meaningful' always trumps 'maximal' when it comes to festive gifting, and this year there are ever more thoughtful ways to give back while giving. As well as being the private residence of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla near Tetbury in Gloucestershire, Highgrove also lends its name to an exclusive retail brand with an elegant abundance of gifts and products fundraising for The Prince's Foundation. Established in 2018 by the then Prince of Wales, amalgamating many of his environmental,

education, arts and regeneration initiatives, the foundation aims to realise his vision of creating communities for a more sustainable world, investing in preserving traditional crafts and historic locations, pioneering sustainability and more.

Highgrove's fundraising festive items share a quintessentially English refined sense of occasion as well as regal style. Choose from a vast range of indulgent food and drink gifts, bought individually or grouped in chic Highgrove hampers, as well as gifts for the whole family and everything needed to make the home festive, such as tree decorations and seasonally scented candles, plus Christmas cards, crackers, books, games, clothing, accessories, beauty – and even artworks painted by His Majesty.

Browse in person at the Highgrove shop in Tetbury or at Fortnum & Mason, or shop online at highgrovegardens.com





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DESIGN DISCOVERIES

Make rooms feel luxuriously cosy – from comfortable furnishings and fittings, to finishing touches that glow and glitter – to welcome the new year in the best style



CRACKERS WITH CONSCIENCE

These crackers are hand-assembled in Dorset with paper hand-printed in Nepal. The gifts inside – ranging from an okta paper flower garland to a felted giraffe – are made in India and Nepal and are fair trade. Each cracker contains a crown, a riddle and an anagram.

Christmas crackers, set of six, £42, Toast

LASTING GLOW

LED taper candles add an elegant atmosphere to parties, gatherings and long winter evenings. Made with hand-poured wax, these remote-control designs are useful for hosts flitting between reception rooms.

Ivory TruGlow remote control LED taper candles, set of four, £39.99, Lights4fun



COLOURFUL DECORATIONS

These eye-catching, hand-painted baubles are crafted using recycled paper and feature a pink velvet ribbon to hang them up. The characterful collection, with five different designs, could be grouped together to add a celebratory note to festive tablescapes, especially if the tableware features brightly coloured patterns.

Hand-painted decorations, set of five, £29, Rowen & Wren



WARMING TEXTILES

Add tactile layers to make furnishings with cooler textures feel cosy. Create an inviting scene – look to rugs, throws and cushions in cotton, wool and linen mixes.

Eshott cushion covers, from £20 each; Farlingham throw, £60; Badbury rug, from £16; Aldsworth kindling box, £32; Square basket, from £60; Hampstead coffee table, £176, all Garden Trading ▶



SHOPPING

EYE-CATCHING POSTER

A reimagination of Julian Chichester's signature Richter bed, the Rita bed has a more dramatic style. It is covered in hand-applied red gesso that is moulded by hand to create a unique textured finish, while contrasting decorative brass rings underline the opulent aesthetic. Customers' own fabric is used on the headboard to ensure the final look can be as flamboyant as desired.

Rita bed, £6,282 excluding fabric, Julian Chichester



TAKE A BOW

Adorn brown, neutral or plain wrapping paper with a striking ribbon and make loved ones feel special. Smart velvet or grosgrain styles have a luxurious look from afar and can be used year-round to elevate gift wrapping.

Black and White Stripe wide ribbon, 5m, £7; Green Grosgrain ribbon, 5m, £6; Burnished Gold wide velvet ribbon, 5m, £9; Merry Christmas, Falalalala and Christmas Tree wrapping paper, 5m, £7, all Layered Lounge

CHRISTMAS SPIRITS

From serving fizz to presenting extravagant cocktails, these glasses are hand-finished to project a glamorous mood with beaded stems and festive green details.

Thimma champagne glasses, set of two, £45; Thimma wine glasses, set of two, £50; Saneer linen napkin, set of two, £20; Rustic dinner candle, set of two, £7.50; Jaha gold bowl £20; Janka glass tealights, set of two, £28; Nakuru iron and glass drinks table, brass, £295, all Nkuku ▶



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CLASSIC PENDANT

A row of pendants has become a modern classic style for providing task lighting over dining tables and kitchen surfaces. Balancing old and new ideas, the Cobb range is inspired by a classic Dutch cobbler's light. To elevate the appeal for modern schemes, the design is updated with a bone china shade and braided cotton cable. *Cobb pendant light, natural white and chrome, small size, £259, Original BTC*

SPARKLING SERVICE

To create a festive sense of occasion at a self-service drinks station, in addition to a smart champagne trug and flickering candles, adorn the setting with baubles placed on the surface or hung from a frame with pretty ribbon. *Barton trug, £130; Kinsley flutes, set of four, £38; Gold Glitter bauble, from £6; Champagne Glass bauble, £6; Swirl mercury tealight holder, £6, all The White Company*



GLEAMING REFLECTION

Mirrors leaning on or hanging above mantelpieces and sideboards are perfect for a modern wreath display. Use a lightweight hoop wreath (opt for metallic tones to create a glittering effect) and hang with a ribbon in a matching colour. Position a table lamp nearby to encourage guests to linger. *Bartlett lamp, £183; Portal mirror, large, £370, both Pooky* ■

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPH (LIGHTS/FUN) © OLIVER FERROTTI, JULIAN CHICHESTER AND ORIGINAL BTC IMAGES © JON DAY, (NKUKU) © DAN DUCHARS

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Basket weave dinner plate, Green, set of four, £128, Rebecca Udall



Henry floor lamp, £189, Where Saints Go



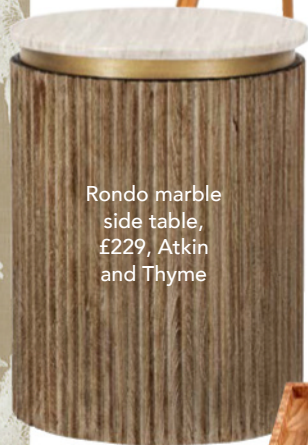
Sheepskin chair, £1,100; Flokat rug, from £395; Pre-lit Grand Spruce Christmas tree, £695, and all other products, The White Company



Gaucha stripe wool mohair blanket, £179, Toast



Le Creuset Stoneware Petite Round casserole, Shell Pink, £23, John Lewis & Partners



Rondo marble side table, £229, Atkin and Thyme

ALPINE TEXTURES

An understated natural palette mixing sophisticated patinas and softly rustic details, alpine-style decor laces winter schemes with an inviting sensory appeal

Yala hammered wine glasses, smoke brown, set of four, £45, Nkuku



Tamo ash exclusive backgammon set, £3,500, iWoodesign



Marble coasters, Merlot and Bianco, set of four, £180, LuxDeco



Upholstered three-seat sofa, Nutmeg, £4,500, Birdie Fortescue



Border: Toile du Tyrol wallpaper, Taupe, £149 a roll, Mind The Gap



Cashmere throw, Dark Camel, £795, Johnstons of Elgin

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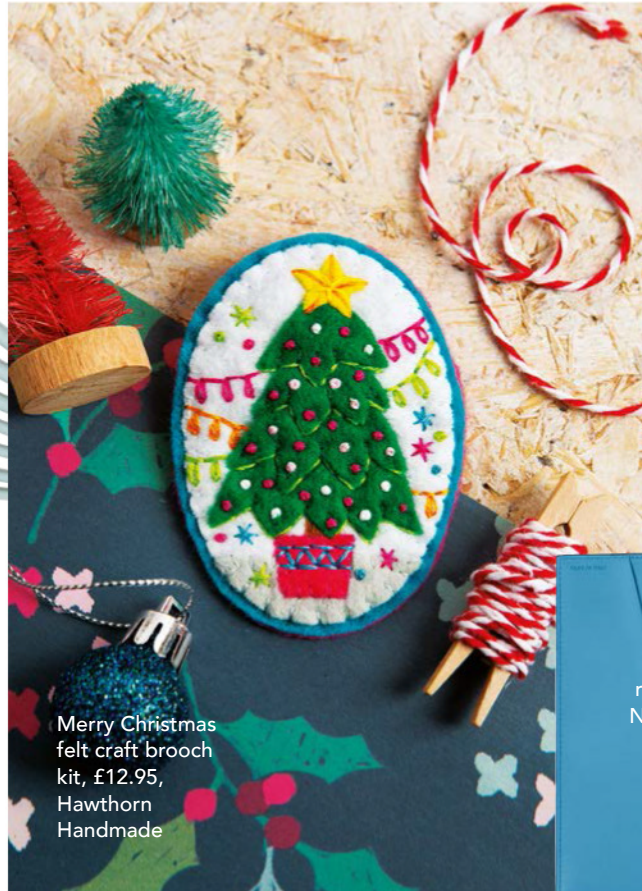


Cake decorating brushes, £32, Emma Dodi



Colour Wheel plate, £15, Reimagined by Anna Stark

Luxury modern calligraphy kit, £85, Tom's Studio



Merry Christmas felt craft brooch kit, £12.95, Hawthorn Handmade

Moulin Roty watercolour artist case, £42.50, Charnwood's Child



Evergreen refillable diary, Nile Blue, £295, Smythson

JOIN THE SKILLS SET

Embrace the start of the year by taking up a new hobby, nurturing an artistic talent or simply making the time to be creative or write a diary

Method mechanical pencil, £65, Andhand

Carve Your Own block printer starter kit, £125, Molly Mahon



Personalised vegan leather embossed pencil case, £19.95, Martha Brook

Large rectangular weaving loom kit, £29.99, Wool Couture



Floral pencil set, £15.99, Liberty

Press & Mount flower pressing kit, £150, JamJar Flowers



FEATURE KATY MCLEAN PHOTOGRAPHS (MOLLY MAHON) © WILL HEAP PHOTOGRAPHY; (WOOL COUTURE) © AMY LAW

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KITCHEN CRAFT

Located in an old RAF base in Norfolk, family-run Naked Kitchens specialises in making bespoke, life-proof kitchens. The brand combines British craftsmanship and cutting-edge technology to deliver timeless, sustainable designs, with each tailor-made kitchen crafted and sprayed in two giant World War II-era aircraft hangars. In an exciting move for 2024, Naked Kitchens is opening a new showroom in Bloomsbury, London where customers can enjoy a one-to-one consultation with an expert kitchen consultant. nakedkitchens.com

THE EDIT

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



O SO PRETTY

Juliette O Designs has taken a different approach to creating its luxury fabrics, using original mixed media art to generate the designs. With sustainability at the company's core, these artworks are primarily made from recycled and out-of-use materials, with things like coffee granules used to make new designs, like its Plume fabric. Made from British and European raw linen materials which are woven and digitally printed in the UK to conserve energy, the company also uses pigment inks which use less water than reactive dyes, adding to their green credentials. julietteodesigns.co.uk



WRAP IT UP

"I like to build a relationship with my clients to understand what they love, what their style goals are, and what they need for their lifestyle," explains Melanie Jacober, founder of Wrapped Studio, the British chair boutique. Whether a handcrafted or vintage design, these one-of-a-kind pieces are made to last, from quality sustainable materials such as ethically sourced timber-framed chairs and natural latex rather than petroleum-based foams. wrappedstudio.co.uk ▶

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CURIOUS CARPETS

In a departure from its more traditional styles, British brand Alternative Flooring's new design - Quirky Curiosity - is a richly patterned wool carpet, with bold colours and an intricate design. Designed by Aamina Desai (BA Hons Textiles Design, University of Central Lancashire), who won the Alternative Flooring and British Wool competition to celebrate new talent and British wool, it brings a fresh interpretation of her heritage into the home, using vibrant new patterns inspired by classic Persian rugs.

alternativeflooring.com

METAL MASTERPIECES

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DRESSED *to celebrate*

Characterful antiques and personal touches have brought life back to food writer Skye McAlpine's London townhouse, creating a charming space for both entertaining and life with her young family

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER STYLING GILL NICHOLAS

The dining table from Lorfords, surrounded by green Bentwood chairs bought on Ebay, is at the heart of festive celebrations. A vintage murano chandelier is paired with wall sconces to create layered lighting for an atmospheric feel late into the evening. The QVC K by Kelly Hoppen Christmas tree is decorated with Skye's own decorations.





‘The yellow in the kitchen was inspired by Monet’s house in Giverny. I’m so happy we did it because it always feels sunny, even on ghastly, grey days’

Joyful sounds of laughter and lively conversation can often be heard from this London townhouse in the run-up to Christmas. Home to cookery author and tableware designer Skye McAlpine, her husband and their two sons, its grand yet comforting style sets the scene for festive celebrations. “One of the things I love most about Christmas is the build-up. We’ll have lots of supper parties and it’s those opportunities to get together with friends and do lots of mini Christmases that I love,” she says.

Skye and her husband were attracted by the size and structure of the Victorian terraced townhouse, which is located one street away from their old flat. “The

whole row of houses had been developed in the 1990s, not very nicely or to a high standard, but the bones of the house were really good,” explains Skye. The couple got the keys in January 2019 and began preparing for a long-term project, but when Skye discovered she was pregnant, their plans changed. “It went from being quite relaxed to having quite a hard deadline,” she says.

With their second son due at the end of June of that year, they called on their good friend, architectural and interior designer Ben Pentreath, to help. “We worked with Ben to make the house feel more characterful, charming and in keeping with its original character,” says Skye. At the outset the house was completely ▶

ABOVE LEFT Skye stands in front of the enchanting Christmas table wearing an elegant pink Emilia Wickstead dress.

ABOVE RIGHT The Victorian terraced townhouse in South West London features traditional sash windows and ornate mouldings.

The open-plan kitchen is the biggest room in the house, "which I feel works really well for us, so we can have parties there or friends over for dinner quite easily," says Skye. Fairy lights from Lights4Fun decorate a row of hanging pots and pans above the large Lacanche cooker.



‘The same baubles come out each year, but I might add a little something to them. I love to make marbled paper chains’

stripped, leaving just its ‘good bones’ as a foundation to build the family home upon. “We added new floors, ceilings and cornices, we put in the fireplaces, we rewired, repainted, and changed the layout. Literally everything. It was a shell,” she continues.

Now with a blank canvas, attention turned to decoration. “We sold our old flat with the furniture, so we didn’t have very much other than a few sentimental pieces,” says Skye. A fruitful trip to Brussels resulted in an assortment of treasures, from vintage Murano glass chandeliers to a large antique kitchen dresser, and these pieces provided the perfect framework to create the warm, welcoming interiors Skye had envisioned. “I wanted a cosy, worn-in feel, which is why I think vintage and antique pieces work so well, because they already have their own story,” she explains. A perfect pairing – Skye’s impeccable taste, undoubtedly influenced by a childhood spent surrounded by grand palazzos and classical architecture in Italy and Ben’s ability to imbue interiors with patina and personality – have created an elegant home filled with an enchanting energy.

The kitchen is the heart of the house and is one of the rooms Skye was most conscious of getting right. Careful consideration was put into the design of the open-plan space to ensure it was at once practical and beautiful, and inspiration for several elements, from the dual-tone cabinets to the abundance of freestanding furniture, came from the kitchen in the family’s home in Venice. Knowing storage is fundamental for any keen host or cook, Ben incorporated open shelving into the design to house Skye’s extensive collection of jars and ingredients, and an old work table, put on wheels and given a new marble worktop, now serves as a versatile kitchen island. “Our old kitchen was pink, and I was so tempted to do this one pink too because I loved it so much, but my husband said ‘This is a new house, we need to give it a new feel’. The yellow was Ben’s ▶

RIGHT An eclectic mix of patterns and styles brings character to the sitting room, from the antique chairs restored in a red and white ticking to match the curtains, to the sofa upholstered in Jean Monro’s Rose & Fern cotton chintz. Texture has been introduced through the plaster-effect walls painted by a specialist with Farrow & Ball paint. Christmas details such as the tree decorations and wrapping paper and ribbons are from The Danes.





At the other end of the sitting room sits a Yamaha baby grand piano, often played by Skye's husband. Reclaimed parquet floors from Lassco have replaced the original flooring throughout the house. The garland on the banister is from Lights4Fun.





The happiness and warmth that emanate from the sunshine-coloured kitchen flow from room to room thanks to myriad subtle yet meaningful touches

ABOVE The boys' room is transformed into a winter wonderland over the festive season, complete with their own mini Christmas tree to decorate. The stockings are from Two 8ths on Etsy.

idea, inspired by Monet's house in Giverny," she explains. "It felt like quite a bold move but I'm so happy we did it because it always feels very sunny, even on ghostly, grey days."

The happiness and warmth that emanate from the sunshine-coloured kitchen flow from room to room thanks to myriad subtle yet meaningful touches within. Tapestry cushions made by Skye and her mother, and a painting given to Skye and her husband on their wedding day lend the sitting room soul, while a bespoke wallpaper which lines the adjoining hallway is a quiet ode to the couple. "Ben found this amazing

artist called Alasdair Peebles who came up with the design and painted it for us. It's inspired by antique Swedish wallpaper and Alasdair added pomegranates for me, because I love them, and little birds because my husband loves birds," says Skye.

These personalised elements continue upstairs, fostering interiors that feel timeless yet unique, from the wrought-iron bed frame that Ben's team altered to create a four-poster bed after Skye had struggled to find one, to the copper bath with a painted exterior to avoid it looking too "blingy" in the sophisticated bathroom scheme. ▶



'I wanted a cosy, worn-in feel, which is why I think vintage and antique pieces work so well, because they already have their own story'

ABOVE In the bathroom, a portrait of Skye's grandmother sits above the marble fireplace sourced from Brussels. Soft and decorative accents, such as the patterned rug and collection of vases on the windowsill, bring warmth to the space.

Skye's attention to detail is just as prevalent when it comes to Christmas decorating. "I go quite traditional but also a bit higgledy-piggledy," she laughs. "The same baubles come out each year, but I might add a little something to them. I love to make marbled paper chains, or one year I added velvet bows to the tree, small touches like that." A testament to Skye's talent for entertaining, the dressing of the large antique French dining table is a work of art. Adorned with a joyful collection of tableware, glassware and accessories from Skye's own brand, Tavola, it is a feast for the eyes. Woven among the place settings are a medley of sweet

treats, mince pies and Amaretti biscuits to Christmas cakes and candy canes. "My mother has always done the Christmas table as very 'more is more' and that's how I like it as well," she says.

Christmas Day itself is a more intimate affair, full of traditions and little luxuries. Stockings are opened around the fireplace with a breakfast of "panettone with ginger tea and hot chocolate", followed by a traditional lunch and a refreshing winter walk. Whether quiet days with family or dinner parties with friends, it is the joy of being together which is at the heart of Christmas in this home. ■



A floral fabric from GP & J Baker lines the walls of the principal bedroom, a striking contrast to the chinoiserie-inspired bureau from Brownrigg. The lamp on the bedside table is from Paolo Moschino and was a gift from Skye's godmother.



In the kitchen, a bespoke design by Kagu Interiors suits the traditional setting. The timber-clad wall is in Charleston Grey by Farrow & Ball. The flooring is from Castle Stone Flooring, with bold pendants from Skinflint Design.

Beaming with JOY

A unique Kentish home that celebrates bygone rural architecture provides the warmest of welcomes for Sarah and Andrew Charlesworth's family Christmas

FEATURE JO LEEVERS
PHOTOGRAPHY JODY STEWART
STYLING LAURA HART





ABOVE Sarah at the ancient door to her home, which has been redesigned by Kagu Interiors.

Illuminated by lanterns and candlelight, Sarah and Andrew Charlesworth's home is a magical evocation of Christmases past, while also providing myriad reasons to raise a glass to their future here. Part of their home is an early 15th-century Wealden hall house, which would have paid host to village gatherings in previous centuries. However, this is but one portion of their unique and unusual home, which melds several architectural traditions. While

respecting their home's intriguing past, Sarah and Andrew have now added another layer to the house's story, with a texture-rich style that perfectly suits the festive season.

This will be Sarah and Andrew's third Christmas in their Grade II listed home in the heart of the Kentish countryside, a home they share with Monty, their Golden Retriever, Sindy, a rescue dog, and Floss, their Bengal cat. The first year they celebrated



Christmas in their new home, the couple did so in flamboyant style. “We chose the biggest tree we could find – probably about 16-feet tall – and smothered it with twinkling white fairy lights,” remembers Sarah. This year she will be recreating this simple but very effective centerpiece, complementing it with similarly natural decorations, such as handmade evergreen wreaths and garlands of foraged winter foliage.

To update their historic home, Sarah and Andrew called upon interior designer Ben Stokes of Kagu Interiors, who has decorated it in a style that references the past but also suits its modern-day owners. With fabrics in neutral shades and pieces chosen for their natural textures, from stippled stone and earthenware vessels to chandeliers fashioned from antlers, Ben took a lead from the house’s own materials, then added a few modern outlines. “Ben has an amazing vision ▶

ABOVE The great hall features chandeliers from De Jong Interieur. A sectional sofa from Andrew Martin is centred around a coffee table from Oka. The central mirror is from Aldgate Home.

The low ceiling in the dining room is balanced by contemporary glazing that lets in ample light. Wishbone chairs by Hans J Wegner from The Conran Shop are set around an antique dining table from IJL Brown, illuminated by soft candlelight. A rug from The Rug Shop of Tunbridge Wells adds geometric impact.





and excels in redesigning the interiors of historic properties,” says Sarah. “We love how his ideas were tailored to us and the house, with a strong emphasis on all things handmade and crafted.”

Their main living space is the great hall, a timber-framed building originally built by a wealthy yeoman farmer. Today, contemporary pieces, such as the clean-lined coffee table, blend with the traditional materials, creating a scheme that reflects how this set of buildings was already a remarkable merging of old and new. ▶

ABOVE The snug, with a sofa from Love Your Home, provides a cosy nook for film nights. The console table from Titchmarsh & Goodwin is topped by colourful lamps from Oka. The rug is also Oka.

RIGHT This unique home is an expert blending of three buildings, including a 15th-century Wealden hall house.





‘My personal style ranges from antiques in milky white tones to what I call “textured contemporary” objects’

ABOVE “This is such a romantic room,” says Sarah of the couple’s bedroom in the old hayloft of the great barn, furnished with antiques in milky white tones. The bed is from Julian Chichester, while the bench is from Nikki Page Antiques and the wardrobe is from Georgia Lacey Antiques.

This Wealden hall house actually once stood a short distance away, but after suffering damage during the hurricane of 1987, it was painstakingly dismantled and then reconstructed on this spot, beam by beam, between 1999 and 2003. “It was a true labour of love by the previous owner, right down to the thatched roof, which he made himself,” says Sarah.

The other half of the couple’s home is an 18th-century cottage, which, incredibly, was also carefully dismantled in its original location several miles away and rebuilt here, brick by brick as a heritage rescue mission, because it was in the path of a high-speed rail link being built through the Kent countryside.

The 15th-century hall and the 18th-century cottage are joined by a new building that functions as an entrance hall and that feels every bit as rich in history as the spaces it brings together. It is built in a Gothic style, with oak beams and a hefty door that dates from the 16th century, its frame displaying carvings of a Tudor rose and a pomegranate, the emblem of either Catherine of Aragon or Mary Tudor. “Every time I walk through our front door, I’m reminded of the history of our home,” says Sarah.

The couple were captivated by their home’s heritage, but also saw the opportunity to bring it up to date for a more modern lifestyle. “Ben knows my personal style, which ranges from antiques in milky white ▶



Elegant simplicity reigns in the newly created en suite, with gleaming finishes set against warm, weathered timbers. The chandelier is from La Place Antiques and the bath is from Coppersmith.



Sarah and Andrew were captivated by their home's heritage, but also saw the opportunity to bring it up to date for a more modern lifestyle

tones to what I call 'textured contemporary' objects," Sarah explains.

During the redesign, there were, however, a few instances of modern desires coming up against the historical quirks of the building: "We have two antique chandeliers in our bedroom suite, but in order to get them into the house, we had to remove a couple of the arms and then have them soldered back on," Sarah says. Then there was the task of hanging the antler chandeliers in the main part of the great hall. "That was quite a challenge because of the very high ceilings," she adds. However, that has not deterred Sarah from filling those chandeliers with festive foliage for this time of year.

Lighting is another of Sarah's favourite ways to add to the atmosphere at Christmas. "Because the walls of the hall are made of mud and straw, there's no scope

for hiding lighting cables within the walls, so we have a lot of table lamps that create pools of light. Christmas is the perfect excuse to add a few more – plus plenty of tealights and candles," she says. Then there is the ever-present glow of open fires or woodburners, including one in the great hall (cleverly supplemented by underfloor heating), another in the entrance hall and an inglenook in kitchen-diner.

Since they moved here, Christmas gatherings have been a lovely way for Sarah and Andrew to meet their new neighbours, but this home comes into its own when their family starts to arrive. With three grown-up children and eight grandchildren, plus their own mothers, the couple always have a full house. "The day's celebrations start with a glass of buck's fizz and the children opening presents, but, really, all of us being together is what feels most special," says Sarah. ■

ABOVE In one of the guest bedrooms, monochromes are set against the rustic textures. The bed from Soho Home sits beneath a woven pendant from Nkuku. The cushions and lamp are from Oka.



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Collective VISION

A fruitful collaboration with an interior designer has ensured Rebecca and Rob Stirling's vision for a stylish, welcoming home has been brought beautifully to life

FEATURE AMANDER MEADE
PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLIER
STYLING DUNNING AND EVERARD

An abundance of fairy lights and natural foliage set the festive scene in the drawing room, where the family relax after Christmas lunch. The sofa and coffee table are from Jamb, the antique mirror was sourced by Dunning and Everard and the oak leaf and acorn chandelier is by Richard Taylor.







Refreshing paint colours in gentle, easy-to-live-with shades and fabrics with timeless patterns allow the original features to shine

ABOVE The rear hall features a draper's table from Arcadia Antiques, Porta Romana lamps and a chair from Lorforde's Antiques. The walls are in Sap Green by Farrow & Ball.

Although they purchased their Hampshire home in 2014, it was clear from the start that Rebecca and Rob Stirling's ambitious plans to reimagine the space for modern living would take time to accomplish. "We could immediately see how the house could be transformed, but there was a great deal to tackle before we could even think about decor," says Rebecca. As well as a

tired and dated interior, the entire property required rewiring, replumbing and reroofing. "There were three different hot water systems, and someone had grafted a copper pipe onto a plastic hot water tank, which melted and caused a massive flood, so there was plenty of costly reparation to undertake initially."

The couple decided to address the renovation and redesign as a single project. After meticulous planning,



work began in November 2019, taking 18 months to complete. “Although we planned to live here full time, we remained in our London property during the heavy work,” says Rebecca. “We had an excellent team of builders and tradespeople, with our architect project managing for us. Every weekend we looked forward to driving down to see what progress had been made.”

Once the structural work was complete, Rebecca and Rob could turn their attention to the excitement of planning a new interior. “We had a pretty clear idea of how we wanted the house to look,” says Rebecca. “It is Grade II listed, with lots of original features, so we wanted to make the most of these while injecting

a contemporary country feeling, and we knew a professional designer would help us achieve the cohesive look we hoped for.”

The couple chose four designers whose work they admired and invited them to visit the site to discuss their portfolios. Among them was Stephanie Dunning, who founded design firm Dunning and Everard with her husband Peter Everard. “With over 30 years’ experience, Stephanie had some suggestions which were too compelling to ignore,” explains Rob. “She listened carefully to our ideas and was able to expand on them in ways we hadn’t considered – like the reworking of the principal bedroom suite.” ▶

ABOVE The use of strong colour in the kitchen defines it from the dining space. The Kenrick stools are by Chapel Street and the Roman blind fabric is Palmyra by Paolo Moschino. The cabinetry was created by RW Armstrong and painted in Messel by Mylands.



‘The ceiling mouldings in several rooms are original domestic papier mâché’

Stephanie was given a straightforward brief to instil colour and character, as well as ensuring the room schemes in the whole house flowed naturally. “Stephanie asked us to note down furnishings and colours we liked so she could understand our preferences, and we met in her showroom several times to consider mood boards and fabrics.” The couple also began collecting items of furniture through online searches and at various antique shops. Rebecca and Rob agree that Stephanie’s design lead proved invaluable throughout the process, especially during unexpected events. “We discovered that the ceiling mouldings in several rooms are original domestic papier mâché, commonly used during the 18th and 19th centuries but now quite rare. We had planned to remove them, but instead, we engaged Peter Martindale, a historical conservation specialist, to assess and restore them. Stephanie chose exactly the right shade ▶

ABOVE Affectionately known as ‘Rob’s Folly’, the pond is twice as large as Rebecca was expecting.

LEFT The skilfully restored papier mâché ceiling tiles add a splendid element of drama and authenticity to the front hallway. The tile pattern is highlighted in Treron by Farrow & Ball to match the walls. The long-case regulator clock is from Tobias Birch Clocks.



The Coromandel wallpaper by Lewis & Wood inspired the colour scheme in this guest bedroom. The Goldsborough bed is by TurnPost and the lamp is by Soho Home.





‘The house is Grade II listed, with lots of original features, so we wanted to make the most of these while injecting a contemporary country feeling’

ABOVE The spacious principal en-suite bathroom has a vanity unit made by The English Joinery Company. The mirrors are by Restoration Hardware and the floor tiles are by The Stone and Ceramic Warehouse.

ABOVE RIGHT A chair in Fauno by C&C Milano creates an cosy nook in the principal bedroom, together with a lamp by Vaughan topped with a shade by Porta Romana. The curtain fabric is Rajmata by Peter Dunham at Tissus d’Hélène, while the grasscloth wallpaper is by Phillip Jeffries.

of paint to highlight their character and now they look really impressive.”

A wall between the kitchen and the dining room has been removed to create a kitchen-diner, and a courtyard in the middle of the house has been transformed into a practical pantry. The kitchen has been ergonomically designed to make cooking more efficient, and new bathrooms have been fitted throughout.

The couple are delighted with their completed project. Each room has been thoughtfully furnished, with a clever combination of their favourite antiques alongside more contemporary pieces to update the look. Refreshing paint colours in gentle, easy-to-live-with shades and fabrics with timeless patterns were deftly selected to allow the original features to shine.

“We are looking forward to a really comfortable, cosy Christmas this year,” says Rebecca. “We had fun here at Christmas before the redesign, but nothing really worked very well and the heating wasn’t very good. The only way to cook was on an old Aga, which also heated the room, so in the summer it was always uncomfortable. This year will feel very different and we have been able to let loose with decorations. The

colours we’ve chosen really encourage a festive feeling. Using lots of natural foliage from the garden to dress the house always helps set the scene.”

On Christmas Day, the couple meet friends and neighbours for drinks in the local pub at midday, before hosting extended family later in the afternoon. Presents are exchanged after lunch by the fire in the drawing room.

Rebecca and Rob thoroughly recommend engaging a professional designer before embarking on any major decorative overhaul. “We advise taking time to find the right design professional for you. We enjoyed the entire process of working with Stephanie, who was extremely proactive and encouraged brilliant communication, which was essential. Remember that any designer can only deliver your vision if you offer plenty of input which ensures the results feel like your own. Always take the advice offered – the professional is a professional for a reason.”

With such an ambitious renovation under their belts, Rebecca and Rob are in no hurry to repeat the process. “I think we are done for now. We are so happy here and this now feels like our forever home.” ■

A clever partition creates an attractive divide between the bedroom and the en-suite bathroom in the open-plan principal suite. Covering the main panel in silk by Altfield instils a glamorous finish. The cushions were made in-house by Dunning and Everard.



A Country CHRISTMAS

Designer Emma Diaz and her husband, Serafin, have sensitively transformed a lacklustre cottage to create a joyful, colourful family home filled with personality

FEATURE & STYLING JANET MCMEEKIN
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

The Westridge Collection dining table has been dressed for the festive celebrations with a centrepiece by Eden Flowers, mistletoe crackers from Nancy & Betty and berry decorations from The White Company. Emma sourced the brass candlesticks from Noble and the Harlequin Shetland throw from Susie Watson Designs.





‘The cottage was devoid of colour but before long I was painting every wall and noticing how the colours lifted my mood and reignited my creativity’

As Emma Diaz lights the festive candles on her oak table, lovingly laid for Christmas dinner, she reflects on just how far she has come since first setting foot in this once-neglected 18th-century cottage. “If someone had told me 10 years ago that my husband, Serafin, and I would be dining with our little boy at a table that I’d designed myself, in a cottage bursting with colour, I wouldn’t have believed them,” Emma confides. “It’s been a rollercoaster journey.”

In 2013, the couple, who originally hail from Kent, began scouring the Cotswolds for a renovation project within commuting distance of Bristol, where Emma was working as an animator for Aardman Animations. “At that time, Serafin had just finished his first cottage restoration and was keen to develop his skills,” Emma explains. When they discovered a damp three-bedroom cottage that had been rented for several years and was

badly in need of modernisation, they felt compelled to give it a new lease of life. “The third bedroom was incredibly tiny and the galley kitchen so small there was barely enough space for one person, never mind two, but the cottage had a good feel and the potential to create our first ‘together’ home,” says Emma. Unsure of its exact origins, she believes the property was built in the mid-1700s as a worker’s cottage for the then-thriving local wool industry.

Fired with enthusiasm, Emma and Serafin, who were childhood sweethearts, began excitedly removing the render to expose the original Cotswold stone. “Although the cottage wasn’t Grade II listed, to our horror, we suddenly discovered it had a local listing,” Emma explains. “That meant we had to stop exposing the stone and get permission for exterior changes, which was very stressful.” After agreeing that, if the cottage had to be rendered, lime would allow it to ▶

ABOVE LEFT The glass ceiling, with its oak beams, is an eye-catching feature in the new kitchen extension. The cake and mince pies are from Betty’s.

ABOVE RIGHT A handmade Afghan rug, bought during a recent visit to Provence, is the latest addition to the sitting room. The compact bookcase is from Emma’s Westridge Collection. The chair and cushion are from Oka.



The wood-burning stove, which the couple inherited from the previous occupants, and colourful paintings by the couple's son, are a delightful focal point. During the winter, Emma places hops above the wooden mantelpiece and forages for pine cones and seasonal greenery to decorate the cottage.





‘We wanted to restore the cottage as sustainably and authentically as we could, using reclaimed materials where possible’

ABOVE LEFT Emma designed the boot room joinery, which was made by Baytree Carpentry. The handles and hooks are from Jim Lawrence and the garland is from The White Company.

ABOVE RIGHT In the study a collage by local artist Belinda Downes provides a focal point. The blue ruffled lampshade is by Beauvamp while the pleated one is by Alice Palmer & Co. The cushion is from Sharland England.

breathe, the pair went on a course in Devon to learn more about building and plastering with lime. “We wanted to restore the cottage as sustainably and authentically as we could, using reclaimed materials where possible,” Emma says. “Once we’d overcome the render hurdle, in 2016, we built a lovely new porch and boot room on one side. This gave us the confidence to tackle the next, much larger, phase.”

The following year, the plucky pair embarked on extending on the other side of the property, building a larger kitchen with a vaulted main bedroom above, and rejigging the upstairs layout. “In the autumn of 2017, we knocked through, and that December, I discovered was pregnant,” Emma recalls. “As it turned colder, the cottage became absolutely freezing. I remember going to bed in clothes and a coat, wondering what on earth we were doing. There were times when we didn’t have a complete roof, had

various holes in parts of the cottage and no boiler. In hindsight, I can’t believe we lived like that.”

While building their bedroom, Serafin, who is a project manager, suggested creating a glass floor to allow light to penetrate the kitchen below. “I was initially sceptical, but having spotted a Parisian apartment with a glazed floor, I embraced the idea,” says Emma. “Even though it meant changing the direction of the floor joists and fitting oak beams, it’s turned out to be a unique feature and well worth the extra upheaval.”

Having poured their hearts and souls into the renovation, soon after their son’s arrival, Emma began feeling that something was amiss. “While on maternity leave, it dawned on me that the cottage was devoid of colour and we were basically living in a white box,” she explains. Gradually, she began introducing hints of red, her favourite colour. With soft furnishings and ▶



Determined that this space would link neatly with the original cottage, the couple salvaged as much of the Cotswold stone as possible to build the new wall in the bedroom. The Ava glass pendant light from Jim Lawrence is an elegant finishing touch.



‘I grew increasingly confident, filling our home with more pattern, striking textiles and wallpaper, and fully immersing myself in the interiors’

ABOVE LEFT Here, Cleo wallpaper in Marin Blue from Elizabeth Ockford is teamed with a lower wall from The English Panelling Company in George by Edward Bulmer Natural Paint. **ABOVE RIGHT** The sanitaryware in the bathroom is from Burlington Bathrooms, and the bobbin mirror is from Alfred Newall. The two smaller shades are made in Small Check Faded Yellow fabric from Chelsea Textiles.

accessories lifting the sitting room, she was thrilled to discover the breathable range of Edward Bulmer Natural Paints. “Before long, I was painting every wall, becoming braver and noticing how the colours lifted my mood and reignited my creativity,” she says. “I grew increasingly confident, filling our home with more pattern, striking textiles and wallpaper, and fully immersing myself in the interiors.”

Emma’s playful aesthetic was noticed by Edward and Emma Bulmer, who invited her to train as one of their first colour consultants. “Working with the Bulmers exposed me to other sustainable British brands,” she says. “I began questioning the provenance of certain pieces of new furniture that I’d been thinking of buying to complement our antique and vintage finds.”

Having struggled to source tables and a bookcase for the cottage, Emma took matters into her own hands.

“Inspired by family walks in the nearby rolling hills, I designed my Westridge Collection of neatly scaled, eco-conscious wood furniture that’s handcrafted in Wiltshire,” she says.

Following an incredibly busy period launching and promoting her furniture collection at various events throughout the country, as well as hosting a plethora of colour workshops and consultancies, Emma is looking forward to relaxing during the festive season and spending quality time with her family. “After enjoying a hearty, oven-baked porridge, complete with pear and cinnamon, and unwrapping presents, Serafin and I will treat ourselves to a little glass of champagne before we all head out for a rural walk,” she says. “We will then sit down at the new table for our Christmas dinner, and celebrate being together in the cossetting cottage that we all adore.” ■

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STYLE INSPIRATION

Interior designers reveal their resolutions, we recognise design achievements with our New Year Honours, and offer expert guides to lighting and festive table settings ▶

A WELCOME CHANGE

A lick of paint is a quick but highly transformative way to update a room. Add a bold stripe to walls for a striking change, or give furniture a creative update. Here, a lightly festive character that will look smart all year round has been given to a chest of drawers and lampshade with the use of green and red. The addition of a stocking is perfect for guests over Christmas - fill with a few essentials such as travel-sized toiletries and a pair of cosy socks to make them feel at home. Wall, Piranesi Pink and Pointe Silk, £55.95 for 2.5l Wall Paint; Chest of drawers and lamp, Olive, Emperor's Silk, Old Ochre and Paloma £26.95 for 1l Chalk Paint, all Annie Sloan. (We celebrate Annie Sloan's influence on decorating on page 98.)





Ring in THE NEW

From unexpected colour palettes to making clever environmental choices, interiors specialists and tastemakers share their plans and designs intentions for the year ahead

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE



CHARU GHANDI *Elicyon*

What design ideas do you have that you hope to bring to fruition next year?

I'm inclined towards exploring a refined colour palette that imparts a sense of timelessness and sophistication. I'd also like to incorporate more sustainable materials into our designs, not only for their ecological benefits but also for the unique aesthetic they bring to a space. For us, the key is always to balance functionality and aesthetic appeal.

What is your New Year design resolution?

To continue focusing on considered, curated and rich interiors. It's essential for us as a studio to create spaces that not only reflect the unique personality of the client but also stand the test of time in terms of style and functionality.

Is there anyone you would like to work with in 2024?

We're looking forward to continuing our expansion of collaborations with inspiring artisans and craftspeople who share a vision. As for projects, we're excited about our international reach, particularly in the South of France, the Middle East and the USA, where we have projects slated for completion. As an international studio, that allows us to expand and explore, pushing the boundaries of our creativity.

elicyon.com ▶





VANESSA MACDONALD *for Melissa Wyndham*

What is your New Year design resolution?

I'm simplifying – using less pattern and decorating with fewer objects. There has been a push for more of a maximalist aesthetic in recent years and I'm looking forward to paring things back, continuing to source pieces that are beautiful in their own right and then letting those items breathe.

Is there a project that you'd like to work on in 2024?

We're looking forward to developing our product range, which is currently a small collection of chairs inspired by our late founder Melissa Wyndham and something she really wanted to do. We've used architectural features found in and around London as inspiration and the collection will soon include bedside tables, mirrors and lighting.

What in the world of design are you most excited about in the year ahead?

I've been delving into books for inspiration. I'm looking forward to applying some of the decorating principles of Jaime Larladé, Bunny Mellon and Elsie de Wolfe. The aim is to combine elegant design with more contemporary pieces, so that our interiors look as though they have evolved over time.

melissawyndham.com



NICKY HASLAM

What is your New Year design resolution?

To continue my lifelong belief in melding the contemporary idiom with the grammar of classic interior architecture.

What was a highlight of 2023?

One of the most instructive challenges was the creation of The Legend Room at the WOW!House at Chelsea Harbour's Design Centre. It's awfully easy when designing a room to think of it as static and one-purposed. In this case, the space had to allow a continual flow, with areas highlighted for varied activities, an important design element in any modern lifestyle.

What design ideas do you hope to bring to fruition?

I've been using a sort of dark gold-green reminiscent of sunlight on moss, and preferably in mohair – coffee-browns and near-blacks play up to that green wonderfully, with lashings of white and flashes of lilac and sharp pink. And there are some astonishing new-tech metallic materials now. I long to do a whole bronze room. I have also added several new designs to my After All Collection at Turnell & Gigon, and have collaborated with Silk Avenue on a range of rug designs with a distinctly graphic flavour. I think with so many clients buying massive contemporary art, rooms must reflect the trend with a kind of linear silhouette and, bold unusual colours. nickyhaslamstudio.com ▶





JOANNA PLANT
Joanna Plant Interiors

What is your New Year design resolution?

I'd like to get out and look at things. The aim is to visit lots of houses and gardens for inspiration and see more exhibitions. I love a house tour and try to find somewhere to go and poke about whenever I travel outside London or abroad. I really appreciate seeing things first-hand these days.

What was a highlight of 2023?

Selling my house of 22 years and embarking on the renovation of a new property – very exciting to be doing a project for myself! What's fantastic is to work with suppliers who have incredible archives to explore and those who offer the possibility of recolouring or rescaling existing designs.

What design ideas do you have that you hope to bring to fruition?

Happily, clients seem to be more responsive to having bolder paint schemes and using more colour. We have been urging them to see how layering pattern can make a room feel more restful and considered. I predict that we are going trim-tastic, using lots of wonderful passementerie to give our rooms detail and refinement.
joannaplantinteriors.com





ANAHITA RIGBY

What was a highlight of 2023?

Seeing the shoot photographs from a completed project in Kensington. I adored working on it because it pushed me outside my comfort zone with pattern, colour and texture. As a designer, it can be daunting to be bold; this is certainly something I will be developing with each project and client as we move into 2024.

How important are sustainable considerations in your work?

I feel strongly about reusing furniture. Some clients suggest removing existing pieces that might not appear to fit with new schemes, to which I respond with the reassurance that it's fun to reframe loved items within a layout. It's not always necessary to buy new pieces; an antique is often much more interesting and sustainable. And when it comes to interior architecture, I will always suggest something that has been used before ahead of anything new – a fireplace is a great example of this.

What design ideas do you have that you hope to bring to fruition next year?

Recently, I've been swooning over emerald green. It's a punchy colour to use and I'm hankering to go big on it. I'd love to decorate an entire room in this tone. anahitarigby.com ▶





PAOLO MOSCHINO AND PHILIP VERGEYLEN

Paolo Moschino

What is your New Year design resolution?

We'd like to further shift the focus to sustainability. That will partly be through building on our own offering such as our recent linen collection, Nuova Vita, which is made with recycled linen fibre. We've also had an enormous demand for more patterned fabrics, so we are working on that.

Is there a project you'd like to work on this coming year?

We dream of opening a real boutique hotel in London full of antiques, fine bedlinen and works of art – not to mention a fabulous Italian restaurant.

What design ideas do you hope to bring to fruition?

We're keen on returning to the drawing board and getting into the nitty gritty. It's exciting to see the interior design world shifting its focus to the small details and not just window dressing. For us, that means colour, texture, more antiques and making sure that home and garden communicate with one another. We'd also love to work on a tableware collection that encompasses everything from plates and glasses to cutlery.

paolomoschino.com





MARTIN BRUDNIZKI

What is your New Year design resolution?

This past year, we've enjoyed developing products that harness ancient craft techniques for And Objects, our new Pimlico bricks-and-mortar store. On our journey of product creation, we have discovered wonderful artisans whether in Hampshire villages or Northern towns. For example, we recently developed a new British-made table lamp crafted from scagliola, a form of plaster, that hasn't been used for many years. We'd like to continue discovering these forgotten skills and bringing them back to the forefront of British design.

Is there anyone you would like to work with in 2024?

We've been working on the Belmond Splendido hotel in Portofino for the last few years; it's a phased project. We are very much enjoying the collaboration.

What in the world of design are you most excited about in the year ahead?

Decorative finishes have become more popular over the years and I think they will continue to make waves in the year ahead. Trompe l'oeil, tortoiseshell and faux bois are all styles I'm looking forward to embracing further. [mbds.com](https://www.mbd.com) ►





MARY GRAHAM & NICOLE SALVESEN

Salvesen Graham

Is there anyone you would like to work with this coming year?
 We'd love to collaborate with an international architect we respect, such as Gil Schafer. We also wouldn't say no to a working on beach house on a tropical island!

How important are sustainable considerations in your work?
 It's a key factor in our choice of partners, such as our trimmings collection with Sanderson Design made

from 90% recycled yarns, or our partnership with WAX Atelier, who locally source most materials and produce in-house in small batches using environmentally low-impact processes. We're big advocates of using antiques too. Aesthetically, they're often more beautiful and from a sustainability point of view, they have a lower carbon footprint and are usually built to last.

What design ideas do you hope to bring to fruition?

We will continue to take a 'future-heritage' approach, which combines traditional schemes with bold colour and playful prints. We love looking through archival fabrics and wallpaper as inspiration for design ideas. Finally, we won't forget the ceiling: whether it be applying a trimming, lacquering, or adding wallpaper, we always consider it.
salvesengraham.com





CLARA EWART

Head of design, Kitesgrove

What was a highlight of 2023?

We've had a busy year working on some really exciting projects, recently completing a second outlet for farm shop The Cotswold Guy, having worked on the brand's original store in Guiting Power. The space was an empty shell, which gave us the opportunity to transform it into a cafe and shop that felt welcoming and comfortable, which we did through use of natural materials, locally sourcing a selection of antique and vintage pieces, and introducing details such as handmade crockery by local ceramicist Sue Pryke. It's been rewarding to combine that with several residential projects.

Is there anyone you would like to work with in 2024?

We were thrilled to collaborate with Bert & May on our Irregular tile collection recently, which featured two designs in abstract designs and muted tones. In 2024, we really look forward to expanding the collection with a third design. We often create bespoke items with British companies that make their products by hand in the UK – we are also in discussions about launching some of these to the market.

What design ideas do you have that you hope to bring to fruition this coming year?

We'd like to incorporate further bold pattern and colour in our projects and to continue to create layered and inviting schemes. In all of our work, we prioritise natural materials, local craftsmanship and ethically sourced products, focusing as much as possible on sourcing vintage and antique pieces, or repurposing existing furniture. That has allowed us to deepen our own knowledge and expertise, something we plan to incorporate further. [kitesgrove.com](https://www.kitesgrove.com) ■



THINK LIKE A DESIGNER IN 2024

SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS

- Reuse or repurpose existing furniture
- Buy antique or vintage pieces
- Seek natural fibres such as linen

DECORATIVE CHOICES

- Be bold and brave with colour and pattern
- Consider different paint techniques and decorative finishes
- Focus on small details and texture

INSPIRING IDEAS

- Visit historic houses for inspiration
- Discover local artisans
- Harness global influences from travels



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New Year HONOURS AWARDS 2024

This year we reflect on innovative and inventive design, sustainable endeavours, new ventures, craftsmanship, home-grown talent and remarkable achievements ▶

LEFT TO RIGHT Floral Zigzag, Slate Blue, Franquemont (p97); Belvoir Chinoiserie, Apricot, de Gournay (p91); Goose, Blue, Watts of Westminster (p91); Tall Trees, Kit Kemp (p87)

Made in Britain

There is a wealth of skilled makers and designers on our shores, reviving time-honoured techniques through expertly crafted and creative designs. **DeVOL** launched its first coloured glass pendant with the help of a local glass artist. **Wrought Iron and Brass Bed Co** celebrated 20 years with a new 100% British iron four-poster bed frame. Long-established British manufacturer **David Hunt Lighting** introduced the Icarus collection modelled on a traditional wax candlestick. A perfect union, **Burleigh** and **Barneby Gates**' collaboration resulted in a collection of timeless wallpapers proudly printed in England. The Isles range by **Marlborough Tiles** paid tribute to the Hebrides with textural irregularities capturing their natural, rugged beauty. Britain has a strong heritage of kitchen makers, from **Barnes of Ashburton** to **The White Kitchen Company**, creating beautiful, honest and well-made designs, and **Pilgrim's** New-Shaker collection continues this tradition with its simple yet timeless appeal. A leader in heat storage cookers, **Everhot** launched an electric heater that blends traditional craftsmanship with modern efficiency. **Martin Huxford's** lights each demonstrated the creative possibilities of rich materials such as brass and bronze. **Cormar Carpets** launched multiple new designs, all still made in its Lancashire-based mills first established in 1956. Finally, handmade using sustainably sourced wood, The Colourist collection from **Georgie Wykeham** can be tailored, colour and finish, to suit any scheme.

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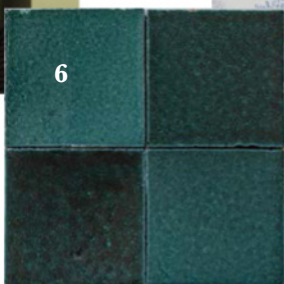
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HOMEGROWN TALENTS

1 & 2 DeVOL's Frilly glass pendant came from its love for rare vintage glass.

3 The Wrought Iron and Brass Bed Co's Aurora frame has a hand-painted heritage-brass finish.

4 & 5 Vanessa Barneby and Alice Gates have captured Burleigh's iconic designs in wallpaper form.

6 Marlborough Tiles' Isles collection consists of several layers of glaze in a variety of hues and weights.

NEW YEAR HONOURS



7 & 8 Hollie Morland, creative director of David Hunt Lighting, and the Icarus wall light.

9, 10 & 11 Pilgrim's New-Shaker collection follows founder Paul Staden's ethos of simple, honest furniture.

12 & 13 Everhot's latest designs, overseen by director Guy Goring, are made in the same Cotswolds factory where its first range cooker was created in 1979.

14 & 15 Martin Huxford designs and crafts his sculptural lights in his studio workshop in West Sussex.

16 The Hampstead wool twist pile carpet from Cormar Carpets comes in a range of neutral and richer shades.

17 & 18 Georgie Wykeham's Colourist collection, inspired by classic antiques, consists of eight styles of table, from side to console. ▶

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPHS (HOLLIE MORLAND) © SEBASTIAN DEVENISH, (BARNBY GATES AND BURLEIGH IMAGES) © BEN PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY, (MARTIN HUXFORD LIGHTS) © NIAL CLUTTON, (GEORGE WYKEHAM LIFESTYLE) © EMMA LEE, (GEORGE WYKEHAM CUTOUT) © TOM ST AUBYN

Collaborations

Partnerships between esteemed brands and talented designers abounded in 2023. Here we highlight some special creative relationships that resulted in particularly covetable designs. **Schumacher** teamed up with New York-based **Drusus Tabor**, specialist in block-printed textiles, for a new collection that celebrates the character and nuances of traditional block-printing. **Nina Campbell** brought her endlessly inspiring and distinctive use of colour and pattern to a highly useable range of tiles by **Fired Earth**. We also loved the joyous use of colour and graphic pattern in the lighting range by London-based Spanish talent **Alvaro Picardo** and **Studio Atkinson**. The inimitable **Nicky Haslam** teamed up with two of his previous creative directors, **Colette van den Thillart** and **Justin Van Breda** for the Autobiographical collection of furniture referencing long-loved antiques, classics and Haslam's own creations. British pottery **Spode** brought the wit and whimsy of **Kit Kemp**'s designs to life in a homeware collection – her **Tall Trees** mural-style wallpaper of an enchanted forest translated into a striking china dinner service elevates any table setting. Artist **Fee Greening** collaborated with **Balineum** to bring her dip pen and ink illustrations to a tile medium that brings flair to a splashback, as well as being collectable pieces of art in themselves. **The Lacquer Company** never fails to delight when it collaborates with designers – we especially love its recent partnerships with **Jane Churchill** and **Peter Mikic**.



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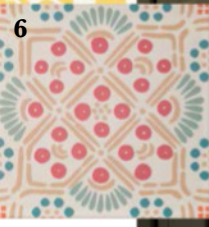
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CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS
 1, 2 & 3 Charles Dort, founder of Drusus Tabor, and the results of his passion for block-printed textiles with Schumacher.
 4, 5 & 6 Nina Campbell's designs for Fired Earth saw her bring her patterns to tiles for the first time.
 7 & 8 Susie Atkinson has brought the creative talents of Alvaro Picardo to add colourful, graphic lighting to her studio's collection.
 9 & 10 Combining the creative talents of Nicky Haslam and Colette van den Thillart with the

furniture craftsmanship of Justin Van Breda, The Autobiographical Collection is a celebration of Haslam's style.
 11 & 12 Kit Kemp's wonderful Tall Trees mural is brought to life on china by Spode.
 13, 14 & 15 Illustrations by Fee Greening create the collectable and covetable Curios tiles collection by Balineum.
 16 & 17 James Lowther, founder of The Lacquer Company, has worked with esteemed designers on colourful collections. Peter Mikic brings his flair to the latest partnership. ▶



Sustainability

A leading priority, sustainability was used by many brands as a catalyst for creating inspirational designs in 2023. **Edward Bulmer Natural Paint** extended its offering of plastic-free, carbon neutral and non-toxic paints with a beautiful new Palette Blenders range. The elegant, contemporary Ocean collection launched by **Soho Lighting** has been designed with a view to rid the oceans of plastics, working with Fishy Filaments to repurpose old, fishing nets into objects of beauty. **Rapture & Wright's** low-impact and environmentally sustainable printworks allows it to produce vibrant designs at high ecological standards. Reworking engaging archive prints into textiles, wallpaper and accessories, **Print Sisters** uses recycled and sustainable paper, and is partnered with a tree-planting charity for environmentally friendly production. **Roger Oates'** multicoloured Flatweaves are completely ecologically traceable – right back to the sheep who provided the wool. **George Smith's** new initiative, Pre-loved, offers ready-to-buy pieces with an interesting history (perhaps as a television star) to continue their lifecycle.



SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

- 1 & 2 The Palette Blenders range from Edward Bulmer Natural Paint has a plant-based formula.
- 3 & 4 Soho Lighting's Ocean collection transforms fishing nets into pendants (co-founder Lee Lovett).
- 5 & 6 Tabriz is a linen fabric by Rapture & Wright (Peter Thwaites and Rebecca Aird) that comes in nine colourways, from lively to more tonal combinations.
- 7 Print Sisters claims to have one of the largest privately owned collections of hand-created textile artworks, including this original oyster screen print.
- 8 Roger Oates has worked with The Woolkeepers to make sure its Flatweave flooring range is sourced with assured integrity.
- 9 Pre-loved by George Smith includes designs used in television dramas and exclusive prototypes.





Craftsmanship

We always enjoy discovering the incredible stories of artistry and heritage skills behind beautiful pieces for the home. In 2023 we were consistently impressed by techniques used by **Porta Romana** to create sculptural lighting – each a piece of art, whether in plaster, metal or glass. **Fromental's** collaboration with interior designer **Katharine Pooley** saw the creation of *An English Butterfly Garden*, a beautiful design celebrating English garden flowers and native butterflies, hand-painted and embroidered on silk with incredible attention to detail. Combining two skills, **Nichola Taylorson** produced colourful hand-block-printed fabrics finished with hand-embroidered details. In the past, we have lauded **Jennifer Manners** for her outstanding efforts in sustainability, but the craftsmanship of her rugs needs praising too – particularly the creation of her *Luxe* collection; each rug is handmade with luxury fibres such as silk and mohair, with a special treatment to make them durable as well as sumptuous. Finally **Beaumont & Fletcher** always impresses with traditional techniques applied to updated classics in its furniture and lighting collections. ▶

EXEMPLARY CRAFTSMANSHIP

1 & 2 **Porta Romana** employs a range of skills, from forging metals to delicate gilding, to create its of fine-quality lighting.

3 & 4 Incredible artistry is displayed in the details of *An English Butterfly Garden* by **Fromental x Katharine Pooley**.

5 & 6 Working with talented artisans in Jaipur, **Nichola Taylorson's** fabrics are block-printed by hand, with lovely embroidered details.

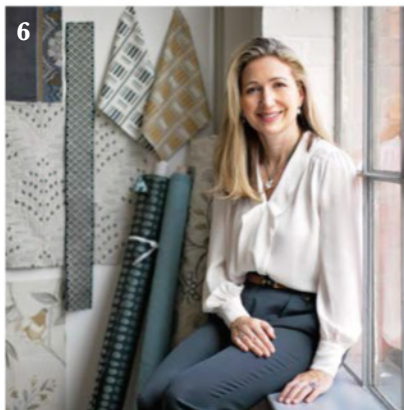
7 & 8 **Jennifer Manner's** *Luxe* collection in opulent silk, mohair and merino wool features hand knotted and hand-loomed rugs.

9 A classic slipper chair is given a contemporary look in **Beaumont & Fletcher's** new flame stitch *Kyma* fabric.



Design reinventions

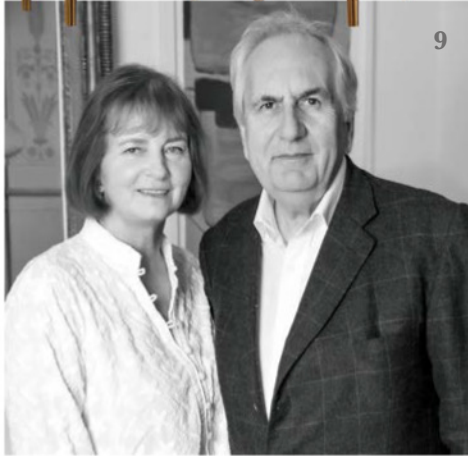
Here we look at a few of our favourite reimagined originals and designs inspired by past eras in 2023. A collaboration between **1838 Wallcoverings** and the **V&A** resulted in prints dating back to the 1700s being updated in over 30 colourways, while Emery Walker's House collection from **Morris & Co** produced fresh interpretations of classic designs, and **Samuel & Sons'** pairing with **Maddux Creative** saw neoclassical motifs represented in hand-detailed textiles. To celebrate Disney's centenary, **Disney Home x Sanderson** saw illustrations combined with designs from an original 1930s collaboration transformed into a nostalgic range of fabrics and wallpapers that will delight all ages. **James Hare**, meanwhile, took inspiration from the Great Exhibition of 1851 for its cosmopolitan **Shalimar** collection. Turning to lighting, **Vaughan's** Stratton chandelier marries 1940s style with a modern aesthetic for a sleek, sophisticated addition to an interior scheme.



IMAGINATIVE REDESIGNS
1 Kilburn's Coral wallpaper is an **1838 Wallcoverings** and **V&A** design based on a watercolour by 18th-century illustrator William Kilburn.
2 Bird, inspired by an 1878 William Morris tapestry, is

now available as a **Morris & Co** wallpaper.
3 & 4 Add a touch of classical flair with the intricately satin-stitched Fogli Cablate border by **Maddux Creative** (seen here) available from **Samuel & Sons**.

5 & 10 The Winnie The Pooh and Hundred Acre Wood wallpaper and fabric designs from **Disney Home x Sanderson** are full of whimsical charm.
6 & 7 Saffron Hare, creative director of **James Hare**, and



1



2

Stately revivals

Revival, rejuvenation and reimagination were key in 2023, painstakingly preserving the precious while innovating important English properties. These five gladdened our eye.

1 De Gournay created this new version of an 18th-century Chinese wallpaper in Belvoir Castle as part of an ambitious project to rejuvenate the historic home.

2 This sublime collection of fabrics and wallpapers created by Watts 1874 in collaboration with Castle Howard is new yet feels historic.

3 A 17th-century Palladian-style mansion in Oxfordshire was lovingly reimaged as RH England, The Gallery at Aynho Park.

4 Wildhive Callow Hall hotel in the Peak District features divine timeless interiors by Isabella Worsley.

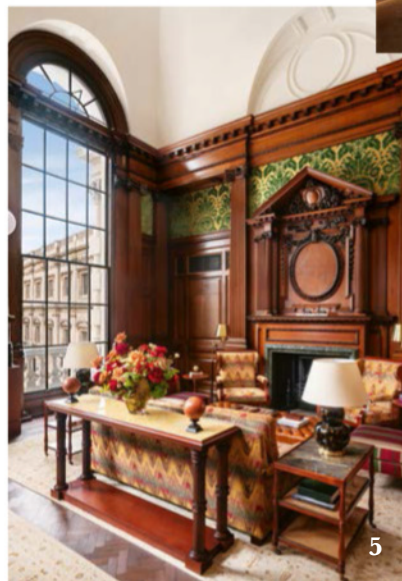
5 Raffles London at The OWO recently opened in style after an eight-year meticulous restoration. ▶



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the Dacca and Paxton fabrics from the Shalimar collection showing a contemporary spirit in rich reds.

8 & 9 Lucy and Michael Vaughan, the founders and creative duo behind Vaughan, and the elegant Stratton chandelier, which comes in single and two-tier options.

FEATURE SARAH FEELEY

ACRES FARM

Club Fenders

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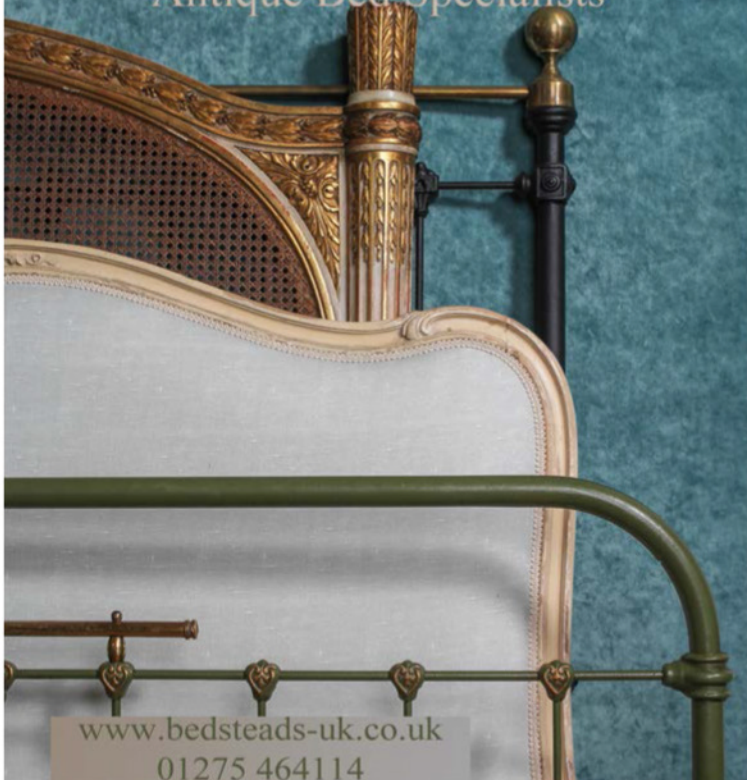


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Innovations

The design world is one of ingenuity and originality, demonstrated each year by myriad launches that have innovation at their core, whether in terms of technology, style or creativity. Here we take a look at some standout pieces from 2023. **Suzy Hoodless'** collection for **Drummonds** marries form and function, including the shapely Dual light which can be fitted vertically or horizontally. Capturing the little joys of life, **Ken Fulk** and **The Rug Company's** bespoke rug, **A Life Reflected** invites customers to personalise the design with beloved companions and pastimes. Antique textiles chosen for their hand-embroidered detailing allow **Hum London's** Prairie lampshades to cast a warm dappled light. **Farrow & Ball's** ultra-matt Dead Flat finish brought a new depth to its extensive range of shades, providing rich, pigmented colour. Outdoor fabrics saw great development, including collections from **Madeaux** and **Sarah Vanrenen for Penny Morrison**, combining durability with aesthetic appeal. **Bert & May** launched several dynamic and versatile collections to mark its first decade, including Striped, Marbled and Borders. ▶

CREATIVE DESIGNS

1 & 2 Suzy Hoodless looked to expert glassmakers for her designs for Drummonds. **3** Delft tiles were the inspiration for Ken Fulk and The Rug Company's bespoke design. **4** Hum London's Prairie lampshade introduces delicate pattern. **5** 2023 marked Sarah Vanrenen's foray into performance fabrics with Penny Morrison.



6 A 2 per cent sheen gives Farrow & Ball's Dead Flat its solid look. **7, 8 & 9** Madeaux's outdoor fabrics, designed by founder Richard Smith, focus on lightfastness and longevity. **10 & 11** Lee Thornley, founder of Bert & May, celebrated the brand's 10th anniversary with the striking Striped collection.

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPH (SUZY HOODLESS PORTRAIT) © TOM MANNION

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5

New ventures

Venturing creatively into pastures new was an enriching and energising focus for many key brands in 2023. Esteemed Savile Row designer **Ozward Boateng OBE** collaborated with Italian furniture-maker **Poltrona Frau** on a capsule collection of furniture and home accessories elegantly combining the joy of African aesthetics reflecting Ozward's Ghanaian heritage with the spirit of English tailoring and fine Italian craftsmanship. Interior designer **Sophie Ashby** launched her debut fabrics The Jocasta Collection under her brand **Sister By Studio Ashby**, with global influences from her travels across Africa, Asia and Europe and celebrating ancient traditions. Globally known for its lavishly handcrafted wallcoverings, **Fromental** unveiled its first solo foray into the world of decorative items with the Objects collection, featuring cushions, wall hangings and original artworks inspired by co-founder Lizzie Deshayes' passion for needlepoint and the desire to elevate this 'domestic' craft into something special. ▶

PASTURES NEW
1 & 2 Each hand-embossed pattern designed by **Ozward Boateng CBE** for his collaboration

with **Poltrona Frau** furniture pays homage to his Ashanti roots.
3,4 & 5 Designed by **Sophie Ashby**,

the eclectic and lively fabrics in her debut range, The **Jocasta Collection**, are made by **Yarn Collective**.



6

6 & 7 **Fromental** co-founders **Tim Butcher** and **Lizzie Deshayes** launched the **Objects** collection, inspired by archive prints, 14th-century tapestries and Japanese-influenced European ceramics.



7



A standout year

There were so many brands and designers that impressed throughout 2023, delivering projects, creations, collections, services and products of high calibre, that we could not single out just one achievement...



POOKY

Continued innovation in affordable yet beautiful pieces resulted in successful collaborations, from Matthew Williamson's vibrant creations (*right*) to Ellen Merchant's hand-block-printed patterns. GP & J Baker reintroduced historical designs and Creative Craft Projects' woven lampshades produced striking forms (*above*).



GP & J BAKER

Every year could be stellar simply for the continued reimagination of archive designs – such as Gertrude (*far left*), inspired by a crewelwork from the late 1600s, along with reinventions of iconic patterns. However, 2023 also saw a debut collection of upholstered furniture, all handcrafted in England; a collaboration with Pooky to bring its classic designs to lighting, and most recently a foray into rugs, again bringing archive designs to a new medium.



SALVESEN GRAHAM

Nicole Salvesen and Mary Graham had a prolific 2023 with the completion of several esteemed projects, including a Mayfair penthouse and an alpine ski chalet, and a number of their own new product ranges and creative collaborations. A partnership with Sanderson saw the duo curate an edit of new and archive designs and the launch of a trimmings collection. They also ventured into bedding and sleepwear in a partnership with Yolke, as well as creating a candle collection with Wax Atelier.



NEPTUNE

From the launch of its colour consultancy and interior design service, offering clients expert advice on choosing the right palette for a space, to the release of its new paint colour Rhubarb, a timeless coral shade, it was certainly a vibrant year for the brand. Alongside extensive new designs in its autumn and spring collections, Neptune also upholstered popular designs in Fermoie's signature fabrics, while a collection with Christopher Farr Cloth resulted in an elevated outdoor range.



LORFORDS CONTEMPORARY

Over the past year, Lorfords has gone from strength to strength, with beautifully designed products emphasising eco-conscious practices. Sustainability remained a key focus with the launch of The Cushion Collection, created with surplus luxury fabric cuttings, and the Vintage Cloth range of fabrics, using recycled antique linen and yarn. A partnership with British artist Natasha Hulse evolved into The Botanical Headboard collection (right), a curated selection of upholstered designs inspired by the Cotswold countryside. Elsewhere, Turner Pocock combined its signature style with luxury furniture crafted in traditional silhouettes, featuring sofas, chairs, benches and ottomans. Teaming with Haines saw the creation of a striking update on a classic slipper chair (right).



On our radar

Here we spotlight notable new and long-admired designers whose talent resulted in outstanding designs and additions to their ranges in 2023.

OCTAVIA DICKINSON From designing interiors for high-profile clients to her latest fabric and wallpaper collections made in the UK, Dickinson (above) imbues all with a classic English sensibility.

FRANQUEMONT Founder Svetlana Willems (right) draws on her Dutch-Indonesian heritage to create textiles in a batik style (swatches right).

ROSI DE RUIG Using decorative papers, from hand-printed botanicals to Japanese designs and hand-woven creations, these little shades (right) create a big impact.

ELOISE HOME Hand-drawn designs inspired by the English countryside in a soft palette (below) that is perfect for an English home.

ATELIER ELLIS We continue to be impressed by the expanding palette of nuanced, richly pigmented paints from Cassandra Ellis (below right) and her team. ▶



FEATURE MOLLY MALCOM PHOTOGRAPH (SALVESEN, GRAHAM, LIFESTYLE) © JONATHAN BOND, (LORFORDS/NATASHA HULSE) © JAMES BEDFORD, (ROSI DE RUIG) © KALINA KRAWCZYK

Lifetime achievement

ANNIE SLOAN

We celebrate the colour expert who has changed the way we decorate our homes with her revolutionary paint formula and myriad paint effects



Who has brought more colour into the world than Annie Sloan? It can be said that she has single-handedly changed the global paint industry, how we decorate our homes and use colour. There was a 'before' Annie Sloan and an 'after' – a sure sign of a trailblazer.

His Majesty The King formally recognised Annie's contribution by appointing her a CBE for services to interior design last year, which she described as "extraordinary and the best acknowledgment of my life's work I can imagine".

Annie invented Chalk Paint in 1990, her revolutionary, water-based, non-toxic formula with a velvety matt finish that sticks to any surface inside and outside the home without the need for priming or sanding. Proudly made in England, it is sold all over the world and its invention prompted a surge in upcycling and painted furniture,

including by absolute beginners encouraged by Annie to give it a go, her paint making the process easier, quicker and therefore more fun.

Born in Australia, Elizabeth Ann Sloan – known as Annie – came to England aged 10. Back in the Seventies, when she left art school having trained as a fine artist, she felt disillusioned with conceptual art and presciently noticed that what people needed in their lives was colour. "Colour is really necessary," she says. "It gives you character, it gives you joy."

After graduating, while carrying out decorative work and painting murals on commission, she could not find one paint that fulfilled all her needs – easy to use, quick-drying, mixable with other colours and usable without having to prep the surface first – so she developed and used her own homemade paint. In 1990, she partnered with a Belgian factory to produce

and sell on a large scale the paint she had been making at home.

Chalk Paint is now available in 43 mixable colours, alongside accessories including brushes, waxes and varnish, and has been joined by 32 shades of Wall Paint and 16 shades of Satin Paint. All the paint is manufactured at a purpose-built facility alongside the brand's Oxford headquarters.

Key to Annie's success is her hands-on encouragement and smiling enthusiasm, brush in hand, demonstrating the extraordinary effects achievable using her paint. The 26 books she has written have been translated into 11 languages, and over two million copies have been sold.

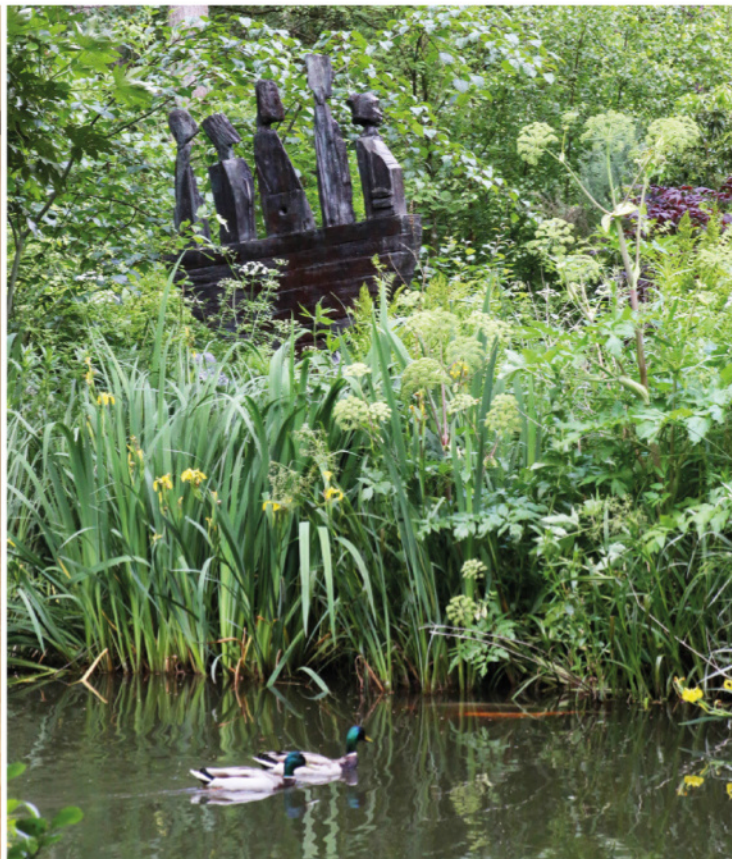
Over three decades on, Annie's business remains true to her core values of sustainability, creativity and mindfulness. "It's always been my mission to transform the world through creativity, one step at a time," she says. anniesloan.com ■

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www.kentchurchbutlers.co.uk

or telephone Roger on **07774 959561** for that personal touch.



Making a statement

From an oversized chandelier to a table lamp with a scalloped shade or a gorgeously curvy brass wall lamp, we look at options for stylish lighting



A showstopping light can bring a period property to life. Chatsworth two-tier chandelier with 12 scrolling arms in black and gold, £4,884, Beaumont & Fletcher



ABOVE A quad pendant adds a contemporary note to a classic hallway scheme.
Large Quad pendant in Olive Green, £789, Davey Lighting

While some light fittings are selected for their ability to blend in, others are chosen for their impact, becoming an important element of an interior design scheme. An oversized chandelier or grand wall sconce will always create a dramatic impression, but smaller fittings, too, can make a statement, perhaps by virtue of bold colour or pattern, a strong shape or the use of an opulent or unusual material. Of course, even statement lighting must serve a practical function, whether for reading or getting dressed. Here, leading designers advise on choosing and using statement lighting for a variety of spaces around the home.

RECEPTION ROOMS AND HALLWAYS

If the front door is the handshake to a home, then the hall is an extended greeting – and choosing appropriate lighting with which to make a first impression is vital. Alastair Hepher, managing director of Charles Edwards, advises that using chandeliers or hanging lanterns creates suitable drama, and installing the same fitting in the porch as in the hallway will make a strong design statement. “If there is a window above the door, centre the chandelier so it can be seen from the outside,” he advises, adding: “A series of hanging lanterns along a hallway will create rhythm and a flow to the space. Be careful not to hang them too high.”

In reception rooms, key considerations are the height of the ceiling and the amount of natural light, says Hollie Moreland, creative director of David Hunt. “In a grand townhouse you could install a large pendant below an original ceiling rose and create a really impressive feature. In an older property with low ceilings, on the other hand, you would look at wall lights rather than pendants. Semi-flush glass uplighters give out a lot of light if the room is naturally rather dark or, for a cosy feel, choose shaded wall lights combined with table and floor lamps for flexibility. When choosing statement lighting, look at finish and colour, which can create real impact. Shades also add another detail of personalisation that you can really have fun with. Think about their lining, too – it could be metallic or a contrast colour.” ▶

SEVEN OF THE BEST EYE-CATCHING LIGHTS

Combine form with function to add a striking note to a lighting scheme

- 1 Hanging Butterfly lantern, Brass and Farrow & Ball paint colours, £13,644, Charles Edwards
- 2 Limited edition Noctis Skipper pendant, Ebonised Wood, £255, Tom Raffield
- 3 Hardy Lamp, Electric Blue, from £1,950, Porta Romana
- 4 Double-arm Library light, Distressed Brass, £850, with 25cm shadow-pleated empire shades, £273 each, Besslink & Jones
- 5 Seven Rain pendant, made to order, Christopher Hyde
- 6 Large Frosted Bubble chandelier, £689, Dowsing & Reynolds
- 7 Original 1227 floor lamp, National Trust edition in Ocean Blue, £329, Anglepoise



1



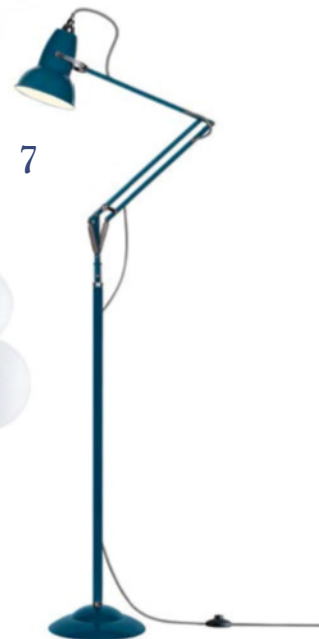
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3



ABOVE A bespoke light can be tailored to any dimensions. Bespoke chandelier, £POA, Cox London. Drawing room designed by Nicky Dobree
 RIGHT Floor lights can loosen schemes with shapely flair. Alma light, £1,200, Original BTC x Beata Heuman





ILLUMINATING UPDATES

Vanessa Macedo, senior lighting designer at John Cullen Lighting on the latest innovations

- Our connection to technology has never been stronger. Through the integration of lighting-control systems and the use of various mobile assistants, we can now achieve complete home automation directly from our smartphones. This includes the ability to have lighting systems adapt to our routines.
- Bulbs can make or break a statement piece. These range from the more traditional style with a touch of modern technology, such as the dim-to-warm feature that replicates the cosy ambience of halogen lamps, to smart lamps that offer a spectrum of different colours, boost the internet signal, and even come equipped with speakers. For best results, select the appropriate bulb to suit both the fixture and the specific environment.
- Light switches are sometimes overlooked, but with the technology now available there are more choices to make than just a switch-plate finish. Recently we have seen the rise of home automation systems, and lighting controls are now highly sophisticated. Button dimmers, retractable toggles and standard rocker switches can all be mixed on the same face plate. Add in momentary switches, and it is possible to control set scenes within different areas of the home while keeping a traditional look.
- The use of alternative and sustainable sources of energy have been at the forefront of new lighting designs, and pieces like Dutch designer Marjan van Aubel's self-powered solar light are proof that we can use solar power without compromising on great design and aesthetics.





BEDROOMS, STAIRCASES AND LANDINGS

Staircases must be well lit for safety, but a great fitting can also turn them into a focal point. Pendant lights are often the most practical, as well as suiting the extra ceiling height; hang them singly or in cascades or clusters to illuminate the spaces above and below, as well as the staircase itself. Perennially popular glass or crystal will throw the light in all directions while adding a touch of glamour. On a landing, much like in a hallway, wall lights are best if the ceiling is low: choose an interesting colour (it could co-ordinate with wallpaper, for example) or a strong shape which, when replicated along the row, will add to the effect. On larger landings, there may be space for a small table with an interesting lamp on top.

Bedrooms, just like any other room, benefit from layers of different types of light, whether a clear,

general light for getting dressed, soft lighting for a relaxing night-time ritual or task lighting for the dressing table or reading in bed. Jo Plant, head of design at Pooky, recommends layers of light that include several different types of light fitting. "Start with a statement pendant that will create a focal point, and then work around it to create a combination of task and ambient lighting solutions for relaxation, reading or getting dressed," she says. "Ceiling lights provide an opportunity to be more creative. Choose a colourful or ornate piece to provide a focal point in the room. For the more adventurous, a chandelier is a great addition to a bedroom to create a sense of grandeur. Consider hanging pendants over each bedside table for an interesting alternative to a table lamp or wall light." ▶

TOP LEFT Cascading lights add drama.

Pendant light kits, from £26; shades, from £31, all Pooky

ABOVE The pink crystal drops on this vintage chandelier inspired this scheme designed by Nicky Dobree.

LEFT A pleated shade fits the elegant scheme in this bedroom design by Violet & George.



KITCHENS AND DINING SPACES

The requirements of kitchens and dining rooms are quite different, and an open-plan kitchen/diner will, of course, need to combine both. Charlie Bowles, director of Original BTC, points out that rows of shiny kitchen cabinets can look austere, and introducing colour via lighting fittings will create interest. “There are so many options to explore, whether a bright, look-at-me primary or a more tonal palette,” he says.

Lee Lovett of Soho Lighting advises considering the desired light levels – which will vary from bright for tasks, to softer for entertaining – and how the material and design of the fitting affect its light output. “In a kitchen you would typically have downlights with a high colour rendering index and spotlights to deliver that punch of light above work surfaces, and then use statement lighting – wall lights if the ceiling is low – for creating ambience and really stamping style into the space,” she says. “In a dark kitchen, a statement glass fitting is super, but if you want to push the light down over a work surface, kitchen island or table, then a fitting that’s closed at the top and open at the bottom will deliver that. Use a dimmer so you can saturate the space with light or make it cosy.” A dimmer is essential in a dining space, too, she says. “Consider combining wall lights with a glass pendant, and dim them for ambience. Then layer the light by adding table lamps.”

Lovett also points out that while glass, brass and ceramics make wonderful statement fittings, there are numerous new materials reaching the market that can add drama and interest. “There are some really interesting new fabrics and textures, such as prismatic glass, recycled plastics and even mycelium. The classics are beautiful, but do think outside the box.” ■



TOP LEFT A lantern by Rose Uniacke casts an intriguing light. Room design by Studio Atkinson. **ABOVE** A chandelier from Norfolk Decorative Antiques, highlights a dining room by VSP Interiors.

LEFT Chandeliers bestow a sleek mood in a traditional setting. *Spruce six-light pendant in Antique Bronze, £750, with 13cm shades, from £52 each, David Hunt Lighting*

FEATURE KATHERINE SORRELL PHOTOGRAPHS (NICKY DOBREE) © PHILIP VILE; (VSP INTERIORS) © PAUL MASSEY; (CHISELWOOD/CURIOUSA) © DARREN CHUNG

In this kitchen by Chiselwood, Curiousa made a series of 10 free-blown glass pendants (available in a choice of 22 colours) to suspend over twin central islands. Stemmed Round pendants, £1,050 each, Curiousa







Perfect SETTING

From plates and glasses to napkins and cutlery, create a Christmas table suited to the occasion



Naturally refined

Use foliage and a simple, chic palette of green, silver and white for a sophisticated take on pared-back rustic festive style. Start with a linen tablecloth in stone or white as a base layer, or add a touch of subtle sparkle with a silvered shimmering option. Layer with beaded placemats and a quality white dinner service. Ribbed glassware and silver cutlery add a smart look, as do glass candlesticks with tapered dinner candles. Use foraged greenery to decorate – garlands of ivy or eucalyptus and some swags on chair backs, with a few sprigs tucked into napkins or in bud vases are ideal. Mercury silver baubles can be used for a final flourish. ▶

MAIN Pre-lit Ultimate Pinecone garland, £95; Pre-lit Ultimate Pinecone wreath, £125; and tableware, all The White Company **1** Mushroom dinner candles, £9.99 for six, St Eval **2** Osko 16-piece set of brushed silver cutlery, £185, Nkuku **3** Green glass tapered candlestick, £21, Joanna Wood **4** Rheolog champagne glasses, set of two, £59, Bolia



Opulent feasting

Make a mood conducive to festive feasting with a table fit for a banquet using rich colours, opulent textures and copious amounts of candlelight. Sizeable plates and serving platters in varying heights are perfect for piling up with favourite dishes, savoury and sweet, and will add grandeur too, particularly in materials such as marble and onyx. Cover with a cloche to add to the drama, alongside bowls, dishes and decorative accessories in metallics such as gold, silver, brass or pewter. Candelabras are ideal for adding to the mood and to create additional height so use several dotted amongst the plates of food. Decorate chairs, or a pile of napkins with tactile velvet in vibrant ruby red for the finishing touch.

MAIN Footed antique brass wine cooler, £225, and all tableware, furniture and accessories, Cox & Cox **1** Nalgora wine and champagne bucket, £95, Nkuku **2** Scalloped-edge serving platter, £42, Rose & Grey **3** Aurum 16-piece cutlery set, £120, Sweetpea & Willow **4** Silver ribbed glass tealight holder, £1.99, Ginger Ray **5** Etched Laurel Leaf champagne coupes, £36 for a set of two, Ella James **6** Gold serving bowls, £34.95 for a set of two, Annabel James **7** Sara Miller glass bowls, £22 for a set of two, Portmeirion **8** Ruby velvet bow, £14.50, Mrs Alice **9** Preto 12-piece stoneware dinner set, Black, Habitat **10** Brass candelabra, £69.95, Heavenly Homes



Indulgently festive

Rich and indulgent tones of plum, burgundy, chocolate and gold combine to create a formal look with a playful twist on tradition with natural textures and a hint of pattern taking centre stage. Use a bold stripe as the basis on which to layer place mats, chargers and a plate for each course, that are all beautifully elaborate in shape and detail. Source tableware and accessories that have a hint of the exotic such as bamboo, rattan, mother of pearl or even tortoise shell. For the finishing touch, use a classic white napkin as a fresh note, and some festive berry or floral opulence strewn down the centre of the table, dotted throughout with decorative votives. ▶

MAIN Olivia Scalloped plates, Raspberry Filet, £134 for four dinner plates, and all other tableware, Rebecca Udall 1 Marie Daâge Iris dinner plate, £130 Bona 2 Red Magnolia spiky garland, £29.99, Gisela Graham 3 The Burgundy Stripe tablecloth, £240, Maison Margaux 4 Floral crackers, £45 for six, Petra & Co 5 Flower Brass Simple Petal candle holder by Jess Wheeler, £80, Summerill and Bishop 6 Jute place mat, £12, Birdie Fortescue 7 Party glass, £20, Daylesford 8 Tortoiseshell cutlery, £33 for a four-piece set, Truffle Tablescapes 9 Mikado white napkins, £24 for a set of four, The Fine Cotton Company 10 Claret red velvet bows, £10 for two, Willow Crossley







Winter wonderland

Create a table setting that is beautifully elegant and accessorised with some magical touches. White works wonderfully with shades of green found in foliage such as spruce, pine and eucalyptus, finished with a flourish of glittering gold. Fine china, delicate glassware and crisp white table linen add a sense of occasion, suitably fitting for any formal festive lunch or dinner. Make guests feel extra special with a personalised embroidered napkin as a place setting or add an element of magic with decorative pieces inspired by *The Nutcracker* or *Swan Lake* dotted amongst a central garland of foliage and flowers, in co-ordinating shades of green and white. ■

OPPOSITE AND ABOVE Olive Pheasant tablecloth, from £88, and all tableware and accessories, Mrs Alice 1 Pulcinella champagne flutes, £95 for a set of four, Oka 2 Diletta scalloped linen placemats by Angela Wickstead, £215 for a set of four, Abask 3 Gold stag decoration, £17.99, Gisela Graham 4 Elise tablecloth, £50, Walton & Co 5 Gold wreath tealight holder, £32, Curated Living 6 Aerin Sophia gold-rimmed tumblers, £300 for a set of four, Bonadea 7 Astier de Villatte Josephine gold rim dinner plate, £195, Summerill and Bishop 8 Bamboo cutlery, from £18, Daylesford 9 Gold Mistletoe crackers, £20 for six, Talking Tables 10 Linen hemstitch monogrammed napkin, £22; Embroidered satin bow, £13, both The Embroidered Napkin Company

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HAZELNUT MOCHA

A festive alternative to hot chocolate, this decadent drink is a must for hazelnut lovers – rich and creamy with a hint of optional hazelnut-flavoured liqueur. Finished with whipped cream and toasted hazelnuts

Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

100g milk chocolate, chopped
500ml milk of choice
2 shots freshly brewed espresso
1 tbsp chocolate hazelnut spread
4-6 tbsp Frangelico liqueur (optional)
200ml double cream
1 tbsp finely chopped toasted hazelnuts

METHOD

- Place the chopped chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of simmering water and heat gently over a low heat until melted. Do not let the base of the bowl touch the surface of the water.
- Place the milk in a saucepan and bring gently to the boil. Add the melted chocolate, coffee and chocolate hazelnut spread to the pan and simmer over a low heat, whisking all the time, until the chocolate is combined.
- Remove from the heat and add the hazelnut liqueur to taste, if using. Pour the drink into two cups or heatproof glasses.
- Whip the cream to stiff peaks and add a spoonful to the top of each drink. Sprinkle with the toasted hazelnuts. Serve at once.



What to do in JANUARY

This is the month to add decorative flourishes with winter whites and woodland foliage, to find time to write thank you letters, and to make fritters to enjoy with family and friends.



CREATE... *a winter welcome*

Set an inviting scene for friends and family by updating festive decor for celebrations. White works wonders for adding charm and simplicity and will allow any space to seamlessly transition from one occasion to another. Look out for classic winter motifs such as snowflakes or stars made from sheets of tissue paper or strands of metal that will allow light to shine through, or even super-sized honeycomb decorations for visual impact. Hang a selection of shapes and styles in windows, on walls, mantelpieces or shelves, or bunch together and suspend from the ceiling above the dining table as a seasonal centrepiece. ▶

Paper stars (from left), Venus White, £65; Moonlight Gold, from £20; Orion White, £55; Porta Candele candle holders, from £24.50; Amour Sans Anse bud vase, £20, all Niki Jones



WRITE... *thank you letters*

Gather the names and addresses of all the family and friends who sent or gave a gift over the festive period and enjoy finding time to sit down and pen a heartfelt thank you letter. It is a lovely ritual that so often in this modern age of email and internet correspondence gets overlooked and forgotten about. Why not source some handcrafted and seasonally illustrated writing paper or notecards and send a thank you message that is full of the true spirit of the festive period? It is a wonderful way to while away some of the time in the days between Christmas and New Year and, for the recipient, of course, it will be a joy to receive.

Christmas Tree writing paper, £12 for 10 sheets,
Wildflower Illustration Co





EAT... *ricotta fritters*

Enjoy a simple but utterly scrumptious alternative to blinis or pancakes with this recipe by Donna Hay. Serve the fritters as part of a relaxed holiday brunch or a selection of party food.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

4 eggs, lightly whisked
 1½ teaspoons finely grated lemon rind
 ¼ cup (10g) finely chopped basil leaves
 ¾ cup (60g) finely grated parmesan, plus extra to serve
 ⅔ cup (100g) plain flour
 2½ teaspoons baking powder
 3 cups (720g) firm fresh ricotta*
 extra virgin olive oil, for frying
 lemon wedges and extra basil leaves, to serve
 sea salt and cracked black pepper

METHOD

- Place the eggs, lemon rind, basil, parmesan, salt and pepper in a large bowl and mix to combine. Sift over the flour and baking powder and mix to combine. Add the ricotta and stir to combine.
 - Heat two teaspoons of extra virgin olive oil in a large non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Cook ¼-cupfuls of the mixture in batches, flattening slightly, for 3 minutes each side or until golden and cooked through.
 - Serve the fritters with lemon wedges, the extra basil leaves and parmesan.
- * Cook's note: for the fluffiest fritters, choose fresh ricotta from a delicatessen or supermarket delicatessen counter rather than the pre-packaged tubs.



FURTHER READING

Even More Basics to Brilliance by Donna Hay, photography by Chris Court, £28, published by Fourth Estate ►

UPDATE... *the traditional festive wreath*

Take flowers all the way through Christmas and beyond with a container that allows for planting and hanging. This is an ingenious way of combining the visual charm of a traditional wreath with the longevity of a hanging basket. Use sphagnum moss and a selection of seasonal favourites such as hellebores, snowdrops, cyclamen, and ivy along with woody herbs such as rosemary, thyme and sage to create a floral display that is fragrant too. Hang on a doorway, on the garden gate or even inside suspended from the top of a window frame, and add a string of battery-operated fairy lights for sparkle. Remember to keep the display well-watered, and, of course, it need not be just for Christmas. Why not plant it up for the summer months with strawberries and soft herbs such as mint, basil and trailing lobelia and hang it from a hook attached to a garden wall or fence?

Wreath hanging basket, from £11.99, Crocus





FEATURE SARA EMSLIE PHOTOGRAPHS (DONNA HAY FRITTERS) © CHRIS COURT, (CROCUS) © MATT AUSTIN

MAKE... *a decorative botanical display*

Celebrate the pared-back, elemental beauty of the natural world by foraging for branches that are covered with lichen or twisted and gnarled to use as a place for hanging decorations. Place them in sitting or dining rooms in vintage glass bottles or apothecary jars and adorn them with delicate pressed-flower glass baubles that can hold a tealight. Accessorise with a carefully edited collection of artwork and decorative accessories

that are weathered and rustic, in colours such as bark, muddy brown and umber and that are beautifully evocative of the bare winter landscape. Why not burn a floral-scented candle to add to the mood and sit back, relax and enjoy. ■

Large Leaf Pressing, £550 framed; Pressed Flower baubles, £25 each; Scented candle, £20, all JamJar Edit



Winter WONDERLAND

Take the magic of the festive season outside with simple decorative touches and whimsical scenes that will create enchanting garden backdrops to transform winter parties and cosy Christmas drinks

From hosting a large Christmas party to elevating intimate family gatherings, decorating the garden enhances the festivities with an unexpected allure. Begin by decorating the front door or front garden to set the tone when visitors arrive. Outdoor fairy lights in a warm white tone add twinkle when laced around the branches of potted trees and shrubs. For an extra flourish, tie velvet bows around tree trunks just before guests arrive. To further elevate the merriment, venture into the garden and create magical settings to enjoy during this year's Christmas celebrations.

DRINKS AL FRESCO

Make Christmas drink feel extra special by serving mulled wine, cocktails or punch outside. Combine a classic alcoholic or non-alcoholic tippie with a mixer in a traditional Christmas colour, try cranberry or pomegranate juice. Add aromatic finishing touches with citrus fruit, cinnamon sticks, nutmeg and cloves. For parties requiring simple-but-impressive cocktails, see Marcus Wareing's Mulled Wine Bellini and Mince Pie Manhattan (recipes on greatbritishchefs.com). Present drinks on a tray with sprigs of fresh foliage for relaxed seasonal charm.

FESTIVE FEAST

Surprise guests with a celebratory open-air lunch. For a striking tablescape, repeat one variety of potted plant or flower across the table. Seasonal blooms in bold hues include red *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, also known as poinsettia, blue Algerian iris, purple *Fritillaria meleagris* and pink *Camellia japonica*. Decorate a metal table clamp with green firs and *Eucalyptus gunnii* and silvery *Senecio viravira*. For a cohesive theme, add baubles to match the flowers. *Burford table*, from £1,300; *Miner's lanterns*, £22 each; *Eshott cushions*, £20 each, all Garden Trading. Try sarahraven.com for a metal table clamp. ▶





FROSTED DETAILS

Warming winter drinks take on a sense of festivity served under a Christmas archway. Simply wrap fir tree branches around a bare arbour (ideal to use up Christmas tree clippings) and hang different-sized decorations in winter whites and frosted silvers all over; keep to two styles of decoration for maximum impact. To add drama for a party, adorn an outdoor tea-light chandelier (try sarahraven.com) with foliage and tie at the top of the arbour.

Add festive flair to gate posts, garden walls or trees with a trio of vessels suited to outdoor use. Place *Helleborus niger* (Christmas roses) and pine tree sprigs in recycled glass bottles filled with water. Hang up with ribbon and tie decorations in a matching colour around the bottle neck.

MIDWINTER CENTREPIECE

This deceptively simple outdoor centrepiece elevates coffee on the terrace. Start with two miniature spruces in felt pots and place taper candles (faux or real) beside them. Next, casually arrange fir branches around the base of the pots. Finally, decorate with Lunaria (silver coin plant) sprigs and metallic baubles. ▶





CHRISTMAS VIGNETTE

Create a decorative focal point to beckon party guests to a particular area in the garden or to create a charming viewpoint to be enjoyed from inside and out. Begin with a rustic base suitable to wrap branches around, such as this wooden ladder. Decorate with garlands of entwined 'Blue Princess' holly and fir branches. Hang a candle-lit glass lantern centrally to draw the eye. For themed parties, add a symbolic prop that will tailor the decoration to the party theme. Here, a decorative key is the start of an intriguing story.

GATHER ROUND

Bring guests together and transform the terrace into an oasis for convivial Christmas drinks. In this scene, seats are draped with inviting faux furs and bright cushions that bring warmth. A lit fire pit allows guests to comfortably linger beside a decorated Nordmann fir tree. An outdoor wreath, pots of *Helleborus niger* (Christmas roses) and collections of pine cones sprayed in frosty tones (see Hobbycraft for floristry spray paint) decorate the area with atmospheric finishing touches. ■

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE
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'I love things that have a personal story, or that have been gifted by people I love'

Who do you live with, and where?

I live with my partner, Adam Smith, a film and TV director, and our two children Nancy, 10 and Albert, 8, in Haggerston, East London. It's a beautiful area with a name that just doesn't do it justice. It's tucked between London Fields and De Beauvoir in a green and gorgeous part of the city with a very special, tight-knit community.

What kind of English home do you have?

We live in a semi-detached Grade-II listed townhouse, which overlooks a communal garden square. Though the house is actually early Victorian, the architecture has a strong Georgian influence.

How have you made the house your home?

At some point we plan to do a big renovation, but in the meantime, we've filled it with furniture, art and decorative items, which make it feel like home. We have many of my own works which have tiles backlit by LEDs and give the rooms a cosy glow. The house has such lovely old bones that it doesn't take much to make it a welcoming space to live in.

How do your surroundings inspire your work as an artist?

I work from a home studio, so my focus on the domestic sphere – creating everything from teapots to lighting, candles to dinnerware – all feels like a direct result of being in this environment. I am slowly but surely taking over the house. Once a piece is near completion, I like to live alongside it for a little while before it is sent off to its new home.

Do you live with art by other artists?

My partner, Adam, collects photographs, which are hung around the house, and a striking print by Darren Almond greets you in the hallway. We also have some



Martha at work in her home studio

My English Home

Living in a green and leafy corner of East London with her young family, the artist Martha Freud finds her home is an inspiration for her work

wonderful pieces by our friends, the artists Charlie Mackesy, Joshua Press and Tom Beard.

What is your most treasured possession?

I love things that have a personal story, or that have been gifted by people I love. Whether it's a pebble picked off the beach by my children or a recently gifted painting of my mother by the great artist Antony Donaldson, I get the same joy from them both.

How do you decorate your home at Christmas?

We have a little rooted Christmas tree that lives in the garden. In December we bring it in and dress it with ornaments the

children have made over the years. We focus on handmade things – our youngest is a passionate origami artist so every year we get more stars to decorate the rooms.

What should no English home be without?

A teapot. In the studio, there's a big pot of tea on the go at all times. I used to collect teapots as a teenager, something I only remembered when I presented my 2021 Mixed Messages exhibition. The show featured my rewriting of the nursery rhyme 'I'm a Little Teapot', with each line stamped into a hand-sculpted porcelain teapot. ■

Martha's limited edition Christmas candle collection is available from marthafreud.com

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