

The

ENGLISH HOME



Celebrating the essence of English style

March 2024 | Issue 229 | £7.99 | UK Edition

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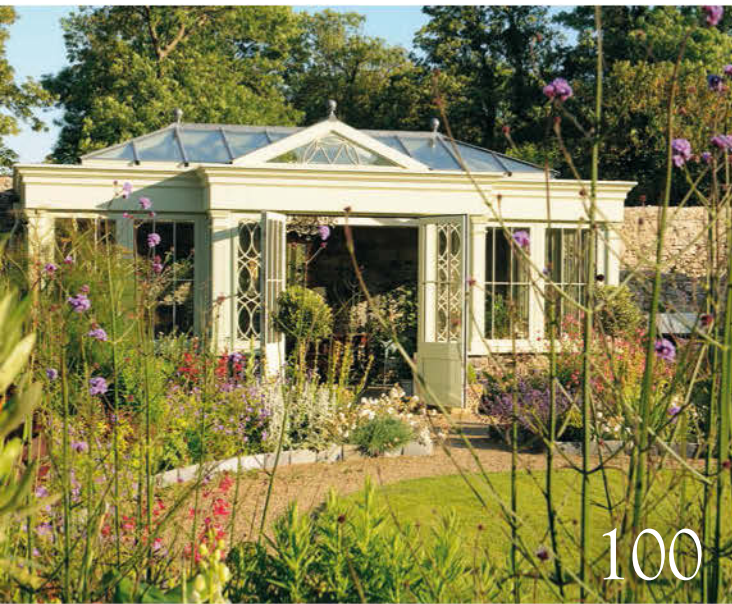
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A letter from home

Welcome to our early spring edition of *The English Home*, which has us looking forward to the lighter, brighter days ahead. Increasing space – or a sense of it – and maximising light are effective ways to enhance that feeling of spring's arrival at home, and in our feature outlining five key ways to achieve this (page 111) you'll find inspiring examples and expert advice.

I've also noticed a rising trend for building a fully functioning, standalone room in the garden. It's become a way of adding valuable, desirable space without moving or extending, and for some, has psychological benefits for hybrid working, indulging in a hobby or simply enjoying the garden in all weathers. To find out more, see our guide on how to commission a garden room on page 100.

Of course, there are many smaller-scale changes we can make to brighten and prepare homes for the new season. Decorating in shades of yellow instantly adds an uplifting warmth to interiors cost-effectively and we look at how best to use these tones on page 90. And now is also the perfect time to redefine and redecorate bedrooms, so our guide on page 72 is packed with inspiration and advice to elevate all the elements, from the overall scheme to bed linen. Elsewhere this issue, you'll find spring and Easter buys to update the home, and insights from interior designers on how to harness small details to achieve impactful interiors (page 82).

However you choose to refresh your home for spring and plan for Easter, we hope you'll find inspiration in our pages this month, and indulgences to enjoy in our *Living The Season* section.

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor

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COMING NEXT MONTH



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NEW SEASON LOOKS

- Discover the latest collections to update classic interiors
- Bespoke solutions full of ingenuity and craftsmanship
- The impact of wallpapering ceilings and how to do it
 - Explore beautiful period homes full of fresh ideas
- AND recipes, gardening and interiors projects for spring

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28 FEBRUARY 2024

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PHOTOGRAPH © RACHAEL SMITH

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SPOTLIGHT ON...

Blended To Perfection

One of Britain's most important ceramics collections inspired chic new table linens by artist Rory Hutton and homeware brand Nara Cambridge. Tablecloths, napkins and tea towels are adorned with 18th-century teapots from The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. Rory is known for his intricate linocuts and block-printed designs which grace silk scarves and other fine items for elite brands. Nara Cambridge founder Alexandra Bishop translated his signature style for this covetable new collection. She says: "Hand-block printing is a very physical process which gives unpredictable results, but the imperfections add a painterly quality and are what makes this collection so charming."

roryhutton.co.uk; nara-cambridge.com



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Abundant Harvest

New wallpapers from Fiona Howard

She designed Sanderson's iconic Dandelion Clocks pattern – now Fiona Howard's latest launch, The Orchard wallpaper collection, captures the charm of the countryside. Nature provides the inspiration for Fiona's patterns, which she translates through sketches and drawings onto lino blocks, carefully carved and printed by hand to create her original wallpaper designs printed in England onto FSC-certified paper using environmentally friendly inks. Of her new collection, which comes in seven colourways, West Sussex-based Fiona says: "I like to weave stories with my wallpapers and entwine pretty details in the patterns, something to gaze at while lying in bed or soaking in a warm bath. The new Orchard wallpapers tell a story of wandering between fruit trees listening to the gentle clucking of hens around the greenhouse as seagulls wheel above the distant hills. We also work with our local farmer to plant native trees and hedgerows in our local area to support a diverse range of flora and fauna, which in some small way gives back to the environment that inspires our designs."

She designed some of the most popular textiles for brands like Sanderson, Colefax and Fowler and John Lewis before founding her own wallpaper and textile design studio in 1987, creating designs that reflect the beauty and diversity of the British coast and countryside. fionahoward.com



Lightbulb Moment

Kate Sbuttoni's ginger jar lamps

"Create the things you wish existed" is a quote dear to Kate Sbuttoni's heart and central to her business. During a trip to China she discovered piles of dusty ginger jars at an antiques market and decided to make one into a lamp – a spark of inspiration which she turned into a business.

She founded The Ginger Jar Lamp Co. in 2016, combining classic ginger jars with vibrant artisan lampshades. "As an interiors enthusiast, I'm passionate about unique, authentic, handmade ceramics and fabrics and a huge fan of ever-elegant blue and white," she says. "I was thrilled to discover the unique history of the humble ginger jar, from its ancient origins as a vessel for exporting spices to the West to becoming a much sought-after decorative item in its own right. The vintage jars we source are handmade following age-old traditions and feature auspicious characters and motifs. I love to create contemporary classics by combining them with vibrant artisan lamp shades resulting in lamps that are limited-edition and truly unique. I've always furnished my home with one-of-a-kind treasures that are made to last and tell the story of who I am and where I've been. I like to think our lamps do the same – often bought as a gift, a memento or to celebrate life's special milestones." gingerjarlampco.com ▶





Jennifer Manners: Woven Art

Rug designer celebrates 10th anniversary

While travelling the world as a TV news journalist years ago, Jennifer Manners became entranced by how different cultures use craft traditions to tell their stories. She collected many treasures, such as hand-stitched textiles from Guatemala, hand-embroidered Kuba cloths from the Congo, handwoven carpets from Turkey and intricately woven fabrics from China. After 12 years in journalism, and unable to find rugs in the precise size, colour, scale and quality she wanted, Kentucky-born Jennifer retrained as an interior designer. She attended London's prestigious Central Saint Martins and set up a meeting with a master weaver she met in Kathmandu.

Today, 10 years after founding Jennifer Manners Design, she is globally known for her exquisite bespoke rugs, each handmade to order. Her name and brand are synonymous with fine craftsmanship, minute attention to detail and an impressive commitment to sustainability without compromising on luxury. Her /re/Purpose Performance collection is a sustainable approach to timeless rugs, the first of its kind – hand-knotted, hard-wearing, stain-resistant rugs made from plush recycled plastic.

Her designs encapsulate a mood of timeless elegance, and artists in Nepal and India bring them to life. She has showrooms in London and New York, and cushions and stair runners have been added to her portfolio of creations. Jennifer was recently a winner in our New Year Honours Awards for her Luxe collection of rugs handmade using luxury fibres such as silk and mohair combined with a special treatment to make them durable as well as sumptuous. She has collaborated with many elite interiors names, and her latest is with Sanderson – The Icon Collection features five of Sanderson's most iconic designs brought to life underfoot as hand-knotted rugs, with depth of colour and texture elevated through the sumptuous pile.

Jennifer says: "The adage 'time flies when you're having fun' has never rung more true as I reflect on 10 years in business. We work in a wonderful, creative industry where clients become friends and our imaginations are able to soar. I am genuinely grateful for every day of the last 10 years and looking forward to the next 10." jennifermanners.co.uk ▶



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Fan Palm, part of The Icon Collection, Jennifer's new rug collaboration with

Sanderson; Emperor Peony from the same collection comes from a 1920s Sanderson archive design;

Jennifer Manners' designs for her bespoke luxury rugs set a mood of timeless elegance in every room.

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Greene & Pleasant Land

*Little Greene unveils
National Trust Papers IV*

Representing over 250 years of British decoration, with deft use of colour bringing a contemporary nuance and breathing new life into historic designs, Little Greene has unveiled the fourth instalment of its wallpaper collaboration with the National Trust. Versatile and eclectic, National Trust Papers IV features eight designs created from original patterns found at National Trust historic houses, adapted and recoloured across 42 colourways, plus one recoloured and revived from the Little Greene archive.

Bedecked with exotic birds, large-scale tropical murals, scrolling trails and florals from stylised to ditsy, these papers have been created using both traditional surface and cutting-edge digital printing methods. A contribution from the sale of every roll supports the National Trust's work as Europe's largest conservation charity caring for 500 places in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Little Greene's creative director Ruth Mottershead says: "Working with the National Trust to uncover and revive these incredible historic designs is a real honour. Designs within this collection date back to 1770, yet still endure, feeling fresh and relevant today." littlegreene.com

Diary



Rarely seen masterpieces from Chatsworth's Devonshire Collections spanning five centuries and depicting children will go on display inside and outside the Derbyshire stately home for the *Picturing Childhood* exhibition from 16 March to 6 October. chatsworth.org



Enjoy browsing through a broad range of decorative items, country house furniture, art and more to find that perfect piece at Bath Decorative Antiques Fair at The Pavilion in Bath from 15–16 March. bathdecorativeantiquesfair.co.uk



Presented by the Crafts Council and with over 400 exceptional international artists and makers, *Collect 2024* at Somerset House in London, from 1–3 March, brings together 40 galleries from across the globe. somersethouse.org.uk ■



Inspiration Station

London Design Week returns

Catch a privileged glimpse of new-season launches and themes for spring and summer and draw inspiration and insights from top interiors names at London Design Week from 11–15 March at Design Centre Chelsea Harbour.

With an impressive line-up of world-class international brands from its showrooms, plus pop-ups, there will be tours, workshops, demonstrations, meet-the-designer sessions and talks including in-depth interviews and expert panel discussions including one hosted by *The English Home* Editor Samantha Scott-Jeffries.

More than 100 events – spearheaded by the renowned main stage talks series, *Conversations in Design* – will give visitors an insider steer on the future of interiors and fascinating insights from home-grown design luminaries like Flora Soames and global names such as US designer Bunny Williams. dchh.co.uk



DESIGN DISCOVERIES

Standout styles are rooted in timeless themes yet designed with a modern sense of flair and the practicalities of life today in mind



FLEXIBLE DINING

Mixing a bench with chairs is a versatile dining table arrangement to suit varying requirements. To ensure the relaxed look does not seem too casual for smarter occasions, match the designs of the table and bench and look for subtle details such as shapely legs.

Elkstone Mellow Oak table, £799; Elkstone Mellow Oak dining bench, £399, Cotswold Company

CASTING LIGHT

Dual upwards and downwards lights elevate spaces in an atmospheric way and provide both task lighting and a wash of light upwards for ambient illumination. Made using traditional techniques at the company's Birmingham-based metalworks, these lights are suitable for indoor and outdoor use.

Tor up/down wall light, antique brass, £1,020, J Adams & Co





GLOBAL BOTANICALS

Inspired by the expeditions of Liberty's founder, the Botanical Atlas collection showcases exotic plants in hand-painted embroideries, textured weaves and modern velvets and linens; accessories also launch in April.

Curtains, *Magical Plants*, £140 a metre; chair, *Kimono Knot*, £160 a metre; cushions (from left), *Kimono Knot*, £135, and *Tudor Poppy*, £165, all Botanical Atlas collection, Liberty London ▶

SHOPPING



TONES OF TILES

If seeking colourful marble for a bathroom wall, a spectrum of green tones pairs beautifully with modern gold and bronze hardware. As seen here, the green backdrop allows the metallics to sing out. Match the tiles with natural wood to lean towards a country feel, or blend with sleek flooring for contemporary townhouse style. *Fennel Green Herringbone honed marble tiles, £159.19 a square metre, Bert & May at Hyperion Tiles*



STRIPES REIMAGINED

Eponymous design house Birdie Fortescue and style tastemaker Sarah Corbett-Winder have collaborated to design cushions, lampshades, furniture and accessories in creative stripey prints to suit timeless schemes.

The Stripey ottoman, £800; The Embroidered Envelope cushion, £95; The Embroidered Stripey cushion, £75; The Stripey String lampshade, from £70; The Must-Have table lamp, £170, Sarah Corbett-Winder x Birdie Fortescue

SHIMMERING WALLS

For an impactful backdrop, unusual wallcoverings can be the answer. This Capiz shell design is interwoven with scintillating mica minerals to beckon attention and reveal a quietly luxurious finish. It could also be used to line the back of a bookcase or cabinet for elegant attention to detail. *Archipelago wallcovering, £310.20 a metre, Omexco* ▶





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SHOPPING



FLOOR ART

Add flair to the floor with a strip of tiles in an art deco style. This ceramic design is practical for high-traffic areas. Here, the tiles are used in a contemporary way to delineate and elevate the mood of a dining area. For a more classic treatment, the pattern could be used as a border around the edge of a room or, for maximum impact, laid as a hallway floor to cleverly lead the eye. *Venetian Parquet Frieze flooring, from £142.99 a square metre, National Trust for Amtico*

ROYAL PAPERS

Lucie Annabel's Balmoral wallpaper range (*above right*) pays homage to the British royal residence and the native wildlife seen on the estate. The edit includes checks, stripes, florals and illustrations of animals realised in colourful shades to give the smart subject matter a modern twist.

Regent Stripe wallpaper in Oxford Blue and Warm Grey, £62 a roll, Lucie Annabel

LIVELY LINENS

Soane Britain is synonymous with rattan furnishings, famously having rescued Britain's last rattan workshop. However, founder Lulu Lytle is always keen to explore new directions, leading to a collaboration with interior decorator and antiques dealer Adam Bray - who has produced four fabrics for the brand (seen here on the chairs), offering dynamic prints designed to be easy to incorporate among classic pieces such as this red cabinet. *Boyd Chairs upholstered in Sgraffito Tan, £250 a metre, Adam Bray x Soane Britain; Kymo rattan cabinet in scarlet rattan, £12,800, Soane Britain* ■



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Palani statement candelabra, £80 for large size, Nkuku

Chambray Blue Wax LED candles, £30 for a set of two, Addison Ross



Pink egg cup plate, £35, Matilda Goad & Co



Chilford solid wood dining table (large), £1,500; Bathford trough, £48, both Garden Trading



Blue/Green Egg/Flower wreath, £34.99, Gisela Graham

Blossom apron, £25, Sophie Allport x National Trust



HAPPY EASTER

From pretty tableware to wreath chandeliers, update Easter decor to entertain in style



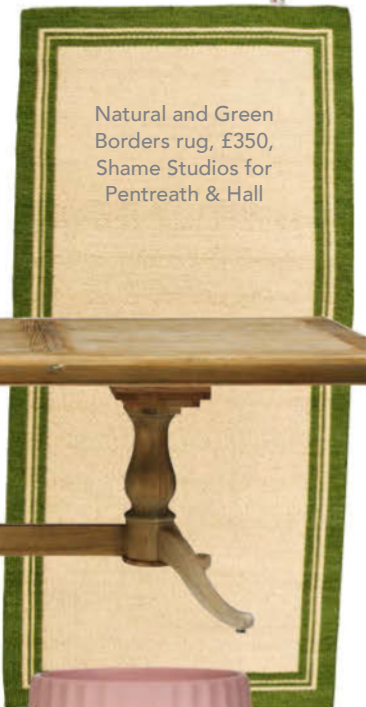
10 LED Easter egg lights, £9.99, lights4fun



Imperial Egg, £375 (collection only, from Yorkshire shops); smaller version, £38.50 (mail order available), Bettys



Gingham side plates, £15 for a set of four, Marks & Spencer



Natural and Green Borders rug, £350, Shame Studios for Pentreath & Hall



Camille Limewash Oak extending dining table, £1,299, Cotswold Company



Easter nest, £22 for a set of four, Mrs Alice



Coleridge two-seater sofa with fixed cover in Areca Putting Green, £2,295, Oka



Pink ceramic tumbler, £10, Basalt & Dune

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE



SHOPPING

Otoro recycled-glass pendant, £150, Nkuku

Torino glass spoons, £25.10 for a set of four, Lyngby Glas, at Nordic Nest



Floral glass carafe, £28, Emma Britton



Plateau ceiling fitting in antiqued brass with small Lisboa shade in violet glass, £466, Pooky

Green Tortue vase, £2,100, Lalique



Royal Brierley Hartland decanter, £135, Dartington Crystal



Quartz vase, Rose, from £475, Rothschild & Bickers



CLEAR CUT

Whether clear, coloured, cut, etched or hand-blown, glass will catch the light beautifully and always be a decorative enhancement



Gems champagne/cocktail glass set, Amber, £50, LSA



Siena pair of candlesticks, Amethyst, £425, Studio at William Yeoward Crystal

Iceberg collection vases, from €315, Venini



Alvar Aalto vase, Moss Green, £150, Iittala



Glass cake stand with cloche, £29, Funky Chunky Furniture Co



CreArt perfume bottles, £90 for a set of two, Artemest



FEATURE KATY MCLEAN

NEW YEAR SALE

Tapestry Kits to Brighten The Long Evenings

Let's look ahead to spring sunshine and flowers and bring the garden indoors with an Ehrman tapestry kit. Now is the time to stitch one of these glorious canvases and escape into a warmer world of pattern and colour.



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naturalwoodfloor.co.uk

THE EDIT

The new products and brand discoveries that have caught our eye this month

GET READY FOR SPRING



Bridgman's award-winning collections celebrate the magic of everyday moments. The family-run business is committed to creating furniture that suffuses a home and garden with an inviting atmosphere. Due to launch next month, its spring collections encourage spending more time lounging outdoors. From statement daybeds with plump cushions, to armchairs and coffee tables featuring warm teak legs, there is ample choice to add an indulgent touch to any garden scheme.

bridgman.co.uk



TRUE ANTIQUES

Salisbury Antiques Centre was born out of Chris Watt's love of furniture, fine art and decorative pieces from the 17th to 19th centuries. It now houses more than 14,000 square feet of antiques – all hand-picked by participating

dealers whose eyes have been trained by years of experience. Their valuable pieces adorn homes of all sizes, from Highland castles and French chateaux to Tudor mansions and Georgian terraces.

salisburyantiquescentre.com



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SUMPTUOUS SLEEP

Behind the lavish collections of French Bedroom is Georgia Metcalfe, whose designs are inspired by visits to French brocantes and rose gardens. Her bedroom furniture, which is handcrafted from the finest material, exudes the timeless elegance of classic French design. The new Avenue Blanc collection is no exception. When it was first launched in 2006, the white bedroom furniture quickly became a favourite. 18 years later, it has been reimagined with a refined frame, fluted columns, softer carvings and scalloped corners. frenchbedroom.co.uk



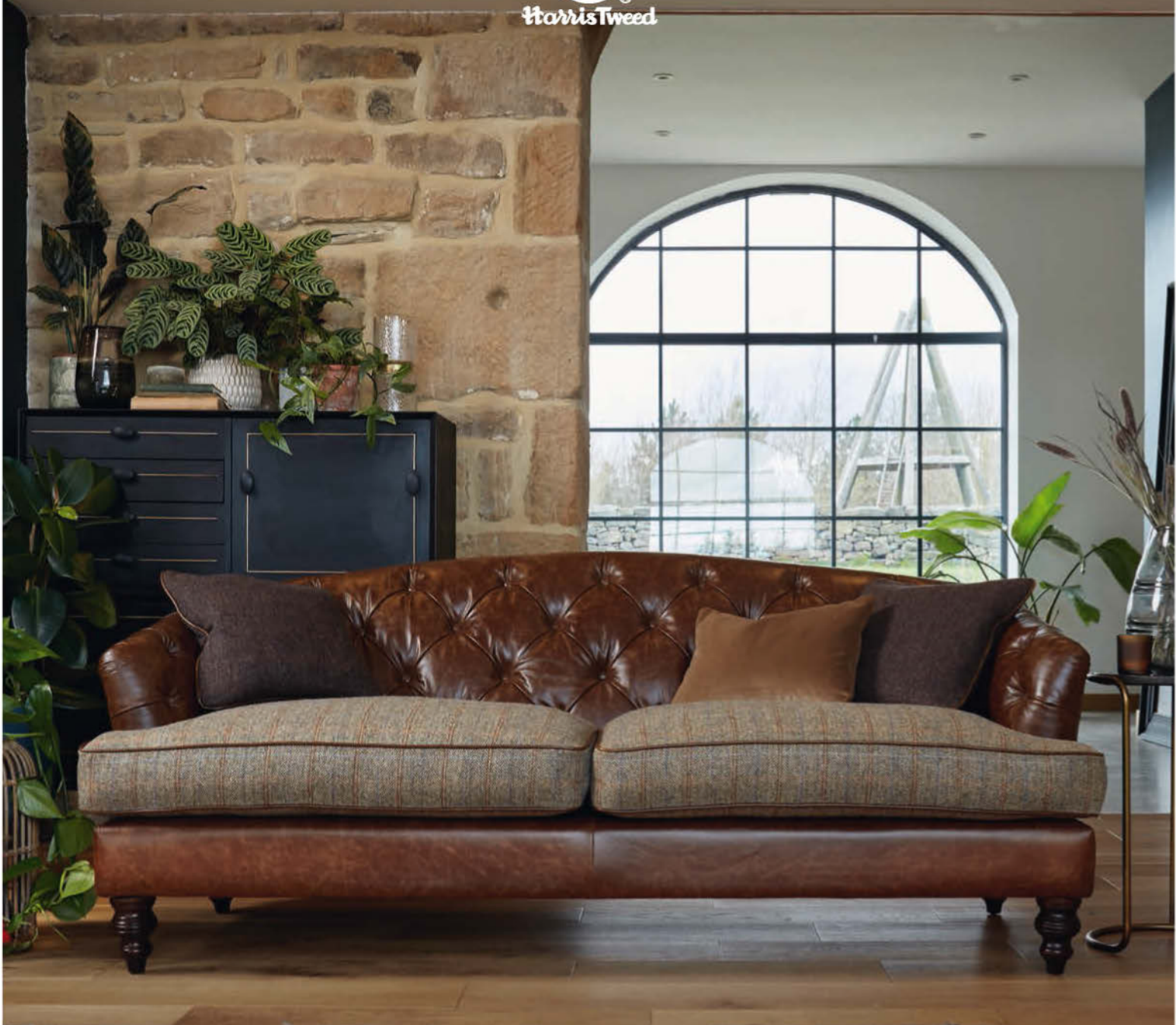
FRAGMENTS OF THE SEA

A graduate of Edinburgh College of Art, Juliet Travers is known for her delicately hand-drawn wallpapers and fabrics, but the artist also paints scallop shells and attaches them to hand-made mounts and frames. These one-of-a-kind artworks, as with all of Juliet's creations, are created in her garden studio. The hand-painted details, which draw attention to the shells' elegant shape and lines, celebrate the ocean's natural beauty and can be made-to-order in any colour. Hang them on their own or as a set to add shapely interest to an interior scheme.

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FIND A STOCKIST



A photograph of a room with green walls, a wooden table, a blue vase, and a floral painting. The room features a dark wood table with a blue and white ceramic vase and a decorative box. A large floral painting is on the wall, and a smaller landscape painting is on the left. The walls are painted a deep green color.

ART *History*

A trio of collections, grown over the years, combined with a desire to reinstate the original Georgian character of this five-storey London townhouse have guided the redecoration

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD
PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES MCDONALD

Farrow & Ball's Calke Green covers the walls of the first floor sitting room. "I always think paintings work much better on a darker background," Frank says. "They lose part of their luminosity when they are hung against a very light or white wall." The large floral painting on the far wall by Jan Brueghel the Younger was Frank's first artwork.



‘A lot of my friends think this house is a ‘folie de grandeur’, but I use every single part of it’

ABOVE LEFT The sash windows and six-panelled front door with semi-circular fanlight are typical features of a Georgian house.

ABOVE RIGHT Frank sits in the first floor sitting room in a Flamant armchair. The colourful lampshade is from Susan Deliss.

Walls lined with paintings by the great Dutch Masters, assemblages of plaster casts and shelves of treasured porcelain may give the impression of a museum, but this London home, located on a picturesque garden square, is undeniably lived in and loved. “A lot of my friends think this house is a ‘folie de grandeur’, but I use every single part of it,” says Frank Hollmeyer, a headhunter in asset management, who has brought personality and charm back to this Georgian townhouse.

Looking to move from his previous three-storey home in Islington, Frank first discovered the townhouse after being persuaded to search in South

London by a friend. The property was not for sale, but one Sunday evening a moment of pure serendipity occurred. “I was walking past, and a young man ran out of the house and put a ‘for sale’ sign up,” he recalls. It turned out to be the owners’ son who aspired to be an estate agent, so his parents had given him the chance to sell their house. Upon viewing it, Frank saw the potential and, swayed by the room for entertaining and generous wall space for his art collection, acted quickly. “I dealt directly with the family. Monday I called them, Tuesday I saw the house, Wednesday I put in the offer.”

Built in 1792, the townhouses on the square were originally developed to provide homes for doctors ▶



Frank's plaster cast collection, which includes seven Bruccianis, has continued to evolve over the years with pieces acquired from numerous museums around the world, including New York and Brussels.



An Empire secretaire from the 1820s, Frank's first antique, found at a flea market in Paris, brings a warmth to the basement dining area. The Hungarian butcher's table was given to Frank by a friend and the chairs were sourced from an antiques shop in Islington.

‘I had to change style and period and turn this into a much more English interior’

working in the nearby Bethlem Royal Hospital, now the Imperial War Museum. But by the 19th century the properties had become overcrowded and run-down, leading to a compulsive purchase order by the council in the 1930s. “They knocked two houses together, so every floor became an apartment,” explains Frank. “They took out lots of period features, there was carpet everywhere and all the walls had woodchip wallpaper. It was a modern house.” The council eventually deemed the buildings too expensive to maintain and they were converted back into single family dwellings and sold to private owners.

After moving in in 2012, Frank left the house alone for a year to observe how it worked. Happy with the existing layout, he began reinstating some of the original features with help from his friend and conservation architect, Tim Whittaker, whose 17th-century Cumbrian longhouse featured in our February 2023 issue. “I really like the style of the Spitalfields Huguenot houses and Tim was involved with the Spitalfields Trust and the restoration of most of them, so he knew exactly what kind of period features were appropriate,” says Frank. Together they designed the shutterboxes, architraving, mouldings, drawings for the fireplaces and added panelled walls to the study to give it an early Georgian feel.

When it came to decoration, Frank continued his commitment to the original character of the townhouse. “In my old house I had a lot of French furniture. It was very popular in the 1990s, but I knew when buying this house that I had to change style and period and had to turn this into a much more English interior,” he says. Antiques sourced over the years from Christie’s and Dreweatts have come to create the foundation of the interiors, bringing a sense of history and a warm, lived-in look to the home. ▶

ABOVE RIGHT The basement kitchen is the third Plain English kitchen Frank has had throughout his various previous houses. At one end, cupboards updated with Edward Bulmer Natural Paint’s Brick add a colourful accent. **RIGHT** Salvaged tomettes floor tiles combined with Farrow & Ball’s Elephant Breath evoke a charming, rustic feel reminiscent of an English country kitchen.





*'The reference point is always
Sir John Soane's museum'*

Keen to seamlessly incorporate his cherished artworks and *objets*, Frank took inspiration from one of his favourite museums. "When I came to London, I discovered Sir John Soane's museum and I had never seen one like it. I thought it was absolutely fantastic," he says. "Ever since, from an aesthetic point of view, everything that I do, the reference point is that museum." The choice of colours, from the sophisticated purple of the study to the rich green of the sitting room, and the playful yet clever use of light and shadow throughout particularly chime with the museum's renowned interiors.

Guided by the house itself, Frank knew which rooms would work best to display his trio of prized collections instantly. Enchanted by the natural light streaming in, the first floor sitting room proffered the ideal space for his oil paintings, a passion that originated from his childhood. "I grew up in Holland and at that time these pictures were part of daily life. You had reproductions of Vermeer's *The Milkmaid* hanging on the wall, Frans Hals was on plates and mugs," he recalls. "I always had an interest in the Dutch Old Masters and when I studied Art History I specialised in Dutch and Flemish 17th-century paintings."

Frank's second passion, his extensive collection of plaster casts, takes pride of place in the ground floor drawing room. "I visited Antwerp in my late 20s and I saw a plaster cast in an antique shop, and I just bought it. There was no vision yet, I just liked it. Then I bought a second one and a third one, and then once you get into it you get sucked into a vortex where you want to have more," he laughs. "It's that massing of stuff that makes it so interesting." ▶



ABOVE LEFT A Gustavian Swedish secretaire and Bouillotte lamp from Christie's create an ideal working space in the first floor study.

LEFT Farrow & Ball's Brassica brings a sophisticated feel to the study. The antique wall light in the hallway would have originally sat atop a Venetian gondola and is hung on the wall via a bracket that Frank's father had specially made.

OPPOSITE The ground floor drawing room contains an elegant mix of texture, colour and pattern. The 18th-century sofa and blue chair are from Christie's, and the yellow wingback chair is from Spencer Swaffer Antiques.





ABOVE A bed from *And So To Bed* is framed by a mural-style Zuber wallpaper panel depicting 'The Bath of Psyche'. The wall lights are from Besselink & Jones.

Similar abundance is demonstrated in the downstairs dining area where open shelves are brimming with Meissen porcelain, the final part in the trilogy of Frank's passions. "I served lunch on Sunday for eight people and the table was laid with porcelain because what's the point of stuffing it in cupboards and keeping it for that once-in-every-few-years occasion. If a plate breaks, it breaks, it's not the end of the world," he says.

It is this relaxed attitude to antiques and art which has allowed the home to become a true sanctuary from the busy London streets outside. While his collections are precious, Frank does not protect them or hide them away. They are there to be enjoyed by all who step foot in the house. "Sitting in the drawing room in the evenings with candles lit and looking at the paintings is absolutely delightful," he says. "It gives me so much pleasure." ■



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Back to the FUTURE

The painstaking restoration of this Italianate villa has resulted in a home that exudes warmth and character – and is ready for the next hundred years

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

ABOVE The property was built in 1842, with the red brick part of the building dating to the 16th century.
RIGHT Specialist plasterer G Cook & Sons was commissioned to add detailing to the ceiling rose to make it suit the grandeur of the room. The Georgian-style footstool, covered in Brocatello in Grey by Zoffany, is by David Seyfried; the antique rug was sourced from The Rug & Carpet Studio.







‘When I was looking at a lot of historic country houses, I noticed that a number of them had this specific yellow in the entrance’

ABOVE LEFT In the entrance hall, walls in Yellow Pink by Little Greene offer an uplifting backdrop to the porter’s chair reupholstered in Chifu in Ochre/Blue by GP & J Baker. **ABOVE RIGHT** Lewis & Wood’s Alken Wildfowlers wallpaper is complemented by tongue-and-groove panelling in Spanish Olive by Zoffany.

Situated in a small village on the border between Suffolk and Essex, this Victorian former rectory stands on the site of a 16th-century parsonage and is still partially surrounded by a moat dating back to that time. Its current owners, Alison and James Nicholls, have spent the last two years nurturing the Italianate style building back to life. “It was quite an austere house and James, who grew up in this village, remembers being scared of it as a child,” recounts Alison. “Back then, it was owned by a retired colonel and rumour had it that he would shoot anyone who entered the grounds. James had to deliver the papers there and he was terrified!”

The house fell into disrepair until it was renovated by a property developer in 2009, although fundamental matters such as the heating system were at that point overlooked. “Like so many old houses, this one was cold and draughty,” Alison confirms, adding, “We started off believing we would approach the house with a light touch but the project ended up being extensive, to put it mildly.”

Working with the couple from the outset was interior designer Lindsey Rendall of Rendall & Wright, who had helped the pair on two previous projects, including their former home, a new-build house in a village nearby. “Lindsey understood our need for this to be a true family home,” says Alison. ▶



The Chambord chandelier by Vaughan Designs perfectly suits the scale of this room, which doubles as Alison's office. Lindsey sourced an antique gilded mirror to hang above the fireplace. The bespoke bookshelves are painted an oxblood red as a contrast to the warm, neutral shade of the walls, Bath Stone by Little Greene.

‘We started off believing we would approach the house with a light touch, but the project ended up being extensive, to put it mildly’

“We live here with our 17-year-old daughter, as well as our two dogs and two cats, but my three older daughters and their families are regular visitors, so the house had to be able to expand from three to 12 at the drop of a hat.”

Thanks to the experienced and skilled local craftsmen that were engaged to update it, every piece of the building’s history has been painstakingly restored or reinstated, from fireplaces to architraves to plaster ceiling roses. To minimise the draughts, the windows have all been carefully repaired and refitted, and underfloor heating has been laid throughout the ground level as well as in the principal en-suite bathroom on the floor above. “The idea was to future-proof the house, and make sure it is ready for the next 100 years,” explains Alison.

Lindsey and Alison were mindful to repurpose as much of the family’s existing furniture and art as possible, reupholstering pieces when necessary in order for them to fit into the new schemes. “Alison had purchased a pair of gold sofas for the previous home but they look as if they were made for the formal drawing room here,” points out Lindsey, who suggested powder blue walls as a sophisticated foil to the gold upholstery. Many more pieces were sourced specifically for the house, including arresting chandeliers that were carefully chosen to suit the scale of the spaces, as well as antiques that befit the grandeur of the rooms. ▶

RIGHT Designed by Rendall & Wright, and made by Cubitt Theobald Cabinetry, the kitchen is painted in Farrow & Ball’s striking Stiffkey Blue and Paint & Paper Library’s Stone II. The Montferrat Leaf chandelier by Vaughan Designs adds a sculptural element. Visit rendallandwright.com to see more of Rendall & Wright’s interior design work.







‘In a house of this size, each room needs to have its own character. However, you need colours to sit happily side by side and a good way to do this is to tonally notch things up or down’

Alison is also a keen antiques buyer and she scoured local auctions for treasures to install in her new home, including the gilded mirror in the guest cloakroom – picked up for just £75 – and the porter’s chair in the entrance hall, which was also bought for a song. “It was a bit of a curve ball when Alison presented me with the porter’s chair, but, in fact, it beautifully complements the form of the balustrade,” explains Lindsey, who had it reupholstered in an archival GP & J Baker fabric that picks out the bold yellow of the walls. “When I was looking at a lot of historic country houses, I noticed that a number of them had this specific yellow in the entrance,” explains Alison.

Lindsey took the bold paint colour as a steer, selecting gentler golds to lead off this space. “In a house of this size, each room needs to have its own character, however, you need colours to sit happily side by side and a good way to do this is to tonally notch things up or down,” she advises, adding, “When you look at a paint sample on a small piece of paper it tends to look very strong but when painted on these large surfaces, colours always look lighter.” The kitchen, which is situated in an extension dating to the 1950s, features punchy shades of blue. “We had upholstered the dining chairs for the previous house in a rich blue velvet and they set the tone for these slightly more contemporary colours,” Lindsey adds. ▶

ABOVE LEFT Juliet Travers’ Nutcracker wallpaper in Navy enlivens the cloakroom. Lindsey scaled the vanity unit to suit the slim gilded mirror bought at auction. **ABOVE RIGHT** A carved four-poster bed from the couple’s previous home is dressed with cushions in Ferres in Nattier by Manuel Canovas at Colefax and Fowler.



The striking bateau bath in brass from Catchpole & Rye is painted Harley Green by Little Greene to pick out one of the colours of the hand-painted silk wallpaper, Earlham on Stone Ochre dyed silk by de Gournay. The marble effect porcelain tiles are Mimica Bianco Ravenna in Gold Matt from Mandarin Stone.



‘Someone in the village remembered the house because of the Chinese silk wallpaper in the dining room, so I thought it would be wonderful to give a nod to the past’

ABOVE The canopy-style bed features luxurious fabrics in Astor faux silk in Loaf, and Leopard in Gold, both by James Hare, trimmed with Palladio braid by Houllès. The bedside tables are bespoke pieces by Titchmarsh & Goodwin.

The wall behind the bed in the principal bedroom is hung with exquisite hand-painted silk wallpaper. “We bumped into someone in the village who told us they remembered the house because of the Chinese silk wallpaper in the dining room, so I thought it would be wonderful to give a nod to the past,” Alison says. Panels of the same design feature in the adjoining en-suite, where they flank the bath which centres on the window. “The view from here is glorious – all you can see is the lawn, trees and water,” adds Alison.

Indeed, Alison and James have worked extensively on reviving the grounds, including lowering lawns, restoring the moat and reinstating the parkland. Plans have also been approved for the installation of a beautiful Victorian glasshouse and a walled vegetable garden, but for the moment, the couple have pressed the pause button on any further work on the house. “We are decisioned out,” laughs Alison. “We need to take a break and enjoy the house for a while... then we will see.” ■



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Leanne searched high and low for a vintage shop counter she could transform into a kitchen island, before designing this one, painted in Dulux Black (00E53) in Diamond Eggshell. She now creates bespoke cabinetry for Bird & Bone. The Heritage Black Ash counter stools are by Ercol.





Creative JOURNEY

Leanne Kilroy and Eric Fulwiler knew that they had unearthed a gem when they came across this former lodging house – despite the extensive work needed to give it new life

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

ABOVE Leanne sits on a vintage Danish bench in the hallway, where walls in a gentle pink, Faded Blossom by Atelier Ellis, and restored woodwork create a clean, contemporary feel.





‘A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush’, and in the case of this family home in London, it is a saying that could not be more apt. Its purchase nearly fell through several times for Leanne Kilroy and Eric Fulwiler, so, when the Victorian terrace finally became theirs, the prospect of renovating while living on-site, or contending with its lodging-house layout alongside three small children did not faze them. “In fact, I had a big appetite for the work,” says Leanne. “We wanted to make our own imprint on this home. For us, the second-floor bedsit kitchen, which may have deterred many, was a bonus. We knew it would come in handy when we renovated the ground floor.”

The couple, who relocated from Massachusetts via New York City to London in 2016, have a relaxed international sensibility that comes from various stints abroad, including Italy, Australia and Canada. They chose to settle in the capital with their children – Stella 12, Vesper, seven and Domino, five – as they were attracted by its cosmopolitan nature and, as

Leanne puts it, “because we feel at home among diversity, in a city that we’re familiar with.”

Though both grew up in period homes in the USA, Leanne is the first to admit that a British terraced house produces its own unique challenges. “Neither of us is unfamiliar with the Victorian vernacular, but of course, terraced city homes tend to be narrower, lack rear access from the street and can suffer from a lack of light. So we both knew that spatial planning would be key and that we’d need to think carefully about storage.”

Favouring a circular layout with no dead-ends, Leanne reworked the ground floor, incorporating a loo, coat storage and pantry, without having to disturb the property’s architectural bones too much. She also knocked through the front and middle sitting rooms, removed the existing kitchen extension and pushed further outwards and to the side, creating an elegant timber-and-wood orangery-style addition, whose steeply pitched roofs, when seen from the rear, create pleasing graphic angles against the original ▶

ABOVE Natural textures create an atmosphere of simplicity in the sitting room. The Bryher ottoman is from The House Upstairs and is upholstered in Pencil Stripe Linen by Buchanan Studio.

OPPOSITE Trailing vines, open shelving and an engineered ash floor topped with a jute runner keep the look in the kitchen relaxed. The Bianco Eclipsia Quartzite worktop is from PGQ Worktops.



ABOVE The couple knocked through this space, adding a pair of reclaimed pine double doors. The middle room also serves as a play area for the children.

brickwork. “That style excited a feeling in me that we could bring the house right back to its bones. I do also enjoy contemporary glass treatments, but this approach felt right because we wanted a sense that the kitchen had always been there,” says Leanne.

The former lodging house also featured exposed brick throughout, which proved impractical in places. So, the couple retained some elements and replastered or painted in other areas. “We took the opportunity to turn what was once an exposed-brick bathroom on the first-floor landing into Eric’s study, requisitioning part of it to create a separate laundry room,” explains Leanne. The brickwork was painted in a softening taupe and the room opened to the eaves to create additional patina. On the second floor, the kitchenette

was eventually removed, and replaced with a bathroom for the children, complete with playful pink grouting.

Throughout, Leanne, who runs interior design studio Good Bones, eschewed trends, preferring to tune into her intuition. On the first floor, she turned a bedroom into a spacious bathroom complete with twin vanities inset into each alcove, a generous bathtub and a shower enclosure finished in micro-cement. “Losing a bedroom may not be a standard move, but we wanted a family bathroom that also provided easy access for guests,” she says of its two entry points.

That keen eye for detail is evident in dozens of touches around the house, from the mustard-coloured kitchen pantry shelves installed after carefully measuring the couple’s collection of Kilner jars,



‘Many of our decisions have been informed by budget. For me, that meant getting more creative, whether scouring vintage stores or tapping into online sources’

to the Cy Twombly artwork hanging on the chimney breast in the bathroom, which, subtly hinged, opens to reveal a secret storage cupboard. “Many of our decisions have been informed by budget, which rarely gave us much wriggle room,” says Leanne. “But for me, that meant getting more creative, whether scouring vintage stores or tapping into online resources. It gave us the opportunity to reflect on what was important.”

Key finds include an antique settle, which now defines the dining area off the kitchen, and a pair of salvaged doors, upcycled to grace the pantry.

The daughter of a dealer in mid-century and antique furniture, it is little surprise that Leanne is drawn to pieces imbued with stories and sentiment. In the bathroom, a milking stool is etched with hers and Eric’s initials, carved when they were childhood ►

ABOVE The vintage glass pendant is from Agapanthus Interiors while the wall lights from Jim Lawrence are topped with lampshades painted by Leanne.



ABOVE A former bedroom, this bathroom features basins from Burlington, above which hand mirrors from Made.com teamed with sconces from Wallis Antiques. Brass basin and bath taps from Cast Iron Bath Company complete the look.

LEFT Walls painted in a soft rose, Wayfinder by Atelier Ellis, make an ideal foil for the red marble fire surround and an antique washstand, repurposed as a dressing table.

sweethearts, while the kitchen houses a Danish apothecary cabinet that Leanne bought from her father's shop more than a decade ago. "Above all, furniture is my guiding principle when designing," she reflects.

That passion for unique pieces prompted Leanne to set up a kitchen design business, Bird & Bone, with partner Sarah Hatcher, whom she discovered online. "My search for an old shop counter that I could rework as a kitchen island proved fruitless, so Sarah's company made one for me," says Leanne. "Later, after designing the kitchen myself, we decided to join forces to create custom-made options for other people's kitchens." Her own is a blend of elegance and informality: quartzite worktops with generous bullnose edges house a sturdy, industrial capacity stainless steel sink, while open shelving displays family mementoes, interspersed with languorous fronds of Devil's Ivy. "Indoor planting makes a home feel alive," says Leanne. "For me, it means someone is putting in daily effort; I see plants as an expression of love towards a space." Nowhere is that expression better realised than here. ■

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Polly in her kitchen

Juggling ACT

Polly and David Richard refused to be defeated when undertaking a huge renovation project alongside managing their busy careers and impending parenthood. Living on site only made the realisation of their dream home that much sweeter

FEATURE AMY MAYNARD PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD GADSBY

It takes a certain amount of grit and determination to live on site during a major renovation – and that is not even taking into account holding down high-pressure careers and expecting a baby. But that is exactly what Polly Richard, 36, and her husband David, 38, did after buying their detached Victorian property in Surrey.

The couple bought the four-bedroom property, which was built in 1884, in 2016. They had been living half a mile away and had often walked down the street looking at the houses on their way to and from the train station during their commute to work. “We had always admired the houses but assumed they would be out of our budget,” says Polly. ▶

The walls in the sitting room are painted in Setting Plaster by Farrow & Ball while the ottoman is by Penny Morrison and the wall lights are from Jim Lawrence. Polly has accessorised the Delft tiles fireplace with paper chains by Mark Heard.





'I buy pieces really slowly over time, when they catch my eye, and love visiting the fairs like Ardingly and Kempton'

Luckily that was not the case. The house they eventually bought was a probate sale, which meant Polly and David were forced to stay with friends and family for six months until the grant of probate came through and they were able to complete on their purchase. "We wanted it so much we were willing to wait," says Polly. By the time they had moved in and building work began, a year had passed and Polly was 11 weeks pregnant with Ralph, now five.

The previous family had owned the house for 60 years and, suffice to say, the couple faced a huge project, all the while juggling Polly's work as a lawyer and David's job in finance. "There was no central heating but coal fires in every room, even the bathrooms," Polly explains. "We had no choice but to live in the kitchen while the work was being done. We had no bathroom, heating or electricity. We both worked such long hours that we showered and ate at work."

Rewiring, plumbing, carpentry, full redecoration – there was a long list of things to get done. So it was not long before things did start to, rather literally, get a bit on top of them. One unfortunate day, a few months into the build, when Polly returned home from work late one night, she found the ceiling had caved in. The builders had been stress-testing the floor above the kitchen to check whether it could bear the weight of a cast-iron bath and the ceiling collapsed onto their bed, which was set up below.

Things soon went from bad to worse, especially given emotions becoming heightened as Polly's due date neared. "We had started decorating and all the carpentry had been done," she says. "And because the house didn't have central heating, we had installed a Megaflo hot water cylinder in the loft. The plumber flushed the system because he thought the first fix had been done, but the pipes weren't connected, so the rooms got flooded. I just burst into tears, it was a total nightmare and everything had to be redone. Another low point was finding a piece of pizza in our bed ▶



ABOVE Fabrics from Penny Morrison, Fermeio and Christopher Farr bring the sitting room scheme to life.

RIGHT Polly and David's home is a Victorian villa on a leafy street in Surrey.

OPPOSITE The shelving in the snug is painted in Green Smoke and the walls in Bone, both by Farrow & Ball. The fender is from The Rye Emporium, while the wall lights are from Jim Lawrence and are topped with shades from Pooky.





ABOVE In the kitchen, units from The Shaker Workshop are teamed with bar stools from Neptune and pendant lights from Industville. The island is painted in Railings by Farrow & Ball. A range oven from Mercury is perfect for cooking for all the family.

LEFT The units are painted in Shaded White by Farrow & Ball. Perrin & Rowe taps for deVOL are perfect for the period scheme.

when I pulled back the covers one night. We had nowhere to eat other than in bed!”

The work took six months and the builders finished a week before Ralph was born. The final piece of the puzzle was the kitchen renovation, which was undertaken a year later. The couple went on to have Cecily, now three, and the family are happily ensconced in their beautiful home, along with mini dachshund, Mabel.

Polly has always had a flair for interiors, something inherited from her mother. “I lived in a Jacobean house growing up in Northumberland and my mum has always had a really classic English country house style,” she says. “My friends used to laugh at me as I furnished my first flat with antiques and called my dark brown dining table my ‘granny table.’”

David, meanwhile, had different taste when the couple got together. “His style was more modern and minimalist, but he has come round,” Polly says. “He now pretends everything in the house was his idea!”

The end result is a serene and stylish home bedecked with beautiful soft furnishings, accessories and antique pieces. The kitchen and dining area is a masterclass in simple period style with its dark kitchen island and taupe cabinets, complete with brass fixtures and ▶



French windows lead from the dining area of the kitchen onto the patio garden furnished with a table and chairs from Kettler. The leather chair is from Laura Ashley.



'I love the usability of the house. It is somehow family-friendly without me knowing what having children would entail when the project began'

ABOVE LEFT The bedding from So Souk in Cecily's bedroom is accessorised with a cushion by Katy Takla in Molly Mahon fabric and a canopy from Nobodinoz. Above the drawers from Franklin's Antiques & Interiors in Brighton is a print from Ralph & James.

ABOVE RIGHT A freestanding bath from the Cast Iron Bath Company makes a smart focal point in the bathroom by being set at an angle along the fireplace.

fittings. The ground floor also features the sitting room and a snug which doubles as a playroom. The former is painted dusky pink with bolder pops of colour in the choice of accessories. The focal point is an open fireplace, surrounded by Delft tiles which were in place when the couple bought the house. The snug, meanwhile, has alcove shelving painted in a moody green and lined with books and pictures.

Upstairs, there are four bedrooms and two bathrooms. The children's bedrooms feature wonderful prints by Ralph & James – the storybook art business run by David and a friend in their spare time. Polly's clever use of fabrics is on display in all the rooms, from the vanity unit curtain in the en suite to the canopy above Cecily's bed. She likes to spend time acquiring pieces for the house rather than rushing and buying everything at once. "I buy pieces really slowly over time, when they catch my eye, and love visiting the fairs, like Ardingly and Kempton," she says.

Something else that has grown organically is Polly's Instagram account. "I started posting bits about the renovation on my personal account – it used to consist of dog and horse pictures and then it became interiors pictures," she says. "It was at a time when people were very interested in following renovation projects – particularly DIY. I only post what I want to, barely anything is sponsored. It has been a really positive thing and I have become part of a nice community and made friends through it."

Polly and David are delighted with their revitalised and inviting home. "I love the usability of the house, especially now we have children. It somehow manages to be family friendly without me actually knowing what having children would really entail when the project began," Polly says. "We spend a lot of time in the kitchen, especially in the summer when we have the doors open and the children run in and out with Mabel." ■

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STYLE INSPIRATION

Create a dreamy bedroom scheme, follow expert advice on adding details for impact and using yellow with aplomb, plus utilise space in the garden for an extra room ➤

A NEW LEAF

This bold, intricate design combines several factors yet feels soothing in its rhythmic repeat and gentle synergy with nature. Full of Indian references, with a contemporary update on the tree of life, offset by gold inlay frames and latticework stripes, this wallpaper and fabric feels rooted in tradition yet full of contemporary character. It makes an ideal choice for a garden room, to aid transition from inside to out.

Taniska wallpaper, £139 a roll; Taniska fabric, £95 a metre, and all other fabrics & trims, Osborne & Little



Dream Big

Create a beautiful space in which to sleep soundly and awake with positivity with a dreamy bedroom full of indulgent details

The bedroom is the most personal room of the house. It is private and a place for comfort and so should be decorated as such. It can be more expressive of personal tastes – it is a great room to use a favourite colour that will generate happiness upon waking up. Indulgent textures are also key for creating a luxurious room in

which to rest and drift to sleep. The bed itself is the focal point of the room, deserving of special attention to make it as inviting and comfortable as possible. Here we explore stylish ideas for creating a room with impact, as well as setting the scene for a perfect night's sleep and ensuring a calming, cheerful sanctuary to retreat to. ▶

ABOVE Decorative trims elevate luxury plains to create an inviting canopy bed. *All fabrics and trims, James Hare*

A statement bed combined with smart upholstery and a handsome bedside lamp makes an impact. Bobble table lamp in Persian Blue and Juniper Green, £294, plus shade, David Hunt Lighting





'A bedroom should be a haven of peace and calm. I believe the use of plain fabrics in any scheme is underestimated. Choosing a luxurious material such as a beautiful silk, then creating detail with subtle trims, works so well. Also, a bed is never finished without an array of cushions in different sizes and shades.'

Saffron Hare, creative director, James Hare

LUXURIOUS SPACE

ABOVE When space allows, having a seating area gives a bedroom a hotel suite feel.

All furniture from a selection at Neptune
LEFT A canopy is a dreamy way to make the bed a focal point. Canopy and headboard, Leona, £112 a metre, Colefax and Fowler

Elevate a bedroom with the addition of seating. Whether an upholstered bench at the foot of the bed, an armchair by a fireside or a small sofa in a cosy nook, having a space to sit, other than on the bed, gives an indulgent feel. It also makes the bedroom a tempting sanctuary in which to read a book or magazine away from the everyday hustle and bustle of family life. Having a separate dressing room is obviously on the wish list, but if this is not possible, allow room to comfortably dress and install smart, discreet storage solutions to achieve a clutter-free, and therefore tranquil, bedroom. ▶



A well-chosen mattress will ensure a comfortable night, while storage bench will maintain a calm, clean look, as well as somewhere to sit. The Rosemoor storage bench, £940, Naturalmat



An oversized headboard, and canopy, ensure the bed is the hero, while layers of pattern and colour create a room full of character.
Interior design by Kit Kemp Design Studio

PERSONAL STYLE

Bedroom palettes tend to veer towards calm and soothing tones – at both the pale and dark ends of the spectrum. While vibrant hues are not often the first choice when designing a room meant for rest and relaxation, it is possible to indulge in colours that make the heart sing. A bedroom should reflect its occupant's personality. If pink is favoured, embrace it, or if shades of blue appeal, layer them to produce a beautiful boudoir scheme. Likewise choose patterns that have instant allure – indulge in a beautiful chinoiserie, statement wallpaper or exquisite embroidery. Though the decor might not be seen or appreciated by guests, it will bring joy every morning and evening. ▶

RIGHT Layer patterns via cushions, curtains and upholstery for a personal feel.
All fabrics, Cathy Nordström

BELOW In this chic bedroom by Elicyon, mellow colours create a soothing sanctuary full of subtle texture and patterns.



'I've always liked a slightly higher bed, as it offers that instant feeling of relaxed luxury which you can really sink into. Never forget the valance – it can hide extra drawers set into the baseboard or just be a lovely finish to the bed, with kickpleats at the corners. Go to town with an oversized headboard, too, to make the bed the focal point.'

Kit Kemp, Creative Director Kit Kemp Design Studio

SLEEP IN COMFORT

The right mattress is crucial to ensuring a good night's sleep and should be replaced every 7–8 years. These British makers offer some of the best options:

- Naturalmat – created in a solar-powered workshop in Devon, all options are made from entirely natural fibres.
- Savoir – bespoke, made-to-order beds and mattresses that are crafted to ensure supreme comfort.
- Hypnos – traditionally crafted from 100% British wool with a dedication to working fairly with farmers.



FOCAL FEATURE

The key part of the bedroom is of course the bed and this should be given priority when considering layout and decoration. Make it the hero of the room and celebrate it. An impressive four-poster can be used in many rooms – not just large spaces, it can make an impact in a small room, too. Clever solutions for lighting, such as integrating reading lights within the canopy or bedside, can negate the need for a bedside table in a compact space. A canopy or an oversized headboard in a bold decorative pattern is another way to create impact. Ensure the bed is beautifully and indulgently dressed, too, with layers of luxurious bed linen, quilts and cushions. ▶

RIGHT A four-poster bed makes a powerful but not overwhelming statement in a compact space. Interior design by Albion Nord.

BELOW A statement light is hung within the frame of a four-poster to beautiful effect. *Aubrey ceiling light, £3,426, Porta Romana*



FEATURE BEDS

Invest in a bed that will remain a focal point of the room for years to come, made by British craftsmen:

- Beaudesert – specialist maker of classic four-poster beds.
- Beaumont & Fletcher – bespoke, handcrafted, upholstered headboards that will transform a divan bed.
- Cornish Bed Co – traditional cast-iron bed frames, including a four-poster option.
- Natural Bed Company – handcrafted solid wood beds, including contemporary four-poster bed styles.
- Wrought Iron & Brass Bed Co – traditional metal bed frames, handmade in Norfolk.



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‘The more fabric you can get into a bedroom the better, it helps acoustically and creates a cosy space. Use fabric to create a tester, to give the illusion of a higher ceiling and add interest to an otherwise blank wall.’

Rosanna Bossom, interior designer



CHOOSING BEDLINEN

Three experts advise on the benefits of different bedding choices to ensure a good night’s sleep



Chrissie Rucker, founder, The White Company

“How we dress our beds, from the mattress up, can make or break how comfortable we are and, therefore, how well we sleep. Choose natural fibres as much as possible – they are more breathable and help stop us overheating.

My personal preference is always for pure linen or cotton bed linen; it feels amazing and also improves with age. Whether you like crisp and cool, or cosy and warm, it’s worth investing in high-quality bed linen. We spin these long-staple, natural fibres into supremely smooth, strong and soft yarns. The resulting cloth feels beautifully breathable, cool and comfortable to sleep beneath.

I always try to dress the bed with a great bedspread, cushions and a throw across the bottom of the bed. I change the throw and cushions depending on the time of year – faux fur in winter and a lighter-weight, more pashmina-style throw in the summer.”



Jessica Hanley, founder, Piglet in Bed

“Linen bedding is the ideal fabric for sleeping in all year round. Thanks to its thermo-regulating properties, it keeps you really cosy during autumn and winter, but is also beautifully breathable during the summer months, wicking away any sweat as you sleep.

Linen is a low-maintenance fabric, getting softer after every wash, but is super durable too. It is made from the fibres of the flax plant, which is known for its robustness – good news for wriggly sleepers! When cared for properly, linen bedding can last for decades, resulting in less waste and ultimately less consumption. Evoking the same calming feelings that arise when you spend time in nature, its natural crinkles make it so inviting, and there’s absolutely no need for ironing. What’s not to love?”



Deborah Fiddy, managing director and founder, Gingerlily

“A good night’s sleep is essential for your mind and body; it enables healing, restoration of energy and general well-being. There is nothing more disturbing in sleep than tossing and turning because we are either too hot or too cold. Silk bedding

allows the body to acclimate to the change in seasons and your own temperature effectively. Silk is a natural heat conductor, which adjusts to your body temperature while you are sleeping.

As well as being naturally hypoallergenic and very breathable, the high protein content found in silk will also keep your hair and skin soft, making silk the ideal choice for overall well-being, and especially for anyone with skin conditions such as eczema.” ■

TOP LEFT A chinoiserie combines with indulgent silk bedding for the ultimate in luxurious bedrooms. *Bedlinen, all from Gingerlily; wallpaper, Little Greene*

LEFT This scheme by Rosanna Bossom uses fabric and pattern to add drama and character. A canopy can help to create a cocooning, comforting feel, too.

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Small details **BIG IMPACT**

What is the secret to creating a very personal, comfortable and welcoming interior? The answer lies not in the big buys but in the details, if we can harness how to use them



This sitting room by Kate Guinness is all about layers of patterns, textures and objects. The paint detail at the top of the room also adds a touch of modernity to a period property.



It is the small things that give a home its unique personality and character. The perfectly placed oil painting found in a junk shop, the tassels added to refresh the curtains that contrast so well with the cushions on the sofa – these are the finishing touches that pull a room together in a way that is unique to its creator.

To discover the best ways of making a home personal to its owners, we spoke to interior designers who specialise in creating layered, inviting English interiors that give the impression that they have evolved over time. Here, they share their thoughts on the importance of detail and reveal some of the styling tools and design ideas they employ for their clients.

KATE GUINNESS

Founder and director, Kate Guinness Design

Why are details important to you when designing an interior?

For me, the details are about reflecting the personality of the client and also about a scheme feeling like a home and not too designed. I may have considered and bought details as an interior designer, but those details need to come together to create a natural space. If it's over designed, it's not going to have personality. It's also hard to distinguish what detail means as a specific element. Is it a light switch, the artwork or all of the finishing touches? ▶

ABOVE The colourful combination of a striking stair runner by Sophie Cooney, rug by Peter Page and a bespoke console table by Robin Myerscough packs a punch in this entrance hall by Kate Guinness Design. The patterns on the rug and stair runner lead the eye upstairs.



‘I don’t feel all details have to feel or should be special. You might not notice them, but they add completeness’

Kate Guinness

At what point in creating a scheme, should we be considering the details?

It varies and can sometimes be based on urgency. In a recent project, we looked at architectural and hard finishes, then curtains, furniture and then details later. That can work well as you can see the scheme growing and building up, but we don’t always work that way. Clients may bring something that informs a design, such as artwork, objects, furniture, which means we consider details earlier on, for example, recovering a sofa and using trims to work with that at the beginning.

Where do you take cues from time and again to inspire finishing touches and details?

It changes, but I think rugs are important. Rugs are often brought in at the end of a project, but we bring them in early to help pull everything together. Details such as rugs are an important element to apportion budget to.

Should every detail feel special and stand out in an ever-evolving home?

I don’t feel all details have to feel or should be special. You might not notice them, but they add completeness.

One of the hardest things to achieve in an interior can be the unexpected and playful – how can we do that with details?

Lampshades are a place to use a great fabric you don’t want to commit to on a larger scale. I also like to add interest with paint detailing when there’s a need for a transformative detail or add a cost-effective architectural detail such as a cornice or dado rail.

ABOVE This room by Kate Guinness is pulled together by a series of complementary collections: cushions (made of vintage and contemporary fabrics), artworks by Christopher Le Brun (art consultancy by Cramer & Bell) and potted plants. **ABOVE LEFT** Interior designer Kate Guinness.

'Be brave and don't feel that everything has to match – things can just be in harmony'

Lucy Cunningham

LUCY CUNNINGHAM

Founder and creative director of Lucy Cunningham Interiors

Why are details important to you when designing an interior?

So many clients say they are stuck on the finishing elements that make a room feel cosy and welcoming. For me details are often about creating vignettes and moments within the room, and it's about choosing the things that work well together within those vignettes.

At what point in creating a scheme, should we be considering the details?

Some projects start with a pair of lampshades, a piece of art or a decorative mirror and we go from there. Other projects start with a blank slate and then you need go back in at the end to hang the art and add the detail. It's about trying to point out the key things that bring everything together and join the dots, which finishing touches do.

Where do you take cues from time and again to inspire finishing touches and details?

I like things to look a bit 'off' so a room feels unique and authentic. It could be cushions that don't completely match, or adding something black to add definition and ground it, so it looks unexpected. It's about encouraging people to be brave and not feel that everything has to match – things can just be in harmony.

One of the hardest things to achieve in an interior can be the unexpected and playful – how can we do that with details?

It's about getting the balance of adding detail as a designer and also details or pieces a client already

ABOVE Interior Designer Lucy Cunningham.

RIGHT Robert Kime's Karabak wallpaper has been used to line the back of the bookshelves to add texture

and interest, highlighting the personal treasures displayed. Amidst the layering of colourful jewel toned accents, lamps of varying heights add impact.





‘For me details are often about creating vignettes and moments within the room’

Lucy Cunningham

owns and wants to incorporate into a scheme because they have significance for them. That’s the important detail for the client.

It’s fun in newer spaces to add detail in such as beading and panelling to make a room feel grounded and to add interest. Also, you can scale playfulness. I like to use fabric walls, but a recent client wasn’t brave enough, so we just did the ceiling and that worked brilliantly.

ABOVE The large-scale pattern on the sofas in this manor house library by Lucy Cunningham are enhanced by the contrasting smaller-scale patterns used for the cushions.

LEFT These taller than usual table lamps balance the proportions of this high-ceilinged dining room by Lucy Cunningham. The mismatched cushions break the vignette’s symmetry.

MARY GRAHAM AND NICOLE SALVESEN,

Founders, Salvesen Graham

Why are details so important to you when designing an interior?

Mary – Details add a depth to a room and stops it feeling two dimensional, they give a room have a heart and soul.

Nicole – They also make it feel that the person who decorated has taken time and care and makes the room feel like you're being considered when you are in it.

At what point in creating a scheme should we be considering the details?

Mary – When you consider details at the beginning, it can give you the confidence to go for a simple, bold scheme. For example, if you have a lovely grasscloth paper to use on all the walls of a room and you trim it with something smart it will offer the same level of impact as something really full-on added at the end. It doesn't need to feel maximalist – it can be smart, or a juxtaposition of different finishes can create considered detail. However, it depends on the type of client you're designing for. We always decide if it will be overwhelming to present everything in one go, down to the last button, or if that would be reassuring.

Nicole – If I'm advising friends, I find they overthink every single fabric and hate the idea they have to do this upfront. I always say choose what you love, stick with it and remember there will be lots of places in the house you can use other things. Also, know that there will be those final flourishes that tie everything together at the end. Sometimes the final flourish is something vintage or antique and takes some time to find and it's about holding your nerve, knowing it will come together.

Mary – It's important to leave space for you or clients to add things from their travels or find great art, which you can't force. The details and finishing touches don't have to come at once.

Where do you take cues from time and again to inspire finishing touches and details?

Nicole – It's often a combination of things. It can be the architectural features you want to focus on when you walk into a house. Or a client may have an amazing piece of artwork that's unique and different ▶

ABOVE Nicole Salvesen (left) and Mary Graham.

RIGHT In this dining room by Salvesen Graham, the fabrics and trims designed in collaboration with

Sanderson are echoed, from the chairs upholstered in Zig Zag Stripe in Raspberry to the curtains. A mix of textures including high gloss paint add warmth.

INSIDER KNOWLEDGE





‘Sometimes the final flourish is something vintage or antique that ties everything together and takes some time to find and it’s about holding your nerve’

Nicole Salvesen, Salvesen Graham

that you want to use – it can be a mix of those things that inform the decisions. In the end, we want the rooms to look authentic, so 99 per cent of our rooms will contain an antique. Whatever methods we’re employing, we’re trying to create a room that looks like it has evolved over time.

Mary – Most people aren’t decorating from scratch. They have a sofa or some inherited items and want to know how to tie them together. It might be a suzani cushion with some heritage to it, as well as some of the tones from your sofa or artwork, that links things together. You want something that’s a common thread and pulls things together and is a missing link in a room. It can be something that doesn’t go and is obscure and almost unsettling in a scheme, or the other way of looking at it could be that it is a thing that ties disparate items together. Ironically, sometimes

that finishing touch is the thing that doesn’t go with anything. It isn’t the cushion that has all the colours in it, it’s the thing that stands out.

Should every detail feel special and stand out in an ever-evolving home?

Mary – That’s the thing about details, they aren’t a feature. It’s more about layering lots of smaller elements to create a picture.

Nicole – You want to have some kind of hierarchy throughout the house in the details. You want to employ details in a way that suggests the importance and function of different rooms and spaces. A main bedroom may have tassels on a curtain, while a guest bedroom may have a simple trim around the room.

One of the hardest things to achieve in an interior can be the unexpected and playful – how can we do that with details?

Mary – We try and steer people away from anything trend-led and to develop their own style with smaller things, something non-committal like a cushion that’s witty, timeless yet contemporary, like Fine Cell Work. Nicole – It’s also about considering the size of a space too. If you want to use a bold wallpaper, perhaps try it in the downstairs loo, where your financial and mental commitment is lower. ■

ABOVE The smart brass lattice detail on the kitchen cabinets, Great Check Rug and chairs from the Collection by Salvesen Graham, upholstered in contrasting Soane fabric, add a layering of pattern to this London kitchen and give it personality.



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YELLOW

Creative Combinations

Continuing our series charting the evolution of colour and pattern, we explore how trends and historical influences have shaped British interiors, this time turning the spotlight to yellow

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE

With tones varying from soft butter and warm primrose to bold citrus and deep mustard, yellow is a versatile hue whose roots lie in pigments first extracted from ochre in prehistoric times. A key note in art, architecture and interiors, yellow was prized by Ancient Egyptians for its association with the sun god Ra. In medieval Europe, it adorned stained glass windows, while the Renaissance saw its wider use in

frescoes and textiles. By the 18th and 19th centuries, yellow featured in wallpapers and neoclassical architecture. Reminiscent of joy and energy, it became a symbol of post-war optimism too, culminating in Nancy Lancaster's wonderfully vibrant 1950s Yellow Room at 39 Brook Street. Today, yellow remains a popular choice for its associations with positivity and warmth, used in an array of interior spaces, from kitchens to children's rooms. ▶



In this sunny pantry by Salvesen Graham, scallop-edged shelving and worktops, and linen cabinet curtains, add an air of relaxed elegance. OPPOSITE Unusual colour combinations, such as a mustard corduroy sofa set against blush pink walls, give yellow a contemporary context in this scheme by Otta Design.



ABOVE LEFT In this entrance hall by Studio Peake, a rich egg yolk yellow, Terre Jaune by Argile, creates an instantly cocooning effect.

ABOVE RIGHT Catkin, a soft, sandy yellow, acts as an effective neutral in this study by paint specialist Fenwick & Tilbrook, offset by architectural accents in Kingfisher, a rich teal.

LEFT Marquee Stripe wallpaper in Ochre by Cole & Son on the walls and in the alcove lends a smart but warm air to this bedroom by Kitesgrove.

Mellow yellow

A dynamic yet earthy colour, depending on its base, yellow can bring a range of emotions and moods to interiors. Lighter, brighter tones impart a cheerful quality, making them ideal for evoking a sense of positivity. These zingy yellows often find their way into playful patterns, such as oversized checks, stripes, squiggles and zigzags, adding a dynamic and lively element to decor.

On the other hand, deeper and richer yellows that border on ochres and golds strike a more formal ambience. These tones lend an air of regality and timelessness to interiors, making them well-suited for more traditional settings. This is particularly evident in classic patterns like damasks, where the richness of the yellow hue often complements the intricacy of the design, creating a sense of opulence.

“Over the past decade, we’ve witnessed a shift from colour schemes centred around cooler tones like silvery blues and blacks, into fresher combinations, such as blues paired with forest greens and the gradual warming of neutrals, along with oranges and brassy metals,” says Elicyon’s Holly Beazley. “Yellow is once again a talking point, as it harmonises with materials like walnut and blonde timbers, as well as natural fibres such as seagrass and wool, all of which carry its undertones.” ▶

Sitting room walls, ceiling and architectural features painted in Benjamin Moore's golden yellow Sun Valley provide an ideal foil to accents of white and blue for a relaxed look.





‘Yellow harmonises with materials like walnut and blonde timbers, as well as natural fibres such as seagrass and wool, all of which carry its undertones’

Holly Beazley, Elicyon

Considering which hues work best, plus where and how to use them, is key. Kitchen cabinetry and pantries can carry several shades of yellow well, from custard to buttermilk and deep mustard, while bright sunshine or citrus shots often work well in more contained spaces, such as cloakrooms, or as accents, including joinery inners or woodwork. “I like using it sparingly, via a chair or a cushion, to add surprise to a scheme, or by using a soft yellow as a wall colour to brighten a dark space such as a hallway,” says Otta Design’s Alex Keith. “In its more muted or mustard tones, it becomes a sophisticated colour that works beautifully when combined with burnt oranges, browns and aubergines.”

Colour consultant Fiona de Lys favours these richer yellow tones. “With its ochre base, yellow is a colour originally from the ground, so it has a primitive and earthy quality, particularly tones leaning towards orange or brown, such as saffron, henna and beeswax,” she explains. “Muddier hues are a favourite as they evoke a sense of aged beauty and maturity. Brighter, stronger yellows do have their place: they remind me of mid-century Italy and its Riviera facades, stripy beach parasols and deckchairs, all of which evoke feelings of life, energy, optimism and fun.”

This is a tone that can instantly lift a mood. “If it’s a buttery yellow, it evokes a fresh, soft feeling,” says American interior designer Amy Vermillion. “Citric yellow – which is mostly green based – is energising, while deep sunny yellows are uplifting. Usefully, light yellows can almost act as a neutral in a colour scheme, working brilliantly as a background to stronger hues.”

Perfect pairings

Giving this colour a contemporary twist also depends on what it is combined with. “For a really modern take, use yellow with clashing colours like red or orange,” advises Alex Keith. “We recently painted ▶

ABOVE LEFT Touches of moody black combined with a rich mustard yellow introduce sophisticated appeal, anchored by Pooky’s wide striped Duccio table lamp in black and natural seagrass.

LEFT In this scheme by Kelling Designs, white bathroom fittings are given an energetic boost thanks to rich yellow walls whose tones are enhanced by a patterned blind.

OPPOSITE Walls in Edward Bulmer Natural Paint’s Naples Yellow provide an ideal foil to a collection of classical artwork in interior designer Martin Brudnizki’s delightfully opulent country apartment..







ABOVE LEFT In this guest bedroom scheme by Veere Grenney, his co-ordinating buttermilk-hued fabric and wallpaper, Belvedere in Straw Yellow for Schumacher, lend a sense of timeless elegance.

ABOVE RIGHT Susie Atkinson's Edith wallpaper border in yellow creates a crisp frame to a largely neutral kitchen scheme beyond.

LEFT Paired with weathered timber and treasured ceramics, soft yellow walls and Little Greene Bassoon glazed rectangular tiles by Bert & May create a simple, rustic feel in this bathroom.

a large L-shaped wall of bespoke bookcases in Paint & Paper Library's Muga – a dirty, sophisticated yellow which we teamed with a Lewis & Wood brown velvet floral sofa for a really striking look. I also like to throw in a touch of olive green for good measure.”

It goes without saying that yellow brings rays of sunshine into a home. “But what isn't obvious is that yellow is such an easy colour to work with,” says Violet & George's Nicky Mudie. “Pale, primrose yellows are great for neutral schemes such as children's bedrooms, working well with greys, pinks and oak for a Scandi look. If you are pairing blue with this tone, make sure you choose a yellow that is as fresh and contemporary as possible to avoid a dated, 1980s look. Little Greene's Yellow-Pink 46 is one of my favourite colours, as is Farrow & Ball's Babouche and Mylands' Golden Square.”

Hallways are a great showcase for yellow, especially buttery shades or those with a rich ochre base as they inject warmth. “Opt for a contemporary twist by contrasting it with darker woodwork colours,” suggests Patrick O'Donnell, international brand ambassador at Farrow & Ball. “An elegant combination would be soothing Sudbury Yellow teamed with a woodwork trim in Studio Green. For that fifth wall (ceiling), go for a soft white with an underlying yellow to soften the look further.” ▶



Kitchen cabinetry painted in Paint & Paper Library's Muga serves to enhance the beauty of natural wood in this textural kitchen scheme by Laura Stephens.



‘Balance bold pops of yellow with neutrals or cooler tones to ensure the space remains harmonious and pleasing to the eye’

Liz Beale, Goddard Littlefair

New ways

Yellow’s rich history serves up several cultural reference points that continue to inspire today. “One of our favourite rooms is the South Drawing Room at Sir John Soane’s Museum, whose walls are finished in ‘Turner’s Patent Yellow’ for dramatic impact,” say Salvesen Graham’s Nicole Salvesen and Mary Graham. “Often, a yellow hue with a bit of brown at its core like this one is easier to work with. And if you want to go bold, dip your toe in by painting the inside of a kitchen or bar cupboard in a bright and brilliant gloss yellow for a bit of unexpected joy when you open the doors.”

Looking to the past in this way is often a good starting point for a new take. “Try using a yellow geometric 1970s style wallpaper in a cloakroom for retro appeal,” says interior designer Juliette Byrne. “At the other end of the scale, using a delicate floral yellow wallpaper, such as Bloomfield Ink’s Eat Your Greens, in a country cottage bedroom, would create an instantly cosy and welcoming feel.”

For a fresh spin, try upholstering a sofa, ottoman or bench in deep yellow, complemented by a burgundy, forest green or deep pink trim. Experiment with finishes too, such as velvet or cord (ideal for occasional chairs) or introduce a sunshine hit via lacquered pieces, such as a scalloped tray or a high gloss citrus lamp base. Yellow borders around architraves and inside window frames are another modern take. “Just beware of its intensity,” advises Goddard Littlefair’s Liz Beale. “Balance bold pops of yellow with neutrals or cooler tones to ensure the space remains harmonious and pleasing to the eye.”

As for the future, yellow continues to anchor our interiors in one way or another. “As we move into a new season, we’ll be seeing more muted yellows,” predicts Fiona de Lys. “Watch out for yellow-based tobacco and caramel browns paired with yellow whites, for schemes that harness this tone in a fresh but attractively grounding way.”

ABOVE LEFT Yellow is a natural bedfellow to earthy green and wood elements in this grounding bedroom scheme by Studio Peake.

LEFT A sofa in Dandelion vintage linen by Love Your Home adds warmth to this relaxed sitting room by Laura Stephens, pairing naturally with tobacco walls and raspberry-pink accents.



PHOTOGRAPHS (OTTA DESIGN) © JONATHAN BOND; PHOTOGRAPHY (SALVESEN GRAHAM) © SIMON UPTON; (STUDIO PEAKE) © ALEXANDER JAMES; (LAURA STEPHENS) © BOZ GAGOVSKI; (VEERE GREINNEY) © DAVID OLIVER; (MARTIN BRUDNIZKI) © JAMES McDONALD



SUNSHINE SHADES

A liberal use of creamy yellows uplifts schemes, while brighter tones flatter a modern palette and mustard hues echo smart vintage styles

- 1 Birce sideboard medium in Gorse Bud, £1,049, Pilgrim 2 Calvin armchair in Mustard Yellow Velvet and Linen, £549, Atkin and Thyme 3 From top: Fresh Yellow, Calming Yellow, Passionate Yellow, from £22 for 1L of Emulsion, Yes Colours 4 Volanges tassel tie-back, Jaune Celeste, £297, Houllès 5 Amarelo and Comporta tiles from Trincha Cores Collection, £10 each, Everett and Blue 6 Sanabria Sweet Yellow tiles, £180 a square metre, Bert & May at Hyperion 7 Frost round side table, Tangerine, £65, Cuckooland 8 Doris cotton fabric, Yellow, £164 a metre, Nicholas Engert Interiors 9 Fortuny Tapa Yellow and White cushions, £275 each, Floren 10 Yellow Athina sofa, €3,600 plus shipping, Koket 11 Yellow handmade Regency-style oval basket and liner, £924, Siby Colefax & John Fowler 12 Veneto rectangular outdoor rug in Soft Yellow, from £250, Suns Lifestyle 13 Artisan mixer 4.7l, Majestic Yellow, £499, KitchenAid ■



Room in the GARDEN

Create extra space for working, hobbies or hosting guests without moving house or building an extension. We look at the important points to consider when commissioning a garden room

Adding a room in the garden has, in recent years, become hugely popular – suppliers report increased demand for garden structures of all kinds, particularly with the growth in hybrid and home working since the pandemic. It is an ideal solution for creating extra space without going to the trouble and cost of moving, and is less expensive, less disruptive and faster to achieve than building an extension. “We have seen a

massive increase in demand from people looking for an insulated garden room that they can use as an addition to their main living space without moving to a bigger house, especially post-Covid with more people working at home,” says Luke Dejahang, CEO of Crown Pavilions. “Another thing that many customers say is that they want that space where they can just get away, but they want it to feel as high-specification as their main house.” ▶

ABOVE AND OPPOSITE Designed by Box 9 Design with Bert & May, Bert’s Boxes are innovative, prefabricated, modular living spaces made from reclaimed, handmade and hand-aged materials.





LEFT Every garden workroom by Little Green Rooms includes a green sedum living roof, which provides insulation for cooler temperatures in summer and cosiness in winter.

BELOW LEFT A garden office for a playwright, including paintings, books, comfortable seating and a cork wall, by Little Green Rooms.

REAPING THE BENEFITS

While many garden rooms serve as dedicated home offices, they are also popular to utilise for entertaining, gyms or yoga/pilates studios, art or craft studios, music rooms, playrooms, meditation spaces, reading rooms, guest accommodation and more. Other interesting uses include golf simulators, sensory rooms and even observatories, and many home owners want their garden room to fulfil more than one function.

Tailored precisely to individual requirements, garden rooms can be tiny or huge, have vaulted ceilings or a second storey, and can include a WC, shower room or bathroom, a kitchen or a sophisticated home entertainment system, even a log burner or swim spa.

These are versatile spaces that are, more or less, limited only by imagination and, because they are located away from the main house, they have the advantages of privacy and tranquility, flexibility in design and a satisfying separation from day-to-day life.

“Typically, we are being asked to create buildings that work on many levels, and that can be adapted, too,” says Merry Albright, creative director of Border



PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

PLANNING PERMISSION

Most garden rooms are classed as outbuildings, so fall under Permitted Development and therefore do not usually require planning permission, provided the building is single storey and does not have a veranda, a balcony, or a platform of more than 30cm. Additional requirements for Permitted Development are that it must not be designed for overnight accommodation or project beyond the principal elevation of the existing property, and the total area of all extensions must not exceed 50 per cent of the land around the “original” house, as it stood on 1 July 1948.

BUILDING REGULATIONS

Building Regulations cover areas including structural integrity, energy performance, drainage and ventilation, fire protection and electrical and gas safety. Garden rooms less than 15 square metres are not required to meet Building Regulations

(unless used for sleeping – see ‘Practicalities - Guest Suites, Kitchens and Bathrooms’ overleaf), though it may be desirable for them to do so.

HEIGHT

Under Permitted Development, a garden room should typically have a maximum roof height of 3m (4m with a dual-pitched roof), or 2.5m if within 2m of the boundary.

LISTED BUILDINGS

Garden rooms within the curtilage of a listed building always require planning permission. Restrictions also apply to properties within World Heritage Sites, AONBs, The Broads and National Parks.

Building Regulations apply to garden rooms of 15–30 square metres built within 1m of a boundary – unless constructed of substantially non-combustible materials. For structures larger than 30 square metres, Building Regulations approval is necessary for the relevant parts.



Oak. “As an example, a working-from home-space that can also function as a party barn, or a studio that works equally well for yoga and other hobbies. Most people also ask for an element of ‘overflow’ accommodation too, so the building can be used for occasional overnight stays when needed.”

THE PERFECT SETTING

Before deciding on a location, it is important to work out how any services required will reach the new room. Some suppliers offer “turnkey” solutions, while others expect the home owner to arrange foundations, electrical connections and any plumbing, so checking what is included is vital.

Dejahang says the practicalities of getting building materials to the site are another consideration, as are the location of any large trees (which will dump snow or falling leaves on the roof), the direction of the sun, whether or not the ground slopes and how far it is comfortable to walk to reach the room, especially on a cold day.

Albright adds: “Work with the existing features you have – such as lovely planting or a good view – and consider whether you have something to hide. It is also key to decide whether you want it to be in a private location or easy for visitors to find.” ▶



TOP A garden room by David Salisbury used by the owners as a place to relax, enjoy the garden and for occasional informal dining.

ABOVE This characterful oak-framed garden building by Oakwrights is positioned to enjoy views over the

garden. It includes a kitchenette, workstation, log burner, underfloor heating, a drop-down TV and a veranda with bifold doors.

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GARDEN REQUISITES



Built by Bespoke Garden Rooms, this garden studio in the grounds of an Arts and Crafts house was designed by Lolita Colenso Design and includes a bathroom.

‘As a general rule, a garden room should have its own architectural merit’

A STYLE TO SUIT THE SETTING

The vast majority of garden rooms are prefabricated, customised to the customer’s needs and made from panels that can be assembled on site relatively quickly and easily. A bespoke garden room, while likely to have a more interesting design, will be more complex and time-consuming to construct. Many garden rooms on the market are simple square or rectangular shapes with a flat or pent (with one sloping side) roof, creating a modern aesthetic, but can be given added interest with full-height windows, bifold doors and the addition of a ‘green’ or ‘living’ roof.

Jack Shaw, founder of Little Green Rooms, says that green roofs are enormously effective as insulation, as well as being attractive, environmentally friendly and popular with neighbours. Gable and hipped roofs give a more traditional look, as do oak frames, which add interest and character internally, too – but it is not necessary to replicate the style of the main house, says Shaw. “I always work by the general rule that the garden room needs to be either exactly the same as the main house or very different,” he says. “It should have its own architectural merit. For example, our dark cedar works really well with Cotswold stone.” ▶

GUIDELINES AND UTILITIES

OFFICES AND OTHER WORK SPACES

Setting up a home office in a garden building usually falls under Permitted Development, providing it does not cause significant disturbance to neighbours. Check local regulations for specific guidelines.

GUEST SUITES, KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS

Any garden room containing sleeping accommodation requires Building Regulations approval, as must buildings containing plumbing for kitchens and bathrooms/WCs. A plumber will need to connect to a water supply and wastewater/sewerage system, which means digging trenches. Check whether this service will be provided by the supplier or if it needs organising separately.

ELECTRICAL SUPPLY

To comply with Part P of the Building Regulations, it is essential to use a qualified

electrician to connect an electricity supply to the new garden room. This is usually done via an armoured cable sunk into a trench, running from the main house and connected to a consumer unit in the new building.

REMOTE LOCATIONS

If erecting a garden room in a location far from main services, consider whether solar panels, on the roof or elsewhere, could provide electricity. As for plumbing, it may be possible to install a septic tank, rainwater harvesting or even a composting toilet.

INTERNET CONNECTION

To connect a garden room with WiFi, it may be possible simply to use a plug-in extender, which works well when covering distances less than about 30m. For excellent stability and a longer reach, hard-wiring will be better, using a CAT6 ethernet cable run underground from the main house.



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An office or hobby room may require generous windows for good natural light

Dejahang says that it is important to be sympathetic to the surroundings and the main dwelling, but not necessarily in the same materials. Most garden rooms are clad in Western red cedar (which eventually fades to silver-grey) or Siberian larch, but other options are available, including brick slips, stone, composite wood and steel panels, while roofs could be anything from EPDM rubber membrane (for flat roofs) to lead, corrugated iron, shingles, slate, thatch or clay tiles.

AN INVITING INTERIOR

A garden room should feel just as luxurious and comfortable as a main home, and there are few limits on the interior design. Ultimately, the design stems from its function, just as with any other living space.

An office or a hobby room may require generous windows for good natural light, well-planned storage, a mini fridge and a kettle, and perhaps a WC and small basin, while guest accommodation could need a kitchenette and a shower room, and even a separate sleeping area. "Adding bathroom and kitchen facilities ►

ABOVE Oak-framed garden buildings by Border Oak are available in a range of modular sizes or designed bespoke, and hand-made to order.

RIGHT Designer Emma Sims-Hilditch commissioned this garden room by Garden Affairs to use as a summer house, art studio and place to sit and read, furnishing it with deep armchairs by Neptune, wall lights from Original BTC and personal collections of plates and prints.





*A garden room should feel as
luxurious and comfortable
as a main home*

will add significantly to the costs of the project, but may be crucial for the outbuilding and its intended purpose,” says Albright. “Subdividing the space into smaller rooms is a good way to take a straightforward plan into something more interesting, but it might be worth considering whether these internal divisions can be moveable or adaptable, so that the space meets more than one purpose and is futureproof.”

Timber flooring will work better in a yoga space, while ceramic tiles are practical for an art studio, and carpet could be an inviting option in a full-time home office. Introduce texture and interest by cladding or adding attractive finishes to internal walls, Albright adds: “Using a palette of natural materials – oak, stone, clay, timber, lime and a colour set that reflects your natural surroundings will always work – especially if the interior spaces have been designed to capitalise upon a particular view.” ■



TOP AND ABOVE Furnished with as much luxury and attention to detail as a main living space, this garden study in London’s Notting Hill was designed by Katharine Pooley.



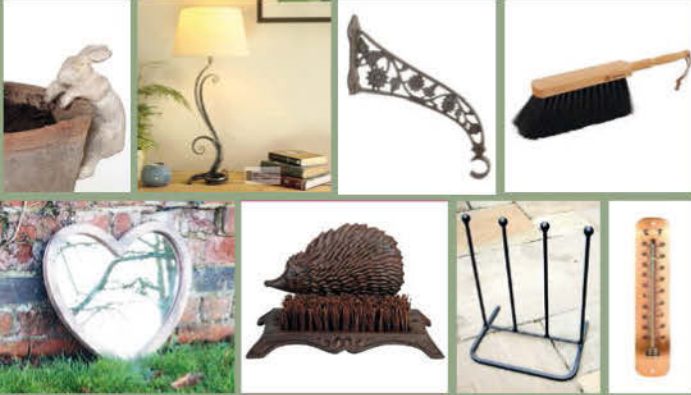
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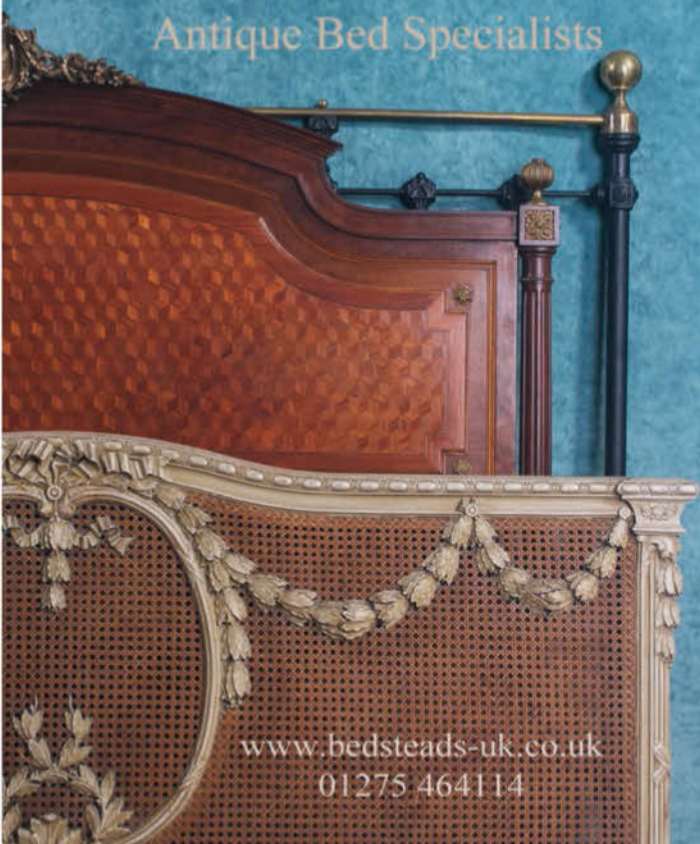


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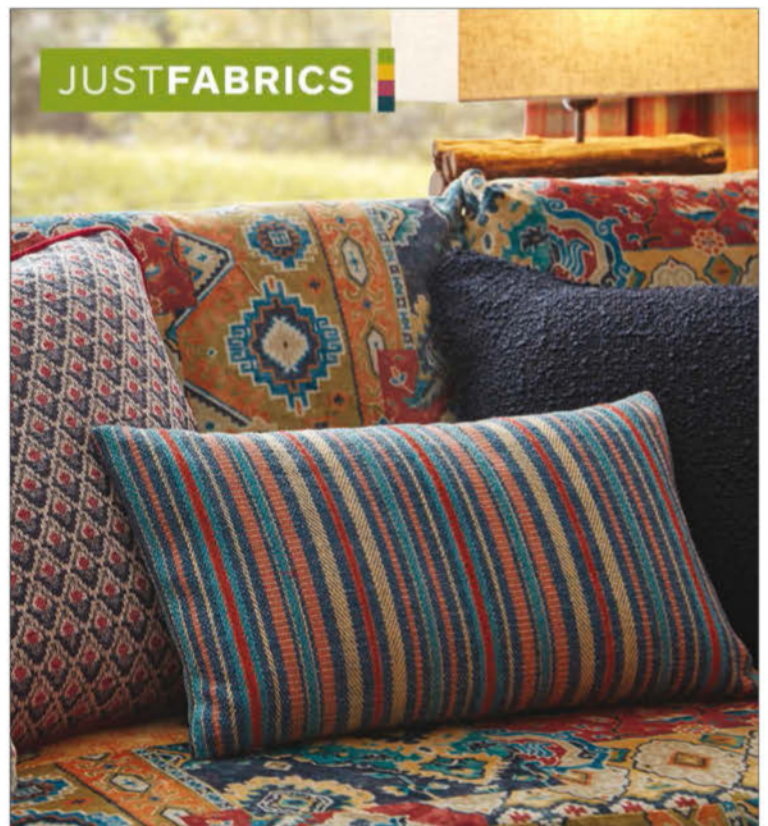
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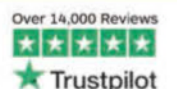
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SPACE *and* LIGHT

Be it the addition of a glazed extension or a structural intervention that opens up floor space internally, there are a variety of ways to introduce more space and light into a period home

Natural light is a beautiful and important resource in any home, and how it is used can have a transformative impact on the interiors. Not only do rooms with good light and ventilation help to boost the mood of those within but natural light can also give the feeling of more space.

When setting out to do a major piece of renovation, creating extra space and additional sources of light are

often the twin ambitions. While it is possible to play tricks with the eye and time-honoured approaches include hanging more mirrors throughout the house, using gloss over matt paint to scatter the light more freely and painting the ceiling a few shades lighter, in reality the interventions will need to be more architectural. At the heart of the matter will be the clever use of glazing, both internally, externally and from above. ▶

ABOVE Holland Green has added a modest extension with glazing into half of the pitched roof. Corten fins emphasise the height and provide shade.



1 Windows

The best way to increase the amount of natural light – and, with that, the feeling of more space – is to install new windows. Vertical windows, especially those that face east, south or west to catch the sunlight, will be the most effective. Bear in mind, any new side-facing first-floor windows may need to be obscure glazed to protect neighbours' privacy.

Sash windows can allow more light in than casements as the frames are often hidden behind the brickwork, explains Richard Dollar of The Sash Window Workshop. "One advantage of today's timber windows is the option to have narrow glazing bars. If the window is double-glazed with individually glazed panes, we can get as low as a 24mm glazing bar," he says. The choice of glass is very important when it comes to letting light into a property. "Try to choose a glass unit with maximum light transmission," Dollar adds.

Skylights can be easily installed in both flat and pitched roofs and don't usually require planning permission. "Skylights provide up to three times more light into a room than a vertical window," explains architect Daniel Harris. He recently used a stepped full-height steel framed glazed door and rooflight combination on a project in London which resulted in a light-filled airy space.

2 Doors

Traditional front doors often have fanlights or clerestory windows above them (some are flanked by panels of obscured glass too) in order to let light in but unwanted interest out. It's at the rear of a house – or the elevations that face away from the public entrance – where the installation of a new style of door will have the greatest impact.

When it comes to adding more natural light and extending the garden views (which gives the impression of more space) the general mantra is more pane and less frame. "For those wanting a more sympathetic solution to a historic house, it's possible to incorporate elements such as a segmented fan detail into the design of the new door," explains Lisa Morton of Architectural Bronze Casements.

It was during the nineteenth century, as glass production got cheaper, that it became more popular to use glazing in internal doors. This is becoming a popular option again, particularly for kitchens and sculleries, but also for other ground-floor rooms.

While open-plan living will deliver the feeling of more light and space, glazed internal doors are useful, says interior designer Nicholas Spencer of Spencer & Wedekind. "Be it for privacy or sound or cooking smells for instance, or even just to break the feeling of a large space being too exposed or empty."



LEFT A lower ground floor extension by Daniel Harris which maximises daylight with a strip skylight by Maxlight and Crittall doors by Clement Windows.

RIGHT The team at Vale Garden Houses has created a traditional-style, light-filled, garden room as an extension to a Victorian rectory for dining, growing indoor plants and appreciating the garden.

BELOW There is no shortage of light in this entrance hall featuring a set of glazed doors surrounded by fixed-pane windows by Architectural Bronze Casements.



3 Extensions

A surefire way of introducing both natural light and more space into a house is by adding on an extension. Be it a country cottage or a classic Victorian townhouse, most properties benefit from this exercise which often places the kitchen at the heart of the home and establishes a stronger connection to the garden or outdoors.

There are various options to choose from, except when handling a listed property or one that falls within a conservation area. Some (but not all) conservation officers these days prefer additions which are contemporary in design, while others will support a design that is sympathetic to the fabric of the building: enter a timber-framed orangery or conservatory.

“Either will be effective at adding space and light,” explains Karen Bell, creative director of David Salisbury. “A lantern roof will help increase the overall ceiling height. A bit like the effect of a vaulted ceiling, this will increase the feeling of space and light in a living space.”

Simon Griffiths of Holland Green favours a contemporary route. “With this approach, you are respecting the original property and creating modern additions that are sensitive to the building’s identity. We find a contemporary, lightweight design and plenty of glazing sitting against older walls offers the best of both worlds.” ▶



‘Where possible, introduce varying ceiling heights to shift the focus of each section’

5 Staircases

Aside from an extension or new windows, another intervention that can have a sizeable impact of a renovation project is replacing the staircase. Anyone keen to introduce more light into a hallway could consider an open-tread design – if designed in accordance with building regulations, these are safe for young children. “If you don’t like the idea of open treads, painting the risers in a light colour and using light-coloured materials which reflect light well will make the staircase appear visually lighter,” explains Richard McClane, design director of Bisca. Another trick is to opt for a cantilevered design. “These do away with visible support structures appearing to float, creating an impression of lightness and space,” McClane adds.

In addition to the design and style of the staircase, consider how best the void underneath can be put to good use and not wasted. “People tend to think of the under-stairs space as dark, dusty and full of spiders but, with thoughtful consideration, it’s the perfect spot to create a haven of organisation that completes a home,” explains Kate Aslangul of Oakley Moore Interior Design. It may be just a trick of the eye, but having somewhere to put away the clutter that gathers in a typical house will allow the eye to travel more freely and give the impression of more space. ■

FEATURE ARABELLA YOUNIS PHOTOGRAPHS (HOLLAND GREEN) © LUCY WALTERS; (CLEMMENT WINDOWS) © GG ARCHARD; (SPENCER & WEDEKIND) © FELIX SPELLER

4 Open-plan spaces

Removing dividing walls and creating an open-plan living area will bring a more spacious and brighter feel to even the smallest houses. While this sense of openness has many benefits, creating an all-in-one eating and socialising space, it is important to create definite zones with rugs or furniture. “We took the small rear-end of a London house and extended it to twice its size and then divided it into zones: an enclosed kitchen with a serving window, a dining area with banquette seating, which is great for space saving, and a sitting room,” says Nicholas Spencer.

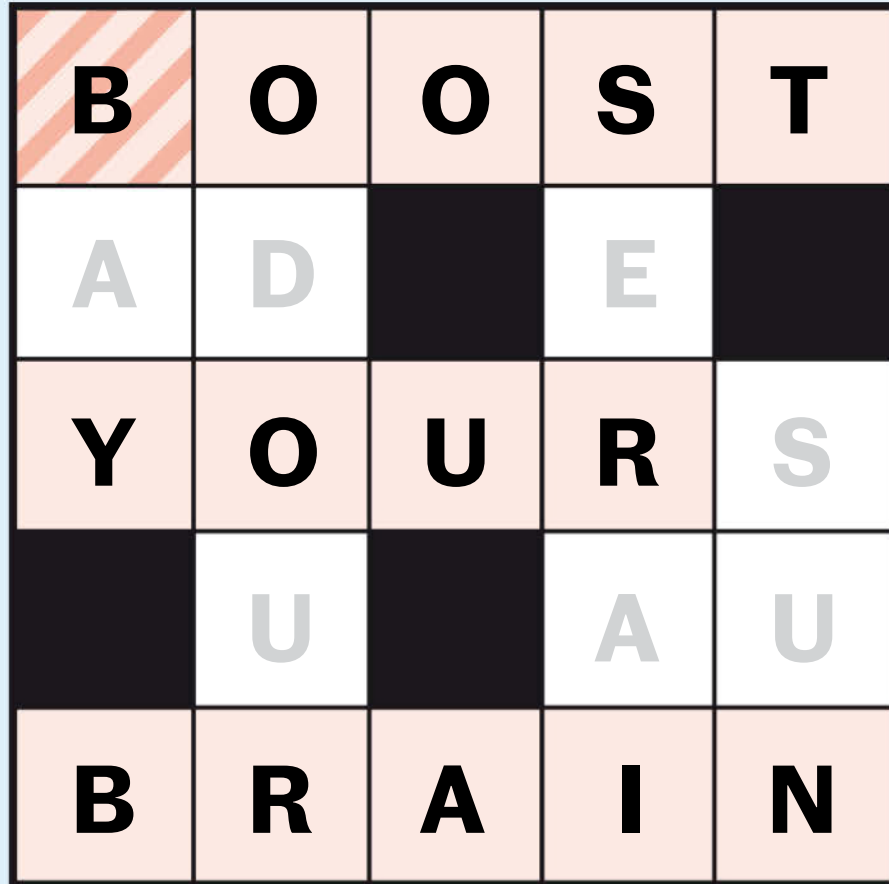
Another option, more easily embraced when designing an open-plan room from scratch, is to consider ceiling heights. “When working with an open-plan space, where possible, introduce varying ceiling heights to shift the focus of each section,” explains Greg Walton, director at Studio McW. “In a recent project on an 18th-century house in Cambridgeshire, our task was to wash the interiors in light and make the most of the floorplan. We opened the kitchen to a full-pitched volume overhead and had a lower, more snug ceiling height for the sitting area.”

ABOVE Slim open-in wood treads will both lengthen the views and allow light to travel into the area below, as demonstrated in this design by Bisca.

RIGHT The rear wall of this house features a 9 metre-long steel and glass system designed by Spencer & Wedekind and made by Crittall.



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LEMON SOUFFLÉ

Serve a light and zesty lemon pudding for an impressive finale to Easter feasts

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

40g soft butter; plus extra
75g caster sugar; plus extra
2 egg yolks
100g quark
2 tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp lemon zest; plus extra
3 egg whites
2 tbsp plain flour
icing sugar; for dusting

METHOD

- Preheat oven to 200°C, gas 6. Butter 4 x 10cm ramekins; sprinkle with sugar.
- Cream the butter with 50g sugar until very pale. Stir in the yolks, quark, lemon juice and zest.
- Beat the egg whites until stiff; beat in the remaining sugar. Add a third of the whites to the mixture, sift in the flour; fold in.
- Gently fold in the remaining whites.
- Fill the dishes three-quarters full with batter. Wipe the butter and sugar from the exposed top edge.
- Bake the soufflés for 15–20 minutes. Top with icing sugar and lemon zest. Serve.

What to do in **MARCH**

This is the month for making scrumptious sweet treats, undertaking seasonal sweeping and cleaning, and saying hello to springtime

CELEBRATE *spring*

The cheery nodding heads of narcissi, commonly referred to as daffodils, with their fresh, delicate scent and varying shades of yellow, are ideal for lifting the mood after the dark winter months. From the intense hues of egg yolk to soft muted lemon, mix up the colours for a display that is full of frivolous seasonal charm.

Cut stems look lovely in antique ceramic jugs, vintage pickling jars or even as short individual flowers displayed in a row of jam jars on a mantelpiece or the centre of a spring table setting. Alternatively, invest in durable, high-quality terracotta pots that will develop a lovely patina over time. They are also resistant to frost and allow roots to breathe while moisture remains in the soil, thanks to the naturally porous surface. Fill with planted bulbs that can be bought from garden centres and burst forth in the early spring weather to add a splash of springtime loveliness.

Varieties such as Narcissus 'Blushing Lady' and Narcissus 'Paper White' are beautifully fragrant, so place them by the front entrance to greet visitors or update a window box with a few bulbs, keep the window slightly ajar and let the fresh breeze waft in and fill the room with their perfume. Alternatively, bright yellow Narcissus 'Red Devon', Narcissus 'Tête-à-Tête' and Narcissus 'Juanita' will make a striking display in the garden, with a group of pots around the perimeter of the greenhouse, or strategically positioned amongst the flower beds, so their brashness and beauty can be enjoyed from indoors too. Remember, once they have flowered, to deadhead them, leaving the foliage to gradually die back, ready for next year. ▶

Bergs Potter terracotta pots, from £11 for a 10cm diameter pot, available from Nordic Nest and other UK suppliers





REINVIGORATE *the senses*

Soothe the soul with the warm, intoxicating natural scent of wood with a few dried branches of olive or other garden foliage that has broken and dried out over winter and is suitable to burn. March is a good time to use the last of the winter store of logs, leaving the fireplace area clear and ready to be swept and cleaned. What is more, the gentle heat from a handful of logs in the hearth is often sufficient to allow the heating to be left switched off, freshening up the living room without feeling chilly and filling it with the aroma of woodsmoke.

Early spring is also a great time to prune woody herbs in the garden such as rosemary and thyme, encouraging the plant to shoot up fresh growth when the temperatures start to rise. Source a couple of extra baskets to place by the fireside, and fill with the cuttings, then add a few stems to the fire along with the logs, and enjoy the fresh herbal notes released as they burn.

Seagrass baskets, large £65, small £52, both Also Home



CREATE *a spring tablescape*

From a relaxing Mother's Day lunch to a fun-filled Easter tea party, dress the table for springtime gatherings. Pretty pastel shades, delicate ceramics and the soft glow of candles in soft hues will easily make the occasion that little bit extra special. Attention, of course, is always in the detail, so opt for artisan, hand-finished pieces and decorative patterns that will bring personality to the mix. Cheery gingham checks are ideal, particularly in luxurious linen and finished with a ruffle edging, a little ribbon or even ricrac for a touch of nostalgia. Make place settings that are perfect for the occasion with napkins beautifully enhanced with an edging of pompom trim, perhaps tie

with ribbon and a daffodil flower placed inside for a Mother's Day lunch. Or fill tiny ceramic dishes with chocolate eggs for that all important Easter get-together. Then sit back and enjoy. ▶

Ruffle linen check tablecloth, £180; porcelain dinner plate, £44; dessert plate, £36; Pompom trim napkins, £25 for a set of two; Fluted mini bowl, £12; Fluted large cake plate, £22; Ceramic cups, £31.50; Glass tumblers, £31.25 for a set of four; Urn-shaped fluted vase (with flowers in), £32; Scalloped vase, £36; Scalloped candle holder, £28; candles, £30 for a set of four; Cutlery, £131 for a 20-piece set, all Sorbet Living

BE INSPIRED *by the exotic*

Take a cue from global influences when choosing new upholstered furniture. A timeless, classic design covered in a textile design influenced by the colours and elaborate tapestries and textiles of India will bring a welcome note of global sophistication to interiors, beautifully complementing any existing furniture and accessories in the process. Delve into the heritage and artistic flavours found in The Threads of India collection from Sofas & Stuff, produced in collaboration with the V&A, and select an upholstery design for a sofa or armchair with a rich, ancient South Asian influence.

Snape chair, from £2,108, in V&A Threads of India Regal Arabesque, Flame, £76.45 a metre, Sofas & Stuff



EAT *cake*

Enjoy a sweet tea-time treat for any occasion, not forgetting the Easter table of course. "Anything that spins off a Bakewell Tart has got to be good, right? This loaf cake brings together a terrific flavour combination of almonds and cherries and is a much easier way to recreate those beloved Bakewell flavours. The result is something perfect for afternoon tea, to cut slices off and come back to – repeatedly, no doubt," says Florence Stanton, author of *Part Time Baker: Simple Bakes without the Stress*.



CHERRY & ALMOND LOAF CAKE

Preparation: 15 mins

Baking: 50 mins

SERVES 8

INGREDIENTS

180g butter, at room temperature
180g caster sugar
3 medium eggs
2 tsp almond extract
155g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
5 tbsp ground almonds
3 tbsp milk
250g pitted fresh or frozen cherries

For the glaze:
125g icing sugar
2 tsp milk
½ tsp almond extract

To serve:
3 tbsp flaked almonds
pitted cherries on their stem (optional)

METHOD

- Preheat the oven to 180°C fan (200°C/400°F/Gas 6) and line a 900g loaf tin with baking parchment.
- In a large bowl, or the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the beater attachment, beat the butter and sugar for 3–5 minutes, until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing after each addition, then add the almond extract and combine again. Combine the flour, baking powder and ground almonds then add them to the bowl and gently fold to combine.
- Add the milk to loosen and stir gently.
- Transfer the batter into the lined tin, level it out, and bake in the oven for 50 minutes, until golden and a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.

- Remove from the oven and leave to cool on a wire rack in the tin before turning it out and glazing it.
- Make the glaze in a small bowl by combing the icing sugar, milk and almond extract. It should be thick but pourable. Adjust if necessary. Pour the glaze over the cake and scatter over the flaked almonds. Adding some fresh cherries, especially those still on their stems, gives a nice finishing touch.
- The cake will keep for up to 2–3 days stored in an airtight container.

Part Time Baker: Simple Bakes without the Stress by Florence Stanton, £18.99, published by Carnival ■





Time for tea

The ceremony of afternoon tea is a quintessentially English experience with an interesting history that is maintained today

Few things truly encapsulate the English spirit better than the notion of sitting down for a nice cup of tea. This ritual is something we have elevated to an art form, particularly in the case of an ‘afternoon tea’, often enjoyed for a celebration. Alex Hutchinson, archivist at Bettys (a Yorkshire-based tea room renowned for its afternoon teas) explains that though “many countries and cultures have evolved a tradition of taking tea in the afternoon with a cake, the British have evolved something very specific. That is, the expectation of tiny finger sandwiches, with the crusts cut off, a selection of very dainty cakes and scones served with cream and

jam. The idea of adding anything else, perhaps sausages, would cause uproar.” It is often cited that the 7th Duchess of Bedford invented the custom of afternoon tea in 1840 when she requested something to tide her over between lunch and dinner. Though this story has its virtues, Hutchinson does explain that the more specific rituals of afternoon tea as we expect it today came much later and are tied in many ways to the history of tea itself.

Playing Mother

We were not always a nation of tea drinkers. In the 17th and 18th centuries, coffee and cocoa were the ▶

TOP The Ritz hotel’s tea master, Giandomenico Scandu, pours the perfect cup of tea.

ABOVE Willow Landscape pastry fork, £16 for four, John Lewis & Partners.

RIGHT The Floral Court at Petersham Nurseries in Covent Garden provides a beautiful setting for afternoon tea.



'The British have evolved a very specific tradition of afternoon tea. That is, tiny finger sandwiches, a selection of very dainty cakes, and, of course, scones served with cream and jam'

Alex Hutchinson, archivist, Bettys



hot drinks of choice, and predominantly drunk by men in the coffee and chocolate houses of the day, where they would be made by specialists.

Hutchinson explains (discussing the work of Annie Gray, food historian and author of *From The Alps to The Dales: 100 Years of Bettys*) that tea, in comparison, was easy to prepare, being simply a case of pouring hot water onto tea leaves: "It was something women could take control of at home. They kept tea leaves in a caddy which was locked away, since it was so expensive. They could dose out the leaves and brew them, which is why we still say, 'I'll be mother'. It was an empowering experience for women at a time when they had precious few rights."

Over time, and owing to a dramatic reduction in the tax on it – from 119% to just 12.5% – tea became more affordable and more of us became tea drinkers. Cafes and tea rooms soon followed and became places for everyone to socialise and enjoy a cup of tea, perhaps with a bun or cake. They were somewhere women could meet without men, too – many early suffragette meetings took place in tea rooms – and perhaps influenced the evolution of afternoon tea into the dainty, feminised meal we know it as today.

The Golden Age

Hutchinson believes the 1920s and 1930s to be "the golden age of afternoon tea". Even in times of austerity, afternoon tea was seen

THE ETIQUETTE OF TEA

Going for a luxury afternoon tea can feel a little intimidating – are there rules on how to drink tea or eat a scone? Here the experts provide a few pointers

Tea cups

The tearista at Fortnum & Mason advises, "Hold the handle between your thumb and fingers, rather than curling your fingers through the handle. Do not extend the little finger, unless auditioning for the part of Mrs Bennett in *Pride & Prejudice*. When stirring it is best to move the spoon gently back and forth from front to back, rather than round and round, and to avoid clinking the side of the cup."

Which tea?

Giandomenico Scanu, tea master at The Ritz suggests, "A little glass of champagne is great to start and relax. We always put you at ease and we are happy for you to try all the teas you like, there are no set rules. Ask for recommendations to make your experience the best it can be. We are not tea snobs – I always say the best cup of tea is the one you like most, so we let guests enjoy it to their preference."

Scones

The subject of much debate, from how 'scone' is pronounced to how they should be eaten, scones can be a divisive part of afternoon tea. The Cornish way is jam first, followed by a generous dollop of clotted cream. Neighbours in Devon, however, start with the cream, then add the jam.

Pastry chef Kumiko Hiwatari suggests, despite being a "cream-first person", there is no right way. "I think a scone

alone isn't perfect, it doesn't have enough sugar or fattiness from butter, but when you add the clotted cream and jam, together they are perfectly balanced and it's just a wonderful treat. It is my guilty pleasure!"

Fortnum & Mason supports this ethos suggesting, "Instead of cutting the scone in half, break it off piece by piece. Spread it with clotted cream and then jam. Or jam and then clotted cream. Why not try both in turn?"

as an affordable way to have a little luxury – and by indulging mid-afternoon, a lighter supper could be had to help the budget. At that time, afternoon tea was served in high-end hotels or luxury cafes, such as the Café Royal on Regent Street in London.

Tea shops and cafes would serve large slices of cakes, but when Frederick Belmont, a Swiss confectioner who arrived in Yorkshire in 1919 and founded Bettys, he wanted to create “excellent little cakes”, Hutchinson explains. “Early advertisements mention ‘dainties’ for afternoon tea. Right from the start he had a vision of what a British afternoon tea was. He wanted it to be very quintessential and almost create something more British than the British.” She adds that the menu in the Twenties and Thirties was not that different to what we see today. A similar experience can also still be enjoyed in the original tea room, commissioned by Belmont at Bettys in York after he went on the Queen Mary cruise liner’s maiden voyage. Impressed by the state rooms on the ship, he engaged the same craftsmen to create a space with similar art deco glamour. The Belmont Room retains all the elegance of the era. “It is the perfect place to enjoy afternoon tea,” Hutchinson says.

Putting on The Ritz

Of course, there is no shortage of places to take afternoon tea – in most hotels it is an option for non-residents as well as residents, and tea rooms and cafes often offer cream and afternoon teas. The Ritz in London though, does hold a certain cachet. It opened its doors in 1906, and afternoon tea, served in the Palm Court has been one of the pillars of its character and allure ever since.

The Ritz is the only hotel in the UK to have a dedicated tea master, Giandomenico Scanu, who carefully curates and sources tea, creating his own unique blends and advising guests on which tea to choose to enhance their experience. “Afternoon tea at The Ritz is on so many bucket lists. We know it is important to people and we take great pride in providing the best experience and meeting expectations.” With a smart dress code, a pianist setting the ambience and a classic Edwardian silver tea service, afternoon tea is a classic affair that attracts over 400 guests each day of the year.

Kumiko Hiwatari, premier sous pastry chef, oversees the creation of the menu. “It is such a privilege to work somewhere with the history and culture of The Ritz and to serve the number of guests we do – it always amazes me how many people come to celebrate an important occasion here,” she says. “Guests have an expectation of something very quintessentially British,



so when designing the menu, we match the Edwardian ambience of the hotel. I love to work with seasonal fruits for the petit gateaux, so I always work with the very best British produce.” A dedicated team works with flair and precision to ensure perfection in the delivery of a selection of finger sandwiches, three petits gateaux – small, refined cakes or patisseries – along with trolley service of a choice of two seasonal cakes, served tableside, and, of course, freshly baked scones, all of which can be replenished on request. “It is a very filling experience, with a lot of food, and a lot of tea to try,” says Hiwatari, who works closely with Scanu to ensure the flavours complement the tea on offer. There are 18 loose-leaf teas available. “If guests are interested, we will tailor different teas to the different stages of the menu,” Scanu says. “You can try as many as you like.” Tea is prepared with precision and care, and refreshed every 15–20 minutes to ensure each cup poured is perfect.

Fit for a King

One of the most exciting and possibly most special experiences of this type has to be the Champagne Tea Tour at Highgrove, the private home of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla. After a tour of the gardens, indulge in a glass of Highgrove Champagne, Prince of Wales tea and a selection of sweet and savoury delicacies. ▶

ABOVE The Palm Court at The Ritz provides a quintessential and indulgent experience for afternoon tea, accompanied by a resident pianist.

OPPOSITE ABOVE A classic menu selection served at the Belmont Room at Bettys in York.

OPPOSITE Botanique Primrose teacup and saucer, £180, Marie Daâge x Bonadea.

“The best cup of the tea is the one you like most, so we always allow guests to enjoy it to their preference”

Giandomenico Scanu, tea master, The Ritz



A spot of tea

London offers a range of places offering a twist on tradition for those seeking something beyond the classic experience. Themed menus celebrate and complement experiences to be had in the capital and can be a wonderful opportunity for families who want children to experience the magic of an afternoon tea.

The Ampersand Hotel

Combine a trip to the nearby Science Museum with an innovative experience that combines gastronomy with chemistry and physics. Expect jams served in petri dishes, pipettes to add toppings, and planets, spacemen and dinosaurs in chocolate and cake form.

One Aldwych

After a trip to see Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, a sampling of this hotel's Wonka-inspired afternoon tea is a must. With fizzy lifting champagne, snozzberry jams and of course chocolate mixed by waterfall, it is a menu to delight all ages.

Sanderson London

One of the most famous 'afternoon teas' in literature, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, inspires the Mad Hatters Afternoon Tea at The Sanderson. After a day hunting for antiques and browsing bookshops, a curiouser and curiouser menu of tempting delights will give an afternoon boost.

The Berkeley

For fashionistas, the Prêt-à-Portea is the perfect respite after clothes shopping in Knightsbridge. With sweet treats inspired by catwalk designs – from a Versace gown in mousse form to a cinnamon blondie Prada handbag – the menu is as stylish as it is delicious.

The Reubens at The Palace

For a regal experience after touring the capital's landmarks, the Royal Afternoon Tea at Reubens, overlooking the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace, features a signature crown made from chocolate mousse, brownie and grapefruit confit.

Petersham Nurseries

Garden lovers will enjoy pottering around the splendid Petersham Nurseries in Covent Garden ahead of a seasonal afternoon tea amongst the flowers in the Floral Court.

Beyond London, for a truly elevated experience, visit Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, where afternoon tea in the newly refurbished Orangery offers a taste of the grandeur experienced by residents of the Palace, which has been home to the Dukes of Marlborough since 1705.

ABOVE Tea is carefully weighed to ensure the perfect strength at The Reubens at The Palace overlooking the Royal Mews.

LEFT Fortune three-tier cake stand, £160, Wedgwood.

OPPOSITE FAR RIGHT Adding a touch of theatre to the afternoon tea experience.

RIGHT Signum porcelain teapot, Small, Blue, £265, Rosenthal x Swarovski.





THE PERFECT BREW

Jane Pettrigrew, director of studies at the UK Tea Academy and author of *Jane Pettrigrew's World of Tea*, offers some tasting notes to help choose the right tea

TRADITIONAL ENGLISH

BREAKFAST blends are bold, robust and assertive, with malty, sometimes woody flavours, and subtle hints of spice, raisins, plums and honey. These popular blends partner extremely well with rich and hearty savoury dishes such as a full English breakfast, Welsh rarebit, or bacon sandwiches. And with sweet treats such as toasted crumpets or muffins with lots of jam, chocolate cake, carrot cake, Easter or Christmas cakes that are rich with dried fruits and spices, and scones topped with generous dollops of densely fruity jam and thick clotted cream.

How to brew English Breakfast:

- Use 2.5g of tea to 200ml of water at 95°C–98°C.
- Brew a large leaf blend for 3–4 minutes, a small leaf blend for 2–3 minutes.
- When the tea is ready, separate the leaves from the liquor by pouring the tea off the leaves into another pot that has been warmed ready with boiling water.

EARL GREY tea blends all contain essential oil of bergamot, a citrus fruit that grows in the south of Italy and is never eaten but is only used in perfumes and teas. A successful Earl Grey tea is always citrusy and aromatic and offers a delicious flavour balance of the tea and the bergamot working harmoniously together. Earl Grey teas make excellent partners for savouries such as smoked salmon sandwiches, softer, creamier goat's cheeses, flans and quiches, cheese, cakes or desserts that include lemon or other citrus fruits, cakes and biscuits that contain almonds or hazelnuts, creamy, egg-based desserts such as crème brûlée, and most things made with chocolate.



How to brew Earl Grey:

- Use 2.5g of tea to 200ml of water at 95°C–98°C.
- Brew a large leaf Earl Grey blend for 3–4 minutes, a small leaf blend for 2–3 minutes.
- When the tea is ready, separate the leaves from the liquor by pouring the tea off the leaves into another pot that has been warmed ready with boiling water.

JADE OOLONGS are amazingly aromatic, with floral hints of jasmine, hyacinth, lily of the valley and roses, and fruity suggestions of peaches, pears and apricots. They pair well with fruit compôtes and tarts, nutty, honeyed pastries such as baklava, and with milk chocolate and creamy chocolate desserts. They also partner with lighter savouries such as chicken, seafoods, rice dishes, and lighter and less spicy Asian dishes.

How to brew Jade Oolongs:

- Use 2.5g of tea to 200ml of water at 90°C for 3 minutes.
- When the tea is ready, separate the leaves from the liquor by pouring the tea off the leaves into another pot that has been warmed ready with boiling water.

JAPANESE SENCHA, a steamed green tea, is becoming more and more popular as people begin to understand how to brew it and what to expect in the way it tastes. Sencha often reminds us of the ozone-rich air at the seaside, seaweed and dark green leafy vegetables such as kale, spinach and broccoli – which are said to be good for us. The teas often also have grassy, nutty notes and can have a wonderful umami, sweet, savoury character. Sencha pairs very well with smoked salmon and other fish, lobster and crab, rice dishes, and chicken. Sencha is less easy to pair with sweet foods but it does drink well with zesty lemon tart, fresh fruit, dark chocolate desserts, and with wagashi, the small Japanese sweets, usually made from red bean paste, that are served during the Japanese green tea ceremony.

How to brew Sencha:

- Use 5g of tea to 60ml of water at 60°C or 65°C for 1–1.5 minutes.
- When the tea is ready, separate the leaves from the liquor by pouring the tea off the leaves into another pot that has been warmed ready with boiling water. ■



My English Home

Charles Berkeley lives on and runs Gloucestershire's Berkeley Castle Estate. The oldest building in England to be inhabited by the family who built it, the Castle dates back to the 12th century

What are your early memories of Berkeley Castle?

My brother Henry and I spent the winter months at the Castle when we were boys (the summers were spent at Spetchley Park, our home in Worcestershire). The Castle was a magical place to grow up in – we had the battlements, tower rooms, old stone steps, creaky doors and floorboards, and our bedrooms were at the very top, in the oldest part, the Keep, which is 12th century. We were allowed to explore all of the rooms and would hide behind towers on the roof and go down to the old dungeon where King Edward II was murdered. Our mother would occasionally ring a big bell for us to come down for lunch or if we needed to go out.

Who made the castle inhabitable for modern life?

The 8th [and last] Earl of Berkeley sold Berkeley Square in London for £2 million in 1918 in order to update and renovate the castle. He put in wonderful doors and windows from Italy and France, restored the Norman stone, added electricity. He salvaged things and added some luxury, such as a bathroom which was shipped over from the Waldorf Astoria hotel in New York in the 1900s by his second wife, who was American. It's a wonderful marble en-suite, still in situ.

How have your immediate family lived here more recently?

My father inherited the Castle in the late

1940s. He was the first to use the private side as a home, lighting fires, having guests to stay. He loved the castle and the beautiful terraced gardens with their rare plants and trees. It was his mission to open the Castle for the first time for the public to visit which he did in 1956. My mother lived here with him from the 1960s.

What is the Keep like today?

Although my father has now sadly died, my mother still lives in the Keep and loves the Castle. Her private wing has a big drawing room and study with lovely tapestries. She has a kitchen with pantry rooms and boot rooms. There is a ladies boudoir, originally used to write letters, which she uses, 13 bedrooms and two state rooms. She is currently having sofas and chairs reupholstered and new curtains installed, upgrades for the next generations to enjoy.

Where on the estate do you live?

I live with my wife Daisy, who is an event rider, our daughter Mary, 12, and our three dogs (Bear, Ginny and Toddy) in an old shooting lodge set high up on a hill with panoramic views and stables for our horses. It's an old turreted building we have been renovating and reconfiguring since just before Covid. It's easier having our own property separate from the Castle – being away from the business gives us balance. As well as weddings, events and tours, we are about to have a film crew here filming the follow up to Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall*. However, I still very much think of the Castle as home and I'm the current Berkeley 'in charge', as it were.

Having worked at Christie's and Sotheby's, which of the many treasures, including Sir Francis Drake's cabin chest, at Berkeley Castle, do you most enjoy showing and talking about to visitors?

The paintings. Inscriptions from the Bible in Latin which date from the 1400s and can still be seen around the top of the old chapel, which the 8th Earl used as his study. The incredible Great Hall with its beautifully carved screens and stained glass windows depicting stories of the family. The Regency-era drawing room (*see above*), still in use, with artwork, tapestries and soft furnishings which bring elegance and colour to the Norman Castle. ■

Berkeley Castle reopens in March to the public, visit berkeley-castle.com for details



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