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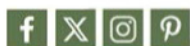


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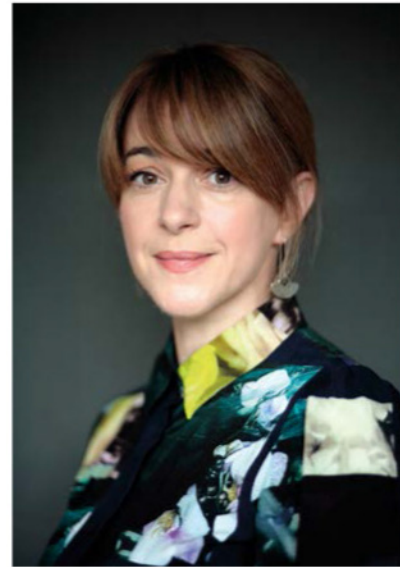
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A letter from home

Welcome to the annual Country Edition, eagerly anticipated by our readers wherever they call home. Perhaps the universal appeal of English country house style is in the romantic notion it evokes – one that conjures mellowing historic houses which have well-worn, comfortable interiors and are set in beautiful, tranquil surroundings that have changed little over time.

There's also something undeniably appealing about the nonchalant informality of country house style. Cecil Beaton wrote of Nancy Lancaster that she had a talent for 'sprucing up a stately but shabby house and making a grand house less grand'. And it is this unpretentious approach that adds to its very English appeal. There's an embracing of the love-worn and patinated. A layering of new finds with heirlooms, the precious and practical, as well as an eclectic mix which appears unselfconscious but somehow works without 'matching'. Mastering the look may therefore seem elusive, but it's exactly the freedom of eclectic decorating which reflects its owner's taste that makes it exciting and creative. It takes a brave touch and a confidence to eschew rules or trends. Beaton went on to say that Lancaster had 'an adequate reverence for tradition, observes the rules of style and proportion, and manifests a disregard for important furniture.'

Today, while country house style continues to have comfort, the influence of the great outdoors and a sense of timeless style at its heart, the best country homes also function smoothly for life today and are of all scales and proportions. We hope you find a delicious mix within these pages to inspire interiors in both town and country.

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor

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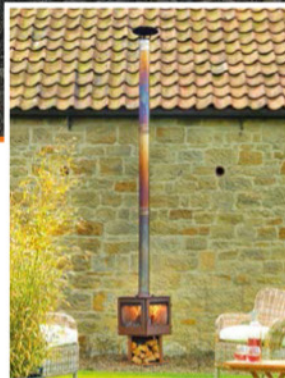
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 - Learn how to plan a lighting scheme
 - Take a tour of four beautiful English homes
- PLUS late summer entertaining, slow British travel, seasonal inspiration and much more...

SEPTEMBER ISSUE ON SALE

31 JULY 2024

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A photograph of a bathroom interior. The walls and floor are covered in patterned tiles with a repeating geometric design in shades of brown, beige, and gold. A dark blue towel hangs on a hook on the left wall. In the center, a shower fixture with a glass door is visible. On the right, a white bathtub with a copper-colored base and classic brassware is shown. A large orange circle with a white border is overlaid on the upper right, containing the text 'SALE NOW ON'.

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SPOTLIGHT ON...

Chatsworth & Cutter Brooks

When Laura Cavendish, Countess of Burlington, unearthed a sample of forgotten 1850s hand-blocked ivy chintz in the attic textile archives at Chatsworth House, she turned to her friend Amanda Brooks (right), founder of Cotswolds shop and lifestyle brand Cutter Brooks. Working with small artisan suppliers in the UK and India using sustainable organic cottons and linens, this delicate print – which was originally created for the Devonshire family whose country seat is Chatsworth in Derbyshire – now adorns table linen, wallpaper, cushions, lampshades, oven gloves, pyjamas and more as part of The Ivy Print Collection. shop.chatsworth.org; cutterbrooks.com





A New Leaf

Fanny Shorter's debut wallpaper

Textile designer and illustrator Fanny Shorter has just launched her first retail wallpaper. Mill Oak was originally designed as a bespoke commission for a country house project by interior design studio Turner Pocock, inspired by the house's Georgian origins and bucolic surroundings.

Fanny says: "My work is inspired by narratives in nature and a strong passion for pattern, printing and the history of the decorative arts. Mill Oak celebrates the quintessential symbol of British heritage, the English oak, with an interwoven bower of branches, leaves and acorns."

The wallpaper is printed in Leicestershire using traditional methods and in four colourways – Calamine, Common Blue, Viridis and Aurea – on a chalky ground.

Working from her studio in Wiltshire's Chalke Valley, Fanny's work is rooted in historic British craftsmanship and inspired by her childhood in rural Hampshire.

After studying illustration and spending a decade working as an illustrator in London, she started her own business, screen-printing her first fabric available by the metre in 2015. Her fabrics are screen-printed by hand at a factory in London, and all of her designs start as hand-drawings. fannyshorter.com

Walls With Character

Luke Edward Hall's new collaboration

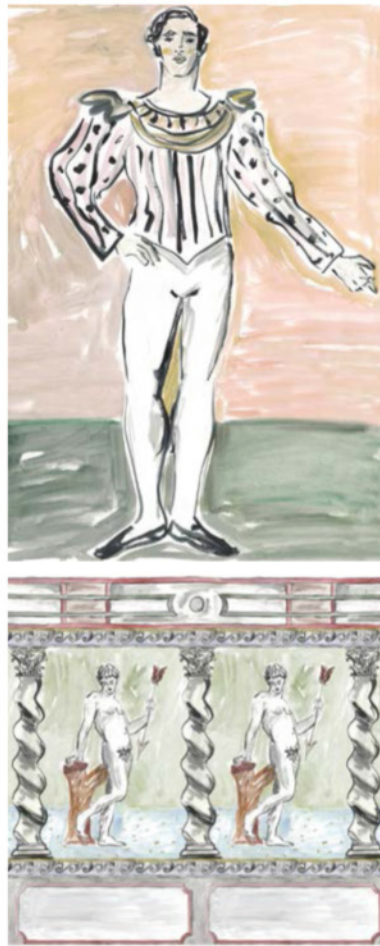
Gods, goddesses, actors and artists adorn the playful new wallpaper collection, Parade, designed by Luke Edward Hall for Venetian design house Rubelli.

Parade draws inspiration from ancient Greece, theatre and the circus, with the artist and designer's signature watercolour illustrations bringing a vibrant array of characters to life, imbuing walls with charm, character and sophistication.

Luke, who works from his studio in a barn on an Oxfordshire farm, says: "I was inspired by Pompeii but also Bloomsbury and Renaissance frescoes. I hope that people will enjoy having fun with this collection, picking and choosing the characters and architectural motifs that speak to them." His colourful work is often inspired by history, filtered through a lens of irreverent romanticism, shaped by his love of storytelling and fantasy. lukeedwardhall.com; rubelli.com ▶

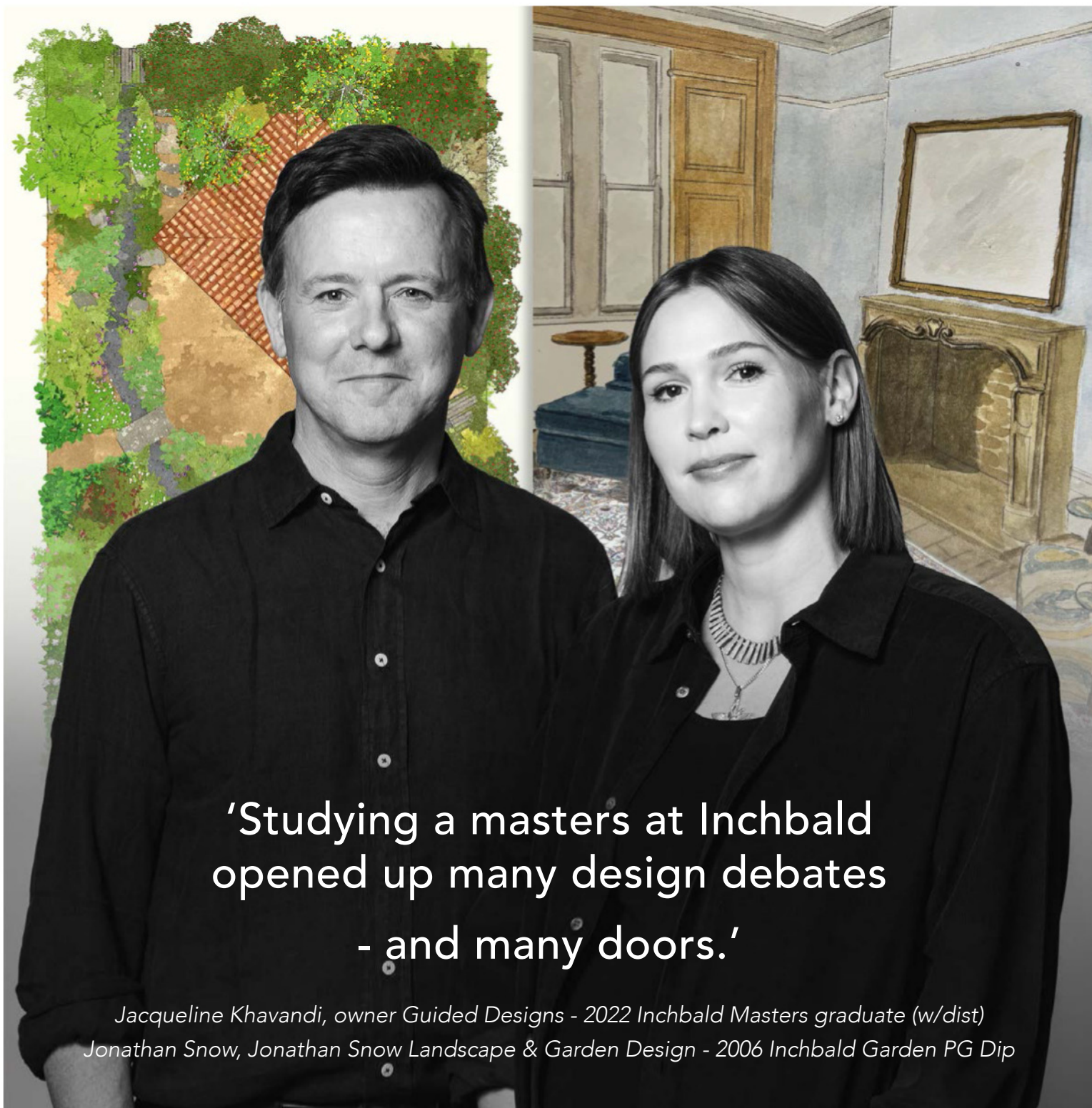
TOP Fanny Shorter with her debut wallpaper Mill Oak.

RIGHT Luke Edward Hall's Parade collection for Rubelli features charming characters in his watercolour style.



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The Glory of Gardens

Bucolic beauty by Thyme and Bertoli

The Cutting Garden Collection by Thyme and Bertoli brings the glory of an English garden into the home. Inspired by flowers hand-picked from the cutting gardens at Thyme – an idyllic country hotel in the Cotswolds – and painted by its founder Caryn Hibbert, the designs adorn homeware, tablecloths, napkins, aprons, decorative accessories and home scent, as well as wallpaper and interiors fabrics decorating four of the hotel’s newly refurbished bedrooms.

Caryn Hibbert says: “I have painted a few of my favourite flowers; unashamedly boisterous, happy and wonderfully floriferous. The patterns depict flowers in their natural form, reaching for the sun, as well as in a florist’s bunch and in linear rows, as they grow in our cutting gardens. These patterns of nature, combined with their heady scents, are the very essence of an English garden.”

Over the past two decades, the Hibbert family has meticulously restored historic estate buildings on the border of Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire in a picturesque Cotswold landscape to create Thyme – a haven of restorative calm with an ethos that our well-being begins with a connection to nature. Thyme comprises an award-winning hotel, Ox Barn restaurant and bar, spa, Tith Barn exhibition space, boutique, gardens, farm and water meadows. Key to the restoration was Caryn’s father, Michael Bertoli, and when Caryn and her daughter Camilla launched a lifestyle brand as a physical embodiment of the Thyme philosophy – encompassing interiors, homeware, wellness and fashion – they named it Bertoli in his honour.

With a spirit of measured maximalism, four bedrooms at Thyme have been decorated with different patterns from The Cutting Garden Collection – Pink Phlox, Mixed Phlox, Elderflower and Sidalcea – enhanced by cushions and lampshades from the collection and fragranced by its signature scent capturing the enchanting aroma of freshly cut flowers. Lorforde Contemporary has created bespoke headboards for each bedroom, exclusive to the hotel and available to order. thyme.co.uk; bertoli.co.uk



TOP LEFT Thyme visionary Caryn Hibbert is also a talented artist.

LEFT Thyme includes a hotel, restaurant, spa, exhibition space, boutique and more.

BELOW LEFT Tablescape in Phlox.

BELOW MIDDLE The Elderflower design adorns this cushion.

RIGHT One of four bedrooms at Thyme decorated with The Cutting Garden Collection.





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Tranquillity at Teatime

Cath Kidston Padgham for Fortnum & Mason

Masterfully capturing the essence of the English countryside, The Wild Garden teaware collection was designed for Fortnum & Mason by Cath Kidston Padgham and her studio Joy of Print.

This collection of heritage fine bone china is bedecked with her charming hand-drawn motifs of seasonal flora and fauna in soft hues, clematis and roses intertwined with self-seeded wildflowers such as ox-eye daisies and thistles.

Her design tells the story of an old English walled garden that has been reclaimed by the wild over time, with tumbledown walls and ancient stonework, offering a peaceful haven for insects and butterflies,

decorating milk jugs and mugs to sugar bowls, teapots and more.

Iconic Piccadilly emporium Fortnum & Mason was established in 1707, rising from humble beginnings and clever entrepreneurship (centuries before that term was coined) to invent the Scotch egg and become 'the Royal grocer'.

After founding her eponymous company, whose nostalgic floral pattern-covered products found success worldwide, Cath Kidston Padgham started her own design studio Joy of Print and natural body care brand C.Atherley.

fortnumandmason.com



Patterned Perfection

Block-printed garden parasols

Frustrated in their search for a garden parasol they liked, friends Polly Eddis and Sarah Muirhead decided to produce their own – and a business was born. Travelling to India to explore fabrics and craftsmanship, they forged links with a three-generation family of artisans in Jaipur who now handmake dreamy parasols for their business Parasols-UK. Patterns are traditionally block-printed on the underside of the elegant waterproof canopy in a choice of colours and three sizes. Each canopy is made especially for its frame which is handmade from cedar wood.

As official partners of the National Garden Scheme (NGS), a percentage from the sale of every parasol is donated to the NGS which supports nursing and health charities. Polly and Sarah have expanded their parasol offering to include complementary tablecloths, napkins, cushions, rugs and bathmats. "We know from personal experience the pleasure that comes from those quirky and special things which are as functional as they are decorative, carefully sourced and beautifully made," they say. parasol-uk.com

Diary



Flock to Waddesdon in Buckinghamshire for a celebration of birds. See remarkable displays of porcelain, paintings and drawings plus real exotic birds as part of *Flights of Fancy: Birds at Waddesdon* which runs until 27 October. waddesdon.org.uk



Smell the roses as the sun goes down and watch deer graze at twilight when the Grade I listed gardens at Helmingham Hall in Suffolk stay open late until 9pm on key dates until the end of August. helmingham.com



Over 200 artworks by more than 100 female artists at Tate Britain for *Now You See Us: Women Artists In Britain 1520–1920* chart their road to being recognised as professional artists. Until 13 October, tate.org.uk ■



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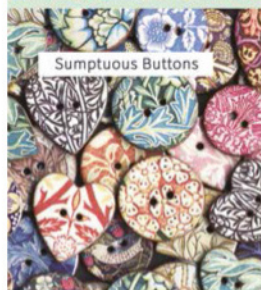


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MADE-TO-ORDER POUFFES

The eye-catching pouffes in this image are handmade in Somerset and can be covered in designs from a range of high-end fabric houses, such as Christopher Farr and Manuel Canovas, to introduce a luxurious print on a smaller scale. Alternatively, customers can supply their own fabric.

Bespoke pouffe, £645–£695, Village London

BOLD SHADES

Designed to Jonathan Adler's stylised vision, this rechargeable LED table lamp comes in four colourful options that highlight the shade's rippled outline. The mobile light provides nine hours of illumination before it needs recharging on its base.

Ripple rechargeable table lamp, Orange, £295, Jonathan Adler



BOWLS FULL

Renowned food writer and cookery columnist Skye McAlpine is expanding her popular tableware collection with new serving bowls and cake stands – just in time for summer soirées. The range is handmade by artisans in Italy, and this classic salad bowl has an elevated style with a hand-painted rim and a scalloped edge. Each piece comes with the personal touch of a recipe from Skye.

Romilly ceramic salad bowl, £76, Skye McAlpine Tavola



STATEMENT TABLE

Made to emulate a gallery piece when not in use, this table is crafted from four colourful marbles arranged in a terrazzo style inspired by Soho House in Rome. The piece is ideal for a smaller dining room and will comfortably seat four to six people.

Charli dining table, £5,995, check weight and dimensions carefully before ordering, Soho Home ▶





CHINTZ RUG

Following Brinton's first partnership with the V&A, a further 15 rugs inspired by the renowned museum's archives have been added to its Design Discoveries collection. The peony-patterned wool rug seen here, echoes a British textile from 1914, which blends this Far Eastern motif with a classic chinoiserie pattern.

Floralia rug, Emerald, from £425, Brintons



STATELY CUSHIONS

The Country House collection by Susi Bellamy emulates the layered colours, rich finishes and opulent patinas of historic English country houses. Due to launch in the September, the range includes cushions, fabrics, lampshades and a wallpaper design.

Cushions (from top): Tasselled Tobacco Marbled medium oblong velvet, £125; Wheat Veneer ruched square velvet, £135; Mulberry Veneer ruched large square velvet, £175; Wheat Veneer ruched large square velvet, £175; Spruce Veneer ruched large square velvet, £175, all Susi Bellamy

HERITAGE NAPKINS

Clothsmith's founders, former interior design duo Polly and Heidi, pay homage to traditional textiles in fresh modern designs - such as this napkin inspired by Turkish embroidery, printed with today's methods.

Nora napkin, £22 for a set of two, Clothsmith ▶





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WATER COLOURS

BC Designs in collaboration with COAT Paints is launching an exclusive edit of six paints to be used on its painted baths. The colours include Smitten Pink, Fresh Coast, Pebble Beach (pictured), Sand Dune, Olive Garden and Meadow View and can be selected for the acrylic boat bath and painted copper bath ranges, with matching basins available.

Boat bath, from £2,164; COAT painting service from £441, BC Designs

NATURAL WALLS

Somerset-based Studio Le Cocq is launching its first wallpaper collection, British Biophilia, with 10 per cent of profits going to Fauna & Flora International. Reflecting the bucolic scenes surrounding the studio, it features five designs, each of which has been hand-drawn and painted by textile designer Stephanie Le Cocq and printed by British manufacturers.

Hedgerows wallpaper, £185 a roll, Studio Le Cocq



GARDEN DINING

Outdoor furniture with a rustic patina looks instantly fitting in the mature backdrop of a period property. Conversely, it also adds a contemporary style of contrast to a newly designed modern terrace. This weatherproof garden set is made from power-coated steel with a deliberately aged style. To save space, the chairs can be folded away.

Ludlow garden table, £348; Ludlow garden chair, £178, Rowen & Wren ■

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPHS ISCHIO HOME © KENSINGTON LEVERNE; GUSI BELLAMY © JAMES BALSTON; (BC DESIGNS) © PHILABELLHATS; DARREN CHUNG AND COAT'S PAINT

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Paint (from left): Pomona, Light Olive Green, Pippin, £60 for 2.5l Emulsion, Edward Bulmer Natural Paint



Padstow reclaimed wooden bench, small, £320, Layered Lounge



Infinity cane coffee table, £129, John Lewis & Partners

Tall beige terracotta vase, £44, Heavenly Homes and Gardens



Thebes alabaster vase, £50, Pentreath & Hall



Augustus wooden side table, £495, Graham and Green

Marina pendant, £250, Neptune



Jakob Lime parquet wood-effect porcelain tile, £46.76 a square metre, Mandarin Stone



Hans J. Wegner & Ilse Crawford CH24 Soft Wishbone chair, Pewter, £551, Carl Hansen & Søn

MODERN COUNTRY

A layered style incorporating light, textured finishes, shapely forms and simple patterns

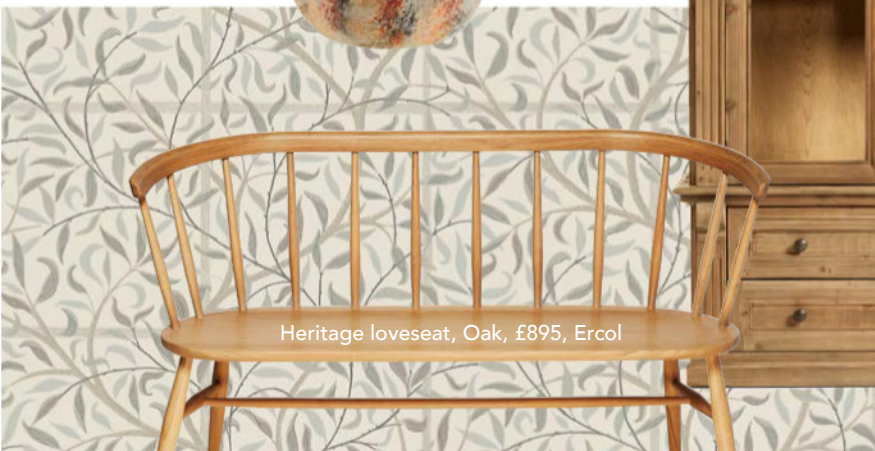
Breeze freestanding bath, £2,695, Waters Baths of Ashbourne



Belly basket, £1,140, Michelle Mateo for The New Craftsmen

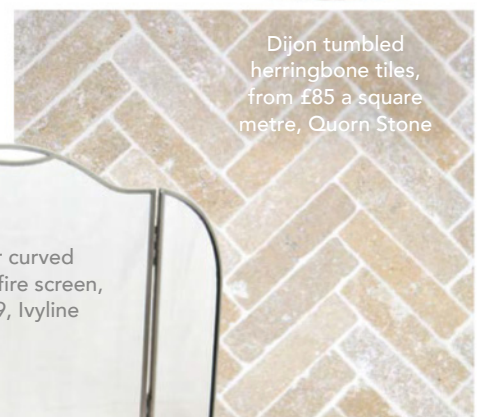


Theodora recycled elm wood cabinet, £3,295, Oka

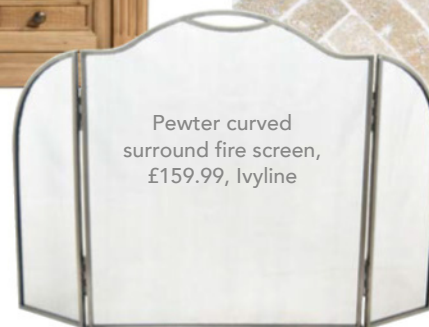


Heritage loveseat, Oak, £895, Ercol

Emmie wallpaper, Sandstone, £41.52 a square metre, Sandberg



Dijon tumbled herringbone tiles, from £85 a square metre, Quorn Stone



Pewter curved surround fire screen, £159.99, Ivyline

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Vera Wang Love Knots toasting flutes, £95 for two, Wedgwood

Oval champagne coupe, £88 for six, The Vintage List, Liberty



Wedding Bells biscuits, £49.95 for 14, Biscuiteers



Petal shallow cast-iron casserole, Shell Pink, £295, Le Creuset



Josephine Garland dinner plate, £38, Mrs Alice

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Country weddings are a joy of the summer season, be a guest of honour and give gifts the happy couple will love and cherish



Henley Heart Box, £1.250, Linley



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Lily of the Valley teapot, £550, Dior Maison



Small hemstitch pillow with monogram, from £70, Volga Linen at Maison Flâneur



Bespoke wedding bouquet painting, from £198, Katie Hipwell



Wildflower hand-painted personalised wedding candles, from £14.22 each, Not on the High Street



Personalised cheeseboard, from £95, Oak & Rope Company



Alphabet brush pots, £40 each, Pentreath & Hall

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN



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THE EDIT

This summer embrace the past, present and future with these brilliant brands

TIMELY APPEAL

To mark his company's 30th anniversary, sculptor David Harber, renowned for his standout sundials, artworks and water features, has released a limited edition of the brand's very first piece, the Armillary Sphere. The new Armillary 30 pays homage to the design principles of its predecessor but with a sense of playfulness that allows owners to see how the sundial tells the time, and an interactive element that enables the orb inside to be rotated by a handle.

The Armillary 30 comes in antique bronze, verdigris bronze or a mirror-polished stainless steel and with just 30 pieces being sold, each of which can be personalised, it will create an extraordinary focal point in the garden. davidharber.co.uk



ENDURING STYLE

Relic Interiors, a leading art and antiques business, has its own handcrafted range of indoor and outdoor furniture inspired by classic designs – perfect for those wishing to add timeless elegance to the home or garden.

This beautiful bench, for instance, from the brand's Chapel Vale Collection, takes inspiration from the bobbin furniture of the 17th century, which became popular during the Arts and Crafts movement of the early 20th century, and is experiencing another renaissance right now.

Handmade in stained French oak, the ornate carving of these pieces is complemented by durable upholstery either in soft velvet or heavy linen that make them instant classics. relicinteriors.com ▶





COTTON FRESH

Spread the love for the family this summer with the gorgeous Frankie range of children's bedding from sister duo Molly and Harriet of the Secret Linen Store, who use 100 per cent organic 200-thread-count cotton and unique hand-drawn designs to create snuggle-ready duvet and pillow sets that will have children looking forward to bedtime.

As a Certified B Corporation, together with its suppliers in Portugal, the company is committed to ensuring each piece is ethically made with minimal impact on the planet. Children will love the softness of the bedding as they cosy down, while parents will be grateful for little touches like the envelope closure on the pillowcases designed to keep the pillow firmly in place for uninterrupted sleep. secretlinenstore.com



SOFA SO GOOD

With a history of working with small UK-based independent businesses, family-run furniture maker Finestock Home combines traditional upholstery techniques with natural and sustainable materials to create handcrafted pieces that are destined to become family heirlooms.

This summer, from 18 to 20 July, visitors to the company's showroom in Chipping Norton in the Cotswolds will be able to cast their eye over the brand's entire quintessential sofa and chair collection, from the Belgravia Collection, inspired by the classic Chesterfield to its innovative loose-cover range, The Windermere Collection, whereby owners can update the look of their sofa to suit changing seasons and styles simply by switching over the fabric. finestockhome.com

MAKE A BID FOR IT

Adding some originality to a home often requires looking outside the mainstream and for fans of period pieces, online marketplace Auctionet is a great place to shop for one-off items from across the continent.

With an incredible array of mid-century items not always readily available in the UK – from designer chairs to coffee tables and cool floor lamps – alongside unique pieces such as antique cabinets, with this online community of Scandinavian and European auction houses and dealers, it is easy to find the perfect items to enhance interiors.

Whether searching for something specific or just browsing on the off-chance of finding that special piece, we may have found the beginning of a new obsession. auctionet.com ■



FEATURE SALLY COFFEY PHOTOGRAPHS (DAVID HARBER) © CLIVE NICHOLS, JOANNA KOSSACK



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Bearded irises and pink 'Coral Charm' peonies line a path which leads through the walled kitchen garden and to the indoor swimming pool beyond.



The heart of **THE MANOR**

A Grade II listed Georgian country house in a quintessential Warwickshire village has been sympathetically brought into the 21st century

FEATURE ANNETTE WARREN PHOTOGRAPHY CLIVE NICHOLS



‘We have a walled cutting garden – formerly a donkey paddock – and grow seasonal flowers for the house’

Deep in the leafy lanes of rural Warwickshire lies a scattering of honey-toned villages seemingly lost in time. In the heart of one such village, set on an old drover’s road from Wales to Northampton and where ironstone cottages are arranged around the village green, sits Katie and Mark Rotheram’s handsome Grade II listed manor house, unassuming from the road, tucked away behind iron gates and a winding gravel drive.

Built in 1805, the house has undergone several changes during its lifetime, the most dramatic being since Katie and Mark bought it in 2001. “I had initially seen it advertised in a magazine the previous year and dismissed it for being too far from London. When we discovered it was still on the market, we drove up to take a look, and that was it,” remembers Katie.

Although the house was in desperate need of a makeover, the couple felt they were up for the ▶



The sitting room is decorated with family mementos and a collection of 17th-century oils and watercolours bought at auction by Mark. ABOVE LEFT Katie picking pink peonies in the walled cutting garden to the south of the house.





'We moved the entrance to the eastern end, where we created an airy and light octagonal hallway'

challenge. "Ostensibly, it looked fine, but we completely gutted it," recalls Mark. "Having not been touched since the 1970s, it boasted brown carpets, gold taps and a bar in the dining room," Katie adds.

The renovation took three years from start to finish. "We wanted a practical family house with a children's floor/nursery and a ground floor where each room flowed into the next," Mark says. "Luckily we got it absolutely right first time because the architect came up with a radical plan which worked really well."

Oxfordshire-based architecture firm Johnston Cave Associates helped bring the couple's ideas to life. A 1970s extension on the south side has been reimagined into something far more aesthetically pleasing - being replaced with an indoor swimming pool wing - and on the north side, a kitchen/diner with an apex ceiling was added, thus completing the house's outward symmetry. From the rear, the view is of a wisteria-clad classical facade, bookended with the newer additions.

Part of the renovations included resiting the front door. "The old front door led into what is now a library but was formerly an entrance hall with a double-ended staircase. We moved the entrance to the eastern end, where we created an airy and light octagonal hallway," explains Katie. The impressive new entrance gives a sense of arrival, with wide stone steps lined with terracotta pots and, within, a ceiling lantern that allows the light to flood in, highlighting the octagonal table beneath with its enormous display of flowers grown by Katie. "We have a walled cutting garden and grow seasonal flowers for the house," she says. Formerly a donkey paddock, this garden was another project undertaken during the renovations.

"When we first moved here there was no garden to speak of, and the house was completely surrounded by a circle of large leylandii trees - which of course had



ABOVE LEFT Light floods into the entrance hall where a collection of 18th-century ceramic tea-light holders from Josephine Ryan Antiques decorates the central table. The crystal glass vase is from William

Yeoward and the table was found at Ronald Phillips. **LEFT** The hand-painted dining service by Deborah Sears of Isis Ceramics features custom motifs of the manor house and its grounds.



ABOVE In the dining room, a crystal chandelier from Lucy Johnson Antiques hangs above the mahogany jupe table from Delahunty Antiques. The George III dining chairs and Regency console table are from Sotheby's.

LEFT The clean and modern lines of the painted kitchen cabinets are softened with blinds in a floral linen from Soane Britain and jugs of freshly cut flowers from the garden.





The interior has an established English country house feel, with floral curtains, plain walls and antique rugs

to go immediately,” laughs Mark, who came up with the concept of the new garden layout. This included extending the rear terrace along the full length of the house, affording views down the wide lawn to an impressive lake, home to a family of swans and a picture postcard *Wind in the Willows*-style boathouse.

The kitchen has been designed as an open-plan family space with French windows leading to a stone terrace at the rear of the property. The room is large enough for family and friends to sit around the table or on a squashy sofa at one end, while at the opposite end, the kitchen area includes a large island demarcating the two zones.

A separate pantry and flower room lead off the kitchen, and a third door opens towards the formal dining room, an important space for family occasions and dinner parties, when the table is laid with the couple’s bespoke dinner service hand-painted by Deborah Sears of Isis Ceramics in Oxfordshire. “We spotted her designs in the Daylesford farm shop and knew immediately that our search was over,” recalls Katie. Painted in three shades – sepia, a specially mixed blue and a pale pink, the set consists of everything from side plates to serving dishes. “When we are entertaining we will usually have lunch in the kitchen and always have dinner in the dining room,” she adds.

The adjacent sitting room is a symphony of soft pastels, with sumptuous sofas surrounding a central glass coffee table strewn with silvered candle holders. “The sitting room isn’t kept for formal occasions and is very much lived in,” remarks Katie, who masterminded the interior decoration with the help of interior designer Grant White, who had worked with the couple on previous houses. ▶

LEFT The sumptuous principal bedroom in a symphony of pinks was designed as a restful sanctuary. The antique desk and gilt pelmet were bought at auction and the floral silk curtain fabric is from Bennison.



Floral curtains, plain walls and antique rugs on polished floors lend the interior an established English country house feel. Family photos abound, along with *objets d'art* and special mementoes such as the pair of children's shoes cast in silver that appear on a side table in the principal bedroom – a gloriously pink and feminine room where Katie's eye has created a charming composition of silk floral curtains and soft furnishings in shades of rose.

The manor is very much a family home and one where guests are welcomed – from summer picnics by the lake to villagers popping by for a game of tennis. With the garden opening annually in aid of charity, this is a house that revels in being the hub of village life, as is totally fitting for a manor house. ■

ABOVE LEFT Set on the lake in the house's beautifully landscaped grounds, the pretty boathouse is home to the family's rowing boat 'Dragonfly'.

ABOVE RIGHT Katie feeding the chickens.
LEFT An archway leads from the drive into a courtyard and the stone steps up to the new main entrance to the house.



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The richly textured 1930s Moroccan rug from Yonder Living establishes a feeling of cosy warmth in the sitting room. Nadia has opted for a palette of understated colours in florals, stripes and block prints including Guy Goodfellow's Olive Sacking on the ottoman.





A curated COLLECTION

Interior designer Nadia Oliver has decorated her home in the Cotswolds with a covetable and much-loved collection of fabrics, furniture and artefacts – some new, some vintage, all beautiful

FEATURE AMANDA HARLING PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL



ABOVE The turquoise blue Indian cupboard in the foreground, a find from Artique in Tetbury, provides a striking contrast to the kitchen units painted in Farrow & Ball's Eating Room Red.

Choosing to live in a hillside cottage accessed only by a steep winding pathway is clearly a successful way of keeping fit, judging by the speed at which Nadia Oliver ascends the steps leading to the old weavers' cottage where she lives with her husband Simon and their 14-year-old son, Otto. "We moved to the Cotswolds from south London about 10 years ago," recalls Nadia, looking out across the panoramic view of jumbled

roofscapes below. "However, it wasn't until just before lockdown that I saw the cottage. Before moving to the Cotswolds, I'd read about Chalford, and we'd wandered around the village many times, so we knew it was somewhere that we'd move to if the right property came up. The concept of living off-road with no vehicle access was very appealing, as was the romance of the area," she explains. "It's like living in a bygone age."



The village is remarkably picturesque with houses and cottages clinging to the vertiginous slopes rising from the river valley below. “Due to the fast-flowing water the area became known for the profusion of woollen mills built on the banks during previous centuries. Housing for the mill workers was squeezed in on the hillsides above, wherever there was a plot wide enough, with a series of paths and steps providing the only means of access.” Originally, donkeys were

used to deliver heavy goods such as firewood and coal, but nowadays delivery drivers have taken their place. “I do feel for them when I see a 40-metre roll of Nicholas Herbert fabric being man-handled up the hill,” admits Nadia.

Nadia studied Fine Art at Central St Martins in London before opting for a career in design some years later. “Having seen my degree show, a major architectural practice commissioned a series of huge ▶

ABOVE Nadia, seen here with the family’s dachshund, Gatsby, is passionate about colour, using it to create flow from one room to another.



Benefitting from far-reaching views over the valley, the glazed addition to the kitchen is the ideal spot for the refectory table, a wedding present. The cushions on the chair are in Nicholas Herbert's Charleston Original and the tassels from horse harnesses on the wall are mementoes from a trip to India.



abstracts for buildings they had designed. That led to commissions from a London property developer, who encouraged me to become involved in the interior design side of the business. I didn't need any persuading as interiors had always been a major interest. In due course, I was taken on by [furniture company] Poliform as a designer, and then by Joss Graham in Ebury Street, who is the oracle when it comes to textiles and artefacts from India. Colour was my passion then and it continues to be so now. It's fascinating to see how rooms are transformed by colour; understanding how interiors bathed in the soft light of the English countryside require a different approach to those where bright sunlight is reflected off the sea is just one of the many aspects that make each project unique and challenging."

Nadia states that when she works on a client's home, she formulates a strong vision from the outset. "As an interior designer, I can help reduce the decision-making angst, but when it came to making decisions about my own home, I adopted a somewhat slower ▶

ABOVE Originally two weavers' cottages, Nadia's hillside home is reached by steps and pathways from Chalford's High Street in the valley below.

RIGHT The entrance hall is hung with an array of baskets.





A delicate giltwood chair with a kantha cushion adds an elegant touch to the principal bedroom where Nadia's collection of *banjara* embroideries is displayed on the wall next to a vibrant green-painted Moroccan wooden panel.



ABOVE In the principal bedroom, the headboard in a bold stripe from Cloth House provides a foil to the floral cushions in Nicholas Herbert's *Kaveri* and the vintage quilt.

LEFT The glazed door by the bookshelves on the landing leads to the upper level of the garden. A floral curtain and the antique side table, a gift from Nadia's mother, add a decorative touch to the rough stone walls painted in Farrow & Ball's *Mouse's Back*.

approach. I only had myself to please; Simon is a graphic artist and has a strong visual sense, but he leaves decoration matters to me." One of Nadia's guiding principles is that she likes the interior space to flow smoothly from one room to another. "Various shades of pink and green probably make up 95 per cent of the decorative scheme, with highlights of other colours to liven things up. I do impulse-buy pieces that catch my eye, whether they are paintings, ceramics, fabric remnants, books, baskets... so it's very much a layered look but edited so as not to look chaotic."

Structurally, the cottage needed little doing to it. "We spent lockdown home-schooling Otto and getting to know the cottage and the garden and deciding what we needed to do to put our stamp on our new home," Nadia says. One of the first items she bought for the sitting room was the Berber rug, and this set the tone for the whole room. She had the walls painted in *Joa's White* by Farrow & Ball to contrast with the original timber beams and the fire surround of rough-hewn Cotswold stone. The fabrics, a pleasing mix of old and new in similar colours and tones, give the ▶



Nadia has added charm to the existing green-tiled bathroom with a blind in a pretty vintage floral print and a ruffled shower curtain from H&M Home.



The fabrics, a pleasing mix of old and new in similar colours, give the cottage the air of having evolved over decades rather than months

ABOVE Shaded by a fig tree and just outside the kitchen, the terrace becomes the main dining area during the summer months. The cushions on the chairs are in Gelim Stripe from Lewis & Wood, and the cushion on the bench is in a Mulberry fabric.

whole cottage the air of having evolved over decades rather than months.

Next door is the kitchen, where the south-facing glazed extension maximises the view. “It provides useful additional space for the dining area, and my office, which is tucked away behind a large 19th-century Flemish tapestry made into a folding screen,” Nadia explains. The kitchen consists of a series of freestanding reclaimed school laboratory cupboards with wooden worktops. An eye-catching turquoise Indian cupboard contrasts joyfully with the rhubarb red chosen for the units. “We found the reclaimed herringbone parquet floor at Frome Reclamation,” she adds. “And, while it’s seen plenty of use, it’s sustainable and we felt it would fit in well with the surroundings.”

Steps from the sitting room lead up to the bedrooms and bathroom. “Because of the steeply sloping site, there’s a glazed door leading out to the garden at the back, which allows light to flow onto the landing,” Nadia says. In the principal bedroom, Nadia’s inherent skill in combining colour and pattern is illustrated by the harmonious way in which the colours in the patchwork bedcover are echoed in the walls, woodwork and the painted chest. While she loves adding to her collection of vintage finds, she also sources contemporary versions of archive designs in the understated, aged colourways that give her home and those of her clients a rare individual charm. “The patchwork bedcover was a find locally – the fabulous World Textile Fair is held annually in nearby Bisley village hall and it’s a date that I try never to miss.” ■



Chairs and a table on the terrace next to the colourful timber extension take advantage of the views over the valley. The cushions are in Zarafshan by Lewis & Wood.

The glazed extension was designed to be a clear delineation and to honour the footprint of the original cottage. It features a kitchen, dining room and sitting area as well as doors that slide wide open to make the most of indoor/outdoor living and family dining beside the swimming pool.



The best of

A clever combination of contemporary and vernacular has transformed this 18th-century Cotswold cottage

FEATURE KERRY HARPER-CUSS



both worlds

architecture together with modern and vintage interiors
into a perfect home for 21st-century family life

PHOTOGRAPHY MARK NICHOLSON



Far from the orange glow of urban night skies and the hubbub of humanity, there still exist a few tiny pockets of England where, rather than street lamps, moonlight illuminates the journey home from the village pub. Kelmscott in the Cotswolds is one such place. Here, clattering hooves make the loudest commotion, and, in many ways, it feels as though time has stood still. Just 230 residents – or thereabouts – live in the mostly stone cottages that dot its winding lanes. Surrounding the village are far-reaching views across ancient agricultural lands.

When Zoë and Johnny Manns bought their home some eight years ago, they were looking to relocate from London with their two children (now 14 and 16) to live nearer their parents. Zoë had grown up in Gloucestershire, so the unspoilt tranquillity of the village appealed. The couple were also looking for an opportunity to rescue a house that had seen better days, so the run-down, 18th-century, Grade II listed property was a serendipitous match.

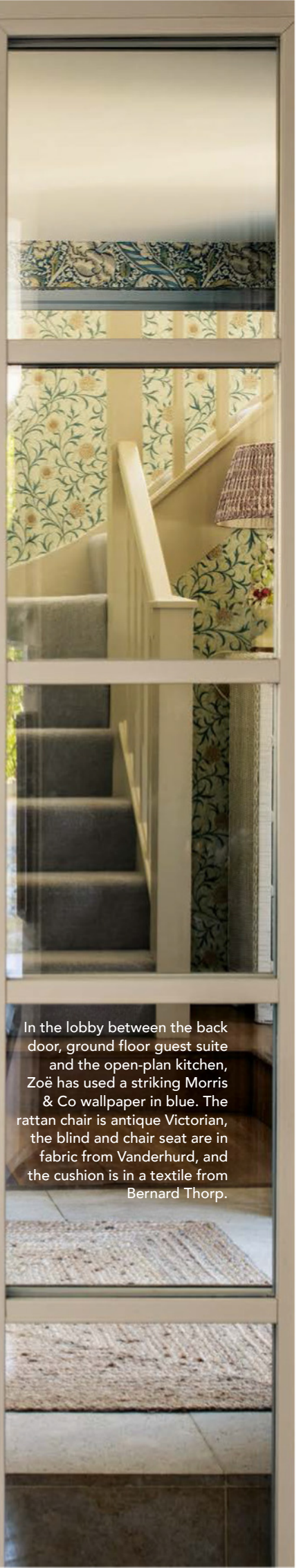
“The cottage was dilapidated and required significant restoration,” Zoë explains. “Every window needed replacing, all the stonework had to be repaired, and it needed reinsulating, too. The back was a hotchpotch of additions and extensions that had been added over the past 50 years, so we felt the best thing was to remove them all to expose the original external ▶

ABOVE Cushions on the contemporary corner sofa are made in vintage and fabric offcuts including designs from GP & J Baker, Colefax and Fowler, Michael S Smith and The Cloth Shop. The bold artwork was bought at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition.

LEFT Former lawyer Zoë, seen here with the family dog, Herbie, has always loved sourcing vintage and antique furniture, textiles, and decorative accessories. The Manns occasionally let Church Cottage for holiday hire through Kate & Toms.

The bespoke kitchen units are painted in Farrow & Ball's Down Pipe. Zoë found the dining table base online and commissioned family friend Henry Mildmay to create the top in ash wood. The Gypsy dining chairs from Bontempi are suitable for indoor and outdoor use and give visual continuity with the garden dining area beyond.





In the lobby between the back door, ground floor guest suite and the open-plan kitchen, Zoë has used a striking Morris & Co wallpaper in blue. The rattan chair is antique Victorian, the blind and chair seat are in fabric from Vanderhurd, and the cushion is in a textile from Bernard Thorp.



'I've learnt to trust that the pieces I fall in love with will work together in an interesting blend of different periods'



wall and replace the mishmash with a singular open-plan extension. It took great skill from local stonemasons to repoint and restore the wibbly, wobbly wall: I love how the plaster now helps blend the old with the new. It was Johnny's idea to include a channel of glass in the extension's ceiling, not only to let daylight in but also to create the sense that the extension is floating lightly on the side of the building. We wanted it to be a sympathetic addition and to create a clear delineation from the original cottage."

It took 18 months to complete the architectural restoration, from fitting a new kitchen and updating the bathrooms to adding the extension and installing the swimming pool. The main footprint of the cottage now features four bedrooms, while an annexe, built in the 1970s to serve as a library, has been converted into guest accommodation with living space and further bedrooms. While Johnny took the lead on the architectural direction, Zoë painstakingly sourced all the interior fittings and fixtures over two years. Scouring shops, fairs and online resources, she stored her finds in a shipping container onsite until the building work was finished and furnishing could begin. ▶

ABOVE The curtains in the snug are made using vintage Rubelli fabric Zoë found at Kempton Market. She had the side table from Oka hand-sprayed in green gloss lacquer by a decorative paint specialist. **LEFT** A neat seating nook nestles in the understairs space in the family sitting room, perfect for a child to curl up with a book.



“I previously practised as a lawyer, but have always been interested in interior design,” Zoë reveals. “I renovated my first flat when I was 23. And Johnny works in real estate in central London so, naturally, he’s particularly interested in and knowledgeable about architecture, so we work well together. We have revived three properties: he’s really good with layout and configuration and loves the challenge of maximising the use of space, while I enjoy sourcing and styling and adding atmosphere with detail and colour.”

Zoë’s particular passion is tracking down vintage and antique pieces, and reusing what is already owned, a service she now offers clients. “I think the aesthetic of blending old and new is beautiful,” she says. “Using vintage pieces always creates unique interiors and – from an environmental view – it seems to me to be essential to give pre-loved pieces a second life. The quality of so many older items is wonderful, and I get great pleasure working with local artisans to have furniture recovered and renewed. I never have a particular style in mind.

“For me, decorating is quite instinctive. I can’t paint and I can’t draw, so creating interiors is how I express creativity. I’ve learnt to trust that the pieces I fall in love with will work together in an interesting blend of different periods. It’s quite an organic process, adding layer upon layer as budget allows. Perhaps because of

my legal training, I love absorbing information about textiles, ceramics, glassware and, in particular, mid-century pieces. I suppose I’ve become quite knowledgeable with time.”

Given the Kelmscott location, Zoë also wanted to introduce nods to the village’s most famous historic resident – William Morris. She took the opportunity to glean insights from a textiles specialist with expertise in the designs of Morris & Co who had also worked on the recent renovation of his summer home – Kelmscott Manor. This inspired her to introduce Morris & Co wallpapers and fabrics in several rooms, as well as assiduously track down vintage examples to have made into bedspreads, cushions and a sofa seat cover. A tapestry sampler cushion featuring motifs from Morris’s Strawberry Thief design has found a home in the family snug.

With its contemporary and rustic architecture, modern and vintage interiors and accumulation of art, glassware and decorative antiques, the result is an uplifting and relaxing home with things to please the eye at every turn. Zoë says, “I love the thrill of the hunt and the challenge of being resourceful in giving old things new life, but, ultimately, the most enjoyable thing is creating spaces that family, friends and visitors want to relax in and have fun with. Although a house is never truly finished, I hope we have achieved that here.” ■

ABOVE LEFT The sleigh bed in this bedroom is a Gustavian-style reproduction from Scumble Goosie. Above the headboard is a 1950s gouache scarf design for Hermès Zoë found in a Paris market and had framed by Acrylidex. **ABOVE RIGHT** In the principal bedroom, a headboard from Sofas & Stuff was rescaled by Zoë’s upholsterer to get it up the narrow staircase. Zoë sourced the punched-brass art deco floor lamp from Sunbury Antiques Market at Kempton.



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EMBRACING HISTORY

A sensitive renovation has transformed this former coaching inn with a long and varied existence into a charming country home

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

ABOVE Kate, seen here with Golden Retriever, Tiggy, has gained valuable knowledge from her career rescuing historic buildings.
RIGHT While she inherited the kitchen table when she moved in, Kate sourced the chairs from Cobwebs Furniture Company in St Ives and has topped them with seat cushions from The Cotswold Company.







‘The village was an important stop between London and Cambridge and this was one of the coaching inns’

In dire need of extensive renovation, this 16th-century house in Hertfordshire should have been far from Kate Pinnock’s mind when she was searching for her new home, but its innate charm and intriguing backstory piqued her interest. “It was in the wrong location and I wanted a barn conversion that didn’t need much work done to it, but I walked in the front door and saw the big fireplace and that was it. That’s what made my mind up,” she recalls.

When Kate purchased the house five years ago, it was in an awful state, having been empty for a year after the previous tenants did a midnight flit and left all their belongings. “It stank and it was filthy. Light switches had been pulled out, there was water coming in down the walls and when I got here the electrics weren’t working,” she says. However, a career in economic development and regeneration, bringing historic buildings back into use, stood Kate in good stead for the refurbishment.

Ensuring the property was windproof and watertight was the primary focus for the builders and scaffolding

was erected for six months. They completed repairs to the brickwork, replaced tiles and restored windows while Kate turned her attention to the interiors.

“I was concentrating on trying to get it a bit cleaner and getting a lick of paint on everything wherever possible,” she says. Despite her familiarity with working on sites, returning the house to its former glory was an arduous journey. “It felt like one step forward, two steps back. The most irritating thing about all of it was, you think you’ve done most of it properly and then you’ll find there’s another leak somewhere.”

Eventually, the timber-framed house was back in good shape – a remarkable achievement considering ▶

ABOVE LEFT The kitchen walls are in Slipper Satin and the cabinets are in Off White, both by Farrow & Ball. The Cecilia pendant lights are from Pooky.

ABOVE RIGHT Small details elevate the country-style cloakroom, including a door latch from the Suffolk Latch Company, knobs from Yester Home and hooks from Oakcrafts.



A lampshade from Oka tops the lamp base on the antique chest to the left of the inglenook fireplace, in which sits a candlestick from Philip Grob Blacksmith. The dried hydrangeas on the chest came from Columbia Road Flower Market in London.



‘I like all sorts of designs but I thought what I’d really like is that typical English eclectic kind of style’

its rich history. Kate has dated the house back to at least 1550, when it stood as a pub. Then, in 1965 it was transformed into a B&B before becoming a home in the mid-1980s. “The village was quite an important stop between London and Cambridge. There were lots of coaching inns here and this house was one of them,” she explains. Traces of its heritage can be found throughout, from the ironmongery in the huge hearth where food would have been cooked and pots hung, to a characterful upright beam in the long sitting room. “If you run your hand down it and get to a point where you can imagine leaning with a pint of beer, there is a hand indentation there,” she adds.

ABOVE LEFT A button back armchair, draped with a Zara Home throw, creates a comfortable corner next to the Yamaha piano in the long sitting room. The tactile rug was bought on a holiday in Morocco.

ABOVE RIGHT Kate has made the most of every corner in her home, like this spot at the bottom of the stairs. The chair and table are antique finds and the curtains are made from Ana & Ina linen fabric.

When it came to decoration, Kate was led by the house. “I’d moved from a home with quite a lot of colour and pattern, and I thought, naively, I’ll bring that here,” she recalls. “I thought I could create something that’s quite rich and deep, but it’s a very dark house and I quickly realised that wasn’t going to work.” Now, a palette of neutrals, nature-inspired motifs and organic materials, allow the rooms to sing, bringing light and a certain freshness to the interiors. Yet, hints of bolder patterns and personality still shine through. “Growing up, we had lots of friends and relatives that were in Nepal and Pakistan and they used to bring back the most beautiful bits of brass and copper and oriental rugs. To me, that feels like home, so I’ve got a lot of that around the place,” she says.

This blending of styles stems from Kate’s eclectic tastes, but she struggled at first to bring them together in harmony. “I like all sorts of designs, from mid-century modern and contemporary styles to very traditional interiors. I found that difficult and I didn’t know which way to go,” she remembers. “I spent a ▶



A candle holder from Much Hadham Forge hangs above the table in the dining room. Decorative accessories, such as the bowls on the mantel which came from a shop in France, introduce a dash of colour to the scheme.



‘I’ve tried to make it as cosy as possible and a little bit luxurious too’

long time looking at Ros Byam Shaw and Ben Pentreath’s books, and I thought, what I’d really like is that typical English eclectic kind of style.” The idea of ‘slow decorating’ particularly chimed with Kate and she has gradually built up her interiors over the years, creating layered spaces that feel warm and lived-in.

A key part of Kate’s characterful schemes is her ever-growing assortment of antiques. Having moved from a tiny two-up, two-down terraced house in Cambridge, she needed to source many furnishings. Interspersed throughout her home is a curated edit of old, dark wood furniture, chosen by Kate for its quality craftsmanship and beautiful yet quirky style. A particularly special find was the large cupboard, which Kate affectionately dubs the ‘big lump’, in the dining room. “That was probably the most expensive piece of furniture I’ve ever bought but it’s brilliant. It’s really changed the feel of that room from a fairly plain space to feeling like it’s part of the rest of the house.”

Hops hanging from beams evoke memories of Kate’s childhood in Kent. “I grew up surrounded by hop farms and we had them at home,” she says. However, the garlands are not just beautiful but practical, too. Over the hearth they cover a beam which had unfortunately been stained a “rather revolting colour” by a previous tenant, while in the kitchen they bring some sought-after softness. “I didn’t put the kitchen in myself and it wouldn’t be what I chose,” she explains. “It’s lovely and really well made but I just felt it’s a little too harsh for the house, which is rough around the edges. So, I really wanted to soften it by bringing lots of wood and natural things into it.”

This sense of softness contributes to the warm and welcoming atmosphere Kate has created throughout her home. “I’ve tried to make it as cosy as possible. A little bit luxurious but like you can slob into one of the big comfy sofas and go to sleep if you want to, which is what most people do,” she laughs. ■



TOP Kate’s involvement in the refurbishment of Kelmscott Manor – William Morris’s summer home in the Cotswolds – inspired her to use Morris & Co’s iconic Willow Boughs pattern in the bedroom.

LEFT The wardrobe, with elegant pointed arch doors, was there when Kate moved in but has been updated with a coat of Farrow & Ball’s Slipper Satin. A National Trust blanket sits on the chair. The artwork is from Waterside Antiques in Ely.



Wooden beams and neutral shades add to the rustic charm of the bathroom. The roll-top bath is from BC Designs and the wall-mounted taps are from The Cast Iron Bath Company. The Ava pendant light is by Jim Lawrence and the picture came from Risby Barn Antiques Centre.

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STYLE INSPIRATION

Add country character with fabric skirts, display treasured art with expert advice, inject colourful pattern with botanical designs and invest in a kitchen and boot room ➤

VINTAGE GLAMOUR

Create a romantic, dreamy scheme with the addition of a luxurious armchair in the bedroom. A feminine blush pink gently sets the mood while a decadent deep ruffled skirt adds glamorous elegance – amplified by the opulent co-ordinating footstool for ultimate relaxation. Designed by Nina Campbell, who we congratulate on being awarded an OBE for services to British Interior Design and Philanthropy in this year's King's Birthday Honours List, this scheme is completed with a mirror from her new collection. Handmade in England with an antiqued glass finish, these mirrors add vintage charm and effortless beauty. For further inspiring ways to enhance interiors with fabric skirts, turn to page 74. *Mabel chair with valance, £3,874 and Mabel stool with valance, £2,662, both in Colette linen in Blush; Rose small oval mirror, £1,500, all Nina Campbell*



Skirting the issue

Add an instant dose of country charm with a pretty, and practical, fabric skirt

Fabric has multiple powers in interiors – it adds colour, pattern, texture and character. When used in the form of a skirt or deep ruffle, whether to cover an under-sink area or add a final flourish to an upholstered chair or lampshade, it can add a touch of romantic and nostalgic appeal as well as practical benefits. In kitchens and bathrooms fabric skirts bring softness and noise-absorbing properties to the abundance of hard surfaces.

Usually with a softly pleated or undulating gathered finish, skirts bring a relaxed feel to interiors – perfect in classic country homes, but also for bringing some of that character to urban spaces too.

As well as being aesthetically pleasing, adding a skirt can be a practical way to maximise storage. For example, attached to a pedestal basin in a small downstairs loo it creates somewhere to store handy yet unsightly bathroom items. In a kitchen or ▶

TOP RIGHT Even a lampshade can wear a skirt, with a deep frill adding country charm in a kitchen.

Balazuc Morocco Stripe linen Ivory, £168 a metre, Inchyra; lampshade made by Beauvamp

RIGHT The addition of a skirted ruffle softens the overall look of this smart country house.

Interior design by Salvesen Graham

‘Cupboard skirts are a quick and cost-effective way to add a layer of warmth, style and texture. Using one to cover an appliance ensures the stark whiteness of the washing machine doesn’t take away from the aesthetics of the utility space’

Grazzie Wilson, head of creative at Ca’ Pietra



‘The addition of frills immediately softens and relaxes a room. A pretty ruffle can be added to any textile finish, from a bed valance, curtain or upholstery to cushions and even lighting’ Caroline Inchyra





A curtain conceals a washing machine in this utility room. The addition of a ruffle adds country charm. Flooring, Farley Limestone Seasoned Parquet, £90 a square metre, Ca'Pietra



'Fabric skirts are a brilliant way of adding texture and personality to a room. They happily conceal things that might not want to be seen and take up far less space than a door'

Tori Murphy, founder, Tori Murphy



'While skirts have country charm, they can be a glamorous addition too. A voluminous skirt adds drama and a Hollywood feel to the petite proportions of an occasional or dressing room chair'

Tiffany Duggan, founder, Studio Duggan



ABOVE Cover the top with the same fabric as the ruffled skirt for a feminine dressing table.

Innis Stripe, Red, £68 a metre, Jane Churchill at Colefax and Fowler

RIGHT Here a skirt conceals a hallway radiator, adding a sense of theatricality that goes with the vintage poster above. *Flora Oyster, £75 a metre, Colours of Arley*

LEFT A deep skirt adds glamour. *Skirted Seven chair, from £2,650, Trove by Studio Duggan*

OPPOSITE A sink skirt adds softness and character to a kitchen. *Dresser Check organic cotton, £85 a metre, Tori Murphy*

utility room, a skirt can be used to cover appliances and open shelving, particularly under-sink areas and islands. This can be useful where space is at a premium and it might be preferable to not have the inconvenience of having to open and shut cupboard doors and drawers. Adding a skirt is also obviously a great way to introduce colour or pattern to what might otherwise be a stark environment. It can be a chance, too, to bring in an element that unites or juxtaposes other decorative choices to tie a scheme, together, perhaps co-ordinating with window dressings or wall treatments.

True romantics will no doubt want to embrace the use of skirts and ruffled edges in other areas of the home too. For instance along the bottom edge of an armchair or sofa, or simply around the ▶



DECORATING

BELOW Give a seat cushion some added flair with an oversized ruffled skirt. Cushion, Cooper, Olive, from £23.04 a metre, and all other fabrics, Prestigious Textiles



'Wrap a pedestal basin in a favourite fabric to create a skirt to conceal storage in a pint-sized powder room'

Emma Bazilian, co-author of *Charm School: The Schumacher Guide to Traditional Decorating for Today*

edge of a cushion or in a more elaborate tablecloth treatment. For maximum impact and a luxurious finish, make sure ruffles are deep. A traditional kidney-shaped dressing table adorned with a full, gathered skirt creates an ultra-feminine look.

Simple stripes, checks or gingham are spot-on choices for country character, as are florals – full-blown or ditsy – to blur the boundary between outside and in. Adding an extra frill as a curtain heading will heighten the country look. For a chic finish fix an under-counter skirt behind a frame to conceal the gathered top. ■

ABOVE RIGHT To create a skirted effect on a table ensure the fabric touches the floor and finish with fringing for an extra flourish.

Anita fabric, £141 a metre, Cathy Nordström

RIGHT Basin skirts are ideal for adding storage space as well as a decorative touch in a small bathroom.

Pauline Check Casement, £156 a metre, Schumacher





A wooden frame or pelmet brings a chic finish to an under-counter skirt to create a smart bar area.
Toile De La Prairie,
£246 a metre,
Jill Lasersohn
for Schumacher





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HOW TO CHOOSE & HANG ART

Interior designers and art experts suggest the best ways of adding character and impact with paintings, prints and other treasures



PREVIOUS PAGE Soft abstracts work particularly well in creating a sense of calm, as in this scheme by Elicyon.

LEFT In this pretty soft pink and earthy brown bedroom scheme by Olivine Design, a contemporary picture lifts the look and helps make the room feel more dynamic.



‘Look at which pieces will suit a room in terms of style and scale so that they don’t overwhelm each other or the space’

Taline Findlater, Olivine Design



‘Don’t be afraid to follow your heart when selecting pieces for your interior’

Jo Baring, art historian, curator and writer

“Art is fundamental to the success of a room,” says Emma Burns, interior designer and joint managing director of Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler. “It doesn’t need to be expensive or valuable, but it must mean something to you – art adds layers to a room that you can’t achieve with just paper or paint.”

Nor does ‘art’ simply mean traditional paintings. “Explore a variety of mediums, such as photographs, prints, sculptures, textiles as well as paintings, to add depth and texture to your space,” advises Jo Baring, art historian, curator and writer. “Mixing different types of artwork can create visual interest and showcase your taste.” While there may be lots of reasons for selecting art, including supporting local artists and creating a collection for investment reasons, Baring says, “Ultimately, trust your instincts and choose artwork that speaks to you on a personal level – your home should reflect your personality and taste, so don’t be afraid to follow your heart when selecting pieces for your interior.”



Local and specialist art galleries can help to select pieces, while antique shops, vintage markets, auction houses and dealers on Instagram also offer opportunities to scout unique art. “Look at which pieces will suit a room in terms of style and scale, and also which will hang together well so that they don’t overwhelm each other or the space,” advises interior designer Taline Findlater of Olivine Design.

Charu Gandhi, founder and director of interior design studio Elicyon, agrees on selecting pictures that spark an attachment and using them to elevate the design of a room. “For the bedroom, ▶

ABOVE & RIGHT Interior designer Henriette von Stockhausen of VSP Interiors uses picture rails in her kitchen to hang different artwork when she wants a change.



Plates imaginatively framed in joyful colour by framing and art consultancy Haviland Designs in this room scheme by Kit Kemp Design Studio.



RIGHT In this room by Laura Stephens Interior Design, the gallery wall is created with pictures of similar shapes and tones to give a cohesive feel.

BELOW RIGHT From the Woven Art collection by Pelican House, Arbor, from £1,036, is woven in jute and shown here amid a collection of painting and prints to bring added texture to the space.



'Gallery walls don't just have to be prints and art. They can be framed fabric scraps and handwritten notes or old plates and ceramics too'

Laura Stephens, interior designer



I suggest pieces that have an emotional connection or memory attached to them – and landscapes in natural tones and soft abstracts work particularly well in creating a sense of calm,” she says. “Living rooms can handle more stimulation and a gallery wall is the perfect way to express creativity.”

When it comes to display, Gandhi suggests considering the scale of a piece before purchase. “A good rule of thumb is to look for art that is two-thirds of the size of the furniture it is being hung above to ensure it doesn't engulf the space,” she explains. “It is also important to make sure there is enough ‘breathing room’ around the art so that it can be enjoyed.” In a larger room, bigger pieces that can be appreciated from a distance can work well, while more intricate pieces can sing in a smaller space, inviting close examination.

To avoid the sense that a painting is ‘floating’ on the wall, Findlater recommends anchoring art on a piece of furniture, while Burns suggests hanging a group of similarly sized prints with tight margins between them for more impact. “Nothing worse than postage stamps floating on your wall!” she adds. “And, if I am installing only a few pieces, I find 165cm from the floor to the centre of the picture very pleasing, as it is a good eye level for most people.” ▶





'Unless you have a set of 30 prints to hang, it is much more impactful to have a variety of frames'

Emma Burns, Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler



LEFT Emma Burns of Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler likes to position key focal pieces, such as a mirror, and build the hang of pictures around those.

BELOW LEFT A gallery wall helps to zone an area in an open-plan space, like this dining corner in a room by Studio Duggan.





Burns also emphasises the importance of framing. “Unless you have a set of 30 prints to hang, it is much more impactful to have a variety of frames,” she notes. Her favourites include antique and vintage frames, and intensely coloured frames with different profiles, such as those from A.Prin, designed for displaying a favourite postcard or photograph. “They look fantastic on a wall or tucked into a bookcase.”

A group of pictures, such as a full gallery wall, can be particularly striking, as well as providing an interesting way of hanging disparate shapes and sizes. “Gallery walls don’t just have to be prints and art,” says interior designer Laura Stephens. “They can be fabric scraps, handwritten notes that you’ve had framed or old plates and ceramics that you mount on the wall. If the general tones of the colours work well together, there are endless possibilities.” Stephens suggests measuring the size of the wall, taping the area on the floor and laying the pieces within the tape to experiment with different groupings and spacings, before hanging on the wall. “I mix elements such as size, medium and ▶

ABOVE & LEFT Paintings hung within wall panels create a ‘frame within a frame’ look, showcasing them perfectly in this apartment by Elicyon.

‘It is also important to make sure there is enough ‘breathing room’ around the art so that it can be enjoyed’

Charu Gandhi, Elicyon



‘Art isn’t merely decoration – it weaves narratives that reflect who we are and what we value’

Tolù Adèkọ, Adèkọ & Co



frame style, while maintaining similar warm or cool tones to the pieces across the wall,” she says. “I also mix portrait and landscape frames to prevent the look becoming too uniform.” She also recommends using brighter, eye-catching pieces to create focal points. “For example, if you want to draw your eye up a narrow stairwell, hang louder pieces near the top.”

Sometimes, changing the frame of a picture, introducing new lighting or rehangng in a different position can transform the result, allowing a fresh appreciation of the artwork. “In essence, art isn’t merely decoration, it’s expression,” says interior designer Tolù Adèkọ of Adèkọ & Co. “It weaves narratives that reflect who we are and what we value.” ■

TOP The eye is drawn to this striking painting in a living room design by Tolù Adèkọ of Adèkọ & Co, its bold colours enlivening the soft neutrals of the room scheme.



IN THE FRAME

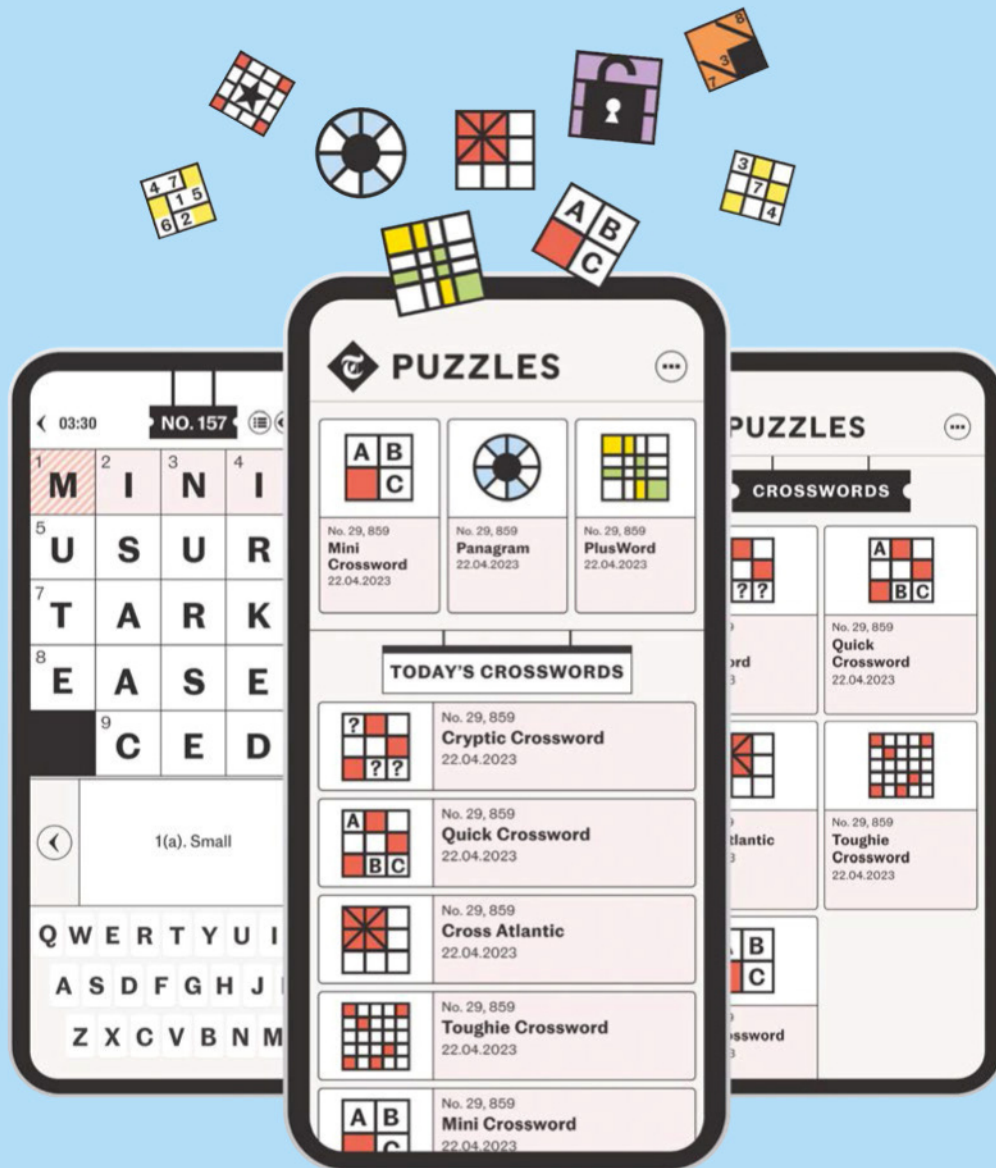
Marcus Wells of bespoke framing and art consultancy Haviland Designs offers his top tips on transforming artwork with a beautiful frame

- Always select a frame that complements the artwork and shows it off to its best, rather than choosing a frame which matches the room or interior design scheme – a common mistake.
- Play with scale: a small painting can look fantastic in a large, chunky frame.
- Pick out a colour from the artwork and use it in the frame as an inner slip or as a painted detail to add impact.
- A contemporary frame on an antique artwork can look wonderful, as can an antique-style frame on contemporary artwork, such as an ornate traditional gilt frame refinished in white or a bright colour.
- I like to surprise and delight by using unusual, often upcycled and found materials for a frame. Try scaffolding planks, timber from old garden fences, antique floorboards and rope, even kebab sticks!
- Mount objects, such as plates, on fabric remnants and use more fabric to line box frames for a chic result.

FEATURE: AMELIA THORPE PHOTOGRAPHS (ELICION) © PATRICK WILLIAMSON; (CHARU GANDHI PORTRAIT) © JAKE CURTIS; (OLIVINE DESIGN) © RACHAEL SMITH; (NSP INTERIORS) © MARK BOLLTON; (HENRIETTE VON STORCHHAUSEN PORTRAIT) © PAUL MASSET; (LAURA STEPHENS INTERIOR DESIGN) © BOZ GAGOVSKI; (PELICAN HOUSE) © MILO BROWN; (KT KEMP DESIGN STUDIO) © SIBYL COLEFAX & JOHN FOWLER; (ADEKO & CO) © DARREN CHUNG

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BOTANICALS

Creative Combinations

Continuing our series celebrating the evolution of colour and pattern, we explore how trends and historical influences have shaped British interiors, this time focusing on uplifting botanicals

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE

Depicting the form, colour and details of plant life, botanicals draw much of their heritage from the carefully studied illustrations produced by Greek botanists several centuries ago, though the Ancient Egyptians captured flora and fauna in more naïve mural form long before that. Over time, botanicals progressed from scientific designs used for research purposes into

prints displayed at home as symbols of elegance and refinement, particularly during the 18th and 19th centuries. As wallpaper and other mass-produced decorative elements became more common throughout the industrial revolution, botanical and floral motifs increased in popularity, cemented by William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement of the early 20th century. These days, the well-being we ►

ABOVE 1838's V&A Flower Meadow, which pays homage Arts and Crafts illustrator Walter Crane's wood block-printed paper from the early 1900s, is reimagined with a softly contemporary twist.

The natural world is transposed to this home office with Little Greene's Bird & Bluebell wallpaper in Pea Green. Featuring birds, bees and bluebells, the design was inspired by a fragment of wallpaper found at Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk.





ABOVE In this country scheme co-designed by Octavia Dickinson, softly patterned table linen inspired by the natural world is anchored by a painterly botanical wallpaper, Beech by Lewis & Wood, whose fronds complement the wood elements of the room.

LEFT This cloakroom by Studio Peake features enveloping palms thanks to a wallpaper by Ulricehamns. A light fitting by Atelier Areti completes the playful look.



derive from the natural world has resulted in a renewed love for botanical and biophilic designs. Leaf wallpaper prints, dense foliage-based patterns and pretty florals all bring a sense of the outdoors in, creating characterful and impactful spaces.

Natural touch

Botanical designs encompass many styles, from abstract prints to delicate drawings. They are organic in nature and easy to incorporate in different schemes, providing a dynamic backdrop to other patterns such as geometrics, stripes and ikats. Layered in abundance they create a nostalgic interior or a statement in an otherwise pared-back contemporary setting. “We accessed a wealth of historic designs inspired by botany, flora, fauna and the natural world while creating our collections with the V&A,” says 1838 Wallcoverings’ James Watson. “These designs have been a constant in decorative history; they not only bring the benefits of nature into the interior, they also offer comfort, cosiness and a sense of the familiar.”

One of the most consistent sources of inspiration through the ages, botanicals are immensely versatile. “They don’t only signify florals either; a simple leaf-based pattern is also part of the genre,” says Little ▶

A perfect balance between contemporary and nostalgic, Kelling Home's Priory sofa in Oak Leaf combines sleek shaping with botanical appeal.



Evocative of a midnight forest, the walls of this living room scheme provide an illustrative backdrop for contemporary zig-zag motifs, including Pooky's Krysto lamp base.



Greene's Ruth Mottershead. "Some of the bolder designs read as captivating large-scale murals. A scenic botanical can transform a space, bringing a sense of depth, creating a focal point and making a room feel more expansive. For a cohesive, contemporary feel, consider complementing a focal design with a dark, co-ordinating colour on woodwork and skirting."

Botanicals are still associated with scholarly appeal too. "I realised their potential as a decorative detail when I was young," says textile designer Neisha Crosland. "I was in my grandfather's study and stumbled across *The Complete Herbal* by Nicholas Culpeper – a 17th-century compendium of coloured engravings of herbs with details of their medicinal and occult qualities. I copied them with a fine Rotring pen and watercolours and framed them using marbled mounts. To this day, botanicals are a celebration of living things and have been a never-ending source of pattern ideas for me and many others."

Perhaps more than any other design style, botanicals have found their place in the country house setting. "That English style – although in part cemented by an American, my great aunt, Nancy Lancaster – always features flora, whether in traditional chintz patterns or in vases," reflects interior designer Jane Churchill. "The British are good gardeners, so it makes sense for us to love a floral pattern too. Personally, I enjoy botanical watercolours for their depth. I am a big fan of Sarah Graham, who creates pencil and ink drawings and watercolours on a vast scale."

As these designs often feature multiple colourways, they are a good way to anchor a scheme, allowing for the introduction of a vibrant yet unified colour



'Complement a focal design with a dark, co-ordinating colour on woodwork and skirting'

Ruth Mottershead, creative director, Little Greene

palette. "I also enjoy the way they contrast with heavy or masculine furniture, such as Arts and Crafts, folk, or Hoshiarpur tables," says interior designer Octavia Dickinson. "They work wonderfully dressing a heavy wooden Georgian mahogany four-poster bed. I like to use them on a large sofa as a loose cover too, with a mixture of plain and textured fabrics as cushions."

In balance

Playing with scale is a good way to use botanicals in fresh, exciting formats. "Scale is one of the most important rules of thumb," says interior designer Laura Stephens. "If the pattern is to stand out and be the focal point, a large-scale print with bold colours can be very striking. In contrast, a small repeat with muted colours can create an almost neutral effect."

Paying attention to whether a motif is cool or warm-toned, the ground colour of the print and the general

ABOVE In this dramatic entrance hall by Laura Stephens, a richly botanic paper, Fruit by Morris & Co, is offset by graphic flooring and woodwork in a rich, dark colour.

RIGHT A utilitarian under-stairs entrance has been softened by Mahala's pretty pomegranates, berries, flowers and foliage-laden Thalia fabric, whose tones have been picked out in corresponding wall-hung ceramics.





Eltham wallpaper, a GP & J Baker Original dating from 1910, brings a timeless, painterly touch to a scheme where fresh fabrics and antiques nestle side by side.



ABOVE LEFT In this colour-laden Oriental-style scheme, Wendy Morrison's Floral Waves and Jardin de Chinois hand-knotted rugs lend a rich, textural twist to classic botanical designs.

ABOVE RIGHT This pretty eaves bedroom by interior designer Emma Ainscough features a delicate vine wallpaper, Creeping Toadflax by Living Quarters teamed with a headboard upholstered in a plain green to bring the outside in.

design style can also help strike the right balance. "While I don't believe in no-nos, I do try to adhere to a few guidelines," continues Stephens. "Think about the pattern repeat, especially on walls. As opposed to more abstract prints, your eye will be drawn to any place where the pattern doesn't match up properly, so it's really important to pay attention to where you are making cuts. In general, if you have more than one botanical element in a room, try to ensure they are differing in scale to avoid overwhelm."

Botanicals work especially well in entrance halls, helping to 'soften' movement from one room to another. "Entrance halls in particular, being the transition from outdoors to indoors, are wonderful for showcasing leafy florals and foliage motifs," says Mottershead. "And a delicate trailing botanical design is a fantastic all-over pattern which works beautifully in dining rooms and bedrooms."

A motif like this should be considered as a starting point for a scheme, one from which the overall colour palette stems. "Botanicals' fluid natural shapes mean they can be paired easily with stripes or geometrics to



produce a balanced space, or layered together to create a truly nature-infused interior," says Mind The Gap's Stefan Ormenisan. "I love to place framed botanical art prints on botanical wallpapers, accessorised with furniture upholstered in leafy or botanical patterns, fully embracing the aesthetic."

Contrast, including playing with light and shade, is key. "Consider feminine and masculine, pattern and plain, heaviness and lightweight," says Dickinson. "If it is a light, feminine pattern, balance it by using it on a grand scale, such as large decorative curtains with pelmets or bulky sofas, or by placing it close to a more graphic piece of furniture or artwork. Crewelwork botanicals with a darker backcloth can be contrasted with softer, gathered curtains or lighter colours. For me, it's all about visual offsetting."

Of course, botanicals also work effortlessly in period settings. "Traditional floral wallpapers are very much at home in a cottage or attic bedroom; the trailing patterns lend themselves to papering walls where there are odd nooks and crannies and low ceilings, as well as in surprising areas such as alcoves, the backs of ▶

DESIGN INSIGHT



bookshelves and even in cupboards,” says wallpaper designer Fiona Howard. “With a couple of layers of Decorators’ Varnish, any paper can be used in a bathroom too.”

Pull out key colours from botanical prints and use them throughout a space in smaller doses, such as in cushions, rugs or accessories. Saffron Hare, of James Hare, suggests that if a scheme features French windows, using a botanical fabric in soft greens, pinks and blues will lead the eye out to the garden.

New trails

Lend this classic style a fresh twist. Ceilings offer the largest expanse of unimpaired space for pattern or colour, so using a small-scale botanical print on the ceiling as well as all four walls can create a comforting and intimate interior. “One of the most exciting trends we are seeing is taking well-known botanical prints and injecting them with a sense of energy and playfulness,” says Stephens. “Recently, we paired a classic Pierre Frey wallpaper with a yellow zigzag border, which felt unexpected and interesting. In another home, we added a vine motif two-thirds up a study wall, carrying it up onto the ceiling for whimsical appeal.”

Interior designer Sarah Peake adds: “Large-scale prints in small rooms can trick the eye into thinking the room is bigger. I recently used a Ulricehamn wallpaper in a tiny ground floor cloakroom. I wanted it to feel as though you were in the jungle. For a small space to really come alive, there must be a sense of drama. A wallpapered arch with a mirror beyond reflected the pattern back, creating a sense of excitement (see page 110).”

‘Use contrasting patterns, such as an organic botanical print with a more defined check’

Sarah Vanrenen, interior designer

ABOVE Here, Cole & Sons’ Hummingbirds Flora wallpaper adds whimsical, painterly appeal, perfectly complemented by natural additions, including traditional parquet flooring.

LEFT In this sitting room scheme by Salvesen Graham, sofas in the design studio’s Floral Trail fabric are grounded by oversized contemporary check painted flooring.



Furniture is also a useful vehicle for botanicals. “Cover the inners of built-in bookcases or cabinets with botanical wallpaper to add a pop of pattern and colour,” suggests Stefan Theunis of wallcovering specialist Omexco. “You can also use botanical wallcoverings to line the inside of drawers, shelves, or closets for an uplift every time they are opened.”

For a sense of energy and contemporary appeal, ensure plenty of variety. “Mix, don’t match,” counsels interior designer Sarah Vanrenen. “Perfectly matched room schemes can look static and impersonal. Mix different scales with contrasting patterns, such as an organic botanical print with a more defined stripe or check.” Ultimately, botanicals remain a constant because they are delightfully reminiscent of the natural world, possessing an intrinsic beauty that transcends trends and fads. For this reason, perhaps, their appeal remains universal.



BLOOMING STYLE

Introduce botanical designs to interiors with furniture and accessories in uplifting patterns, shapely silhouettes and refined details that impart the rhythm of nature in a fresh way

- 1 Kew Fluted Tulip Mocha planter, from £49.99, Ivyline 2 Hydran drawer handle in the shape of a hydrengia flower, around £275.02, PullCast 3 Tiles (from left): Tulip, £31.20 each, Clementine Can-Can, £21.60 each, and Primrose Can-Can, £20.40 each, Neisha Crosland 4 White Flower Sconce wall light, £159, Houseof 5 Kappar Sand ruffle cushion, £145 with pad (£130 without), Abigail Borg 6 Merielle tablecloth, £94, Graham and Green 7 Trumpet Flowers, Teal, £120 a metre, GP & J Baker 8 Ferns Embroidery, Green/Natural, £200 a metre, GP & J Baker 9 Munro chair in Hollingbourne, £2,950, Nina Campbell 10 Avalon petite bench, from £1,750, Trove 11 Indoor/Outdoor Tropical Leaf pouffe, £30, Ella James 12 Flora flower shape bowl, £8.50, Maison Chérie 13 Bloom wallpaper, Green, £41.52 a square metre, Sandberg 14 Bouclé Clover pouffe, £175, French Bedroom 15 Poppies rug, from £895, Trove 16 Flora large wall mirror, Navy, £1,495, Balineum 17 Gold Leaves side table, £155, Joanna Wood ■

STYLE & *Substance*

From an expansive cook's table to a capacious drinks area and characterful lighting to antiques, these are the elements that make up today's ultimate country kitchens and boot rooms



This kitchen by Artichoke features a cook's table – a popular alternative to the classic island in country homes.



Anyone who lives in the countryside will know that kitchens and boot rooms are two of the hardest working rooms in a house. While the kitchen has morphed into a room where everyone tends to spend the majority of their time – and where owners are likely to spend the most capital – boot rooms, too, should command due attention. Bruce Hodgson, founder of Artichoke, which designs classic kitchens for country houses, goes as far as to say that a well-designed boot room can add to the liveability of a country house. ▶



ABOVE Antiques from Robert Young help create the evolved look in this kitchen by Plain English.

LEFT Store boots under bench seats such as these by Barnes of Ashburton.

RIGHT Appliances (or more excitingly, bars) can be hidden within purpose-built cupboards by Lewis Alderton.

OPPOSITE If short on space, consider a boot cupboard like this one by Naked Kitchens.





STORAGE SOLUTIONS

Traditionally, farmhouse-type kitchens had a less fitted and formal look than their urban counterparts with more open storage such as shelves and dressers. This is an approach that many are adopting in their schemes today. As a result, owners are choosing to hide appliances in purpose-built larder cupboards or pantries.

Larger houses may have 'back kitchens', where the messy preparation takes place, allowing the main kitchen to remain clutter-free. Tom Edmonds, founder and director of Lewis Alderson & Co, says some of his clients want these to be accessed by secret doors. "They can look like a kitchen cabinet or bookshelves where

when you pull a book forward it unlocks the latch."

A classic element of a Victorian kitchen, the cook's table is becoming increasingly popular in the modern home, says Artichoke's Bruce Hodgson. "A cook's table sits beautifully in period houses, allowing light and space to flow through the room while also functioning as a multi-purpose prep area and social hub." Cables can be hidden in their legs and they can provide useful storage for cutlery, extra display shelves and even a prep sink.

Boot rooms typically require a mix of storage such as lift-up bench seats, hooks and shelving, pull-out welly drawers and

large full-length cupboards. Edmonds recommends using deep drawers below a bench for hats, gloves and dog accessories. These can be allocated to different family members using card frames. "Watch out for lift-up lids with small children; these need supporting struts to prevent them from closing abruptly," he adds.

If there is no space for a dedicated boot room, consider an extra-deep cupboard with drawers for hats, hooks for coats and shelves for wellies, which can stand near the front or back door. Just make sure the shelves allow for the height of the tallest boot, recommends Jane Everett, creative director of Naked Kitchens. ▶



ABOVE A sleek run of cupboards across a whole kitchen wall, as seen in this design by Studio Duggan, creates a large storage area without the space feeling cluttered.

BELOW Nicola Harding elevates this functional

boot room and pantry area through the use of art and wall lights.

RIGHT The White Kitchen Company's English Heritage range blends traditional elegant designs with the benefit of modern functionality.



STYLE TRENDS

The lived-in or settled look is the one many owners want when installing a new kitchen in a country home. Sarah Picton of Plain English explains how the company designed a kitchen for clients in Gloucestershire together with Robert Young Antiques to help achieve this goal. "The idea was for the room to sit quietly within this rather beautiful building and not feel overly designed," she says.

Natural materials and artisanal craftsmanship skills are another way to hark back to the traditional farmhouse kitchen. "Natural timbers continue to be a winning combination for any kitchen – timeless and gorgeous. Texture is very much in vogue," says Jane Everett. "We're not all super organised and tidy, so reeded glass is superb for glazed wall cabinets. It adds texture and helps disguise the items housed within."

Open shelves are increasingly used as spaces to display collections of favourite

When open shelves are used as display areas, as seen in this deVOL scheme for a Victorian rectory, the line between kitchens and sitting rooms is blurred.





If space allows, introduce a freestanding cook's-style table as a handy place to fold laundry and store hats, gloves and dog leads. Solid Brass Beehive cupboard knobs, £10 each, YesterHome

things such as art and ceramics. "Using art as decoration in a kitchen further confirms the notion that kitchens are for living in, not just for working in," says Helen Parker, creative director of deVOL.

By a similar token, table lamps are creeping in more and more in country kitchens. Not only do they bring in another colour or pattern to the space but they also help soften the bridge between a hard-working practical space and a living area. "Adding sculptural table lamps around the kitchen brings in design interest. Doubling as *objets d'art*, they are a way of adding depth and texture to a space," believes Hollie Moreland, creative director of David Hunt Lighting.

"You can also be creative with lighting a boot room," says Jamie Godfrey, senior design consultant at Neville Johnson. "We've put spotlights into fitted furniture to help build the room's character and change the ambience of the space. These are practical too for late nights or early morning dog walks."

Using the same material for fixtures and fittings between the kitchen and boot room is a subtle way of sewing the two spaces together – examples include co-ordinating light switches, taps and hooks. Sheena Lawrence, co-director of Jim Lawrence, says that antiqued brass is increasingly popular for country kitchens and boot rooms. "It ages subtly over time into a beautiful patina that remains sturdy for years to come." ▶



JUST ONE THING

Improve existing country kitchens and boot rooms with the addition of any of these ideas

- 1 Boiling water tap.** This creates extra work surface space by removing an appliance and is efficient, too. Standard kettles use 2,200W to boil 1.7l of water while boiling water taps, such as Quooker, use 10W a day to keep water ready to use.
- 2 Pot filler tap.** Perfect for larger kitchens owned by keen cooks, this is a tap that is built in above the cooker to save carrying heavy pans full of water from the sink.
- 3 Heated towel rails.** These can be invaluable to dry wet coats and winter gear in boot rooms.
- 4 Washable rugs.** Consider these to add a dash of colour or soften the hard surfaces in kitchens and boot rooms.
- 5 Range cooker.** Nothing speaks more loudly of a country kitchen than a sturdy range cooker.
- 6 Docking drawer.** This is ideal to hide away the tangle of charging cables often found in a kitchen.

ABOVE A table lamp such as this design by David Hunt Lighting can bring colour and interest to kitchen or boot room surfaces.

RIGHT Lift-up bench seats, such as this by deVOL, can be used for storage spaces.





LEFT For a boot room that feels grounded to its surroundings, opt for authentic finishes. *Hector 30 wall lights, £199 each, Original BTC*

BELOW LEFT Nigel Hunt of Huntrey designed this galley kitchen in a Cotswold cottage with an existing Everhot 60 cooker and Suffolk cabinets by Neptune.

BELOW Four-legged friends will welcome a warm shower and cosy nook to sleep in. *Mornington Collection, from £15,000, Second Nature Kitchens*



PRACTICAL DETAILS

These days constant warmth is a comfort during the cooler months, but it was not that long ago that it would have been essential for drying sodden clothing in a working farmhouse, says Merlin Wright, design director of Plain English. “There is a lot to be said for an Aga or Everhot range to lean against in a country kitchen. Modern versions can be programmed with an app to be on when needed.” Both companies produce small versions that can slot into a standard oven void – ideal for smaller country kitchens, or those who want the look but not the expense of a traditional range. Blake & Bull has designed bespoke drying racks to sit on top of the range and these are proving popular with those who want to make the most of the ambient heat to dry linen.

Mud is an ever-present element of country life so a good boot room should have a big sink to wash dogs and boots,

adds Wright. Easy-to-clean floors are another consideration; most steer away from wood floors in boot rooms as they do not take well to getting wet with muddy paw prints or dripping coats. Storing boots under benches, rather than in cupboards, will make it relatively easy to keep control of excess mud. Henriette von Stockhausen, creative director of VSP Interiors, went one stage further with a client and installed a drain in the floor to make mopping that much easier.

Tongue-and-groove panelling is another shortcut to settle a boot room. Originally used to provide insulation and cover up any damp that had infiltrated cold stone walls, it is now a recognised decorative technique. Not only does it look attractive but cladding the walls better protects them from scuffs that are inevitably generated in a busy boot room, says interior designer Kate Guinness. ■

Fully fitted, they can take weeks to install...

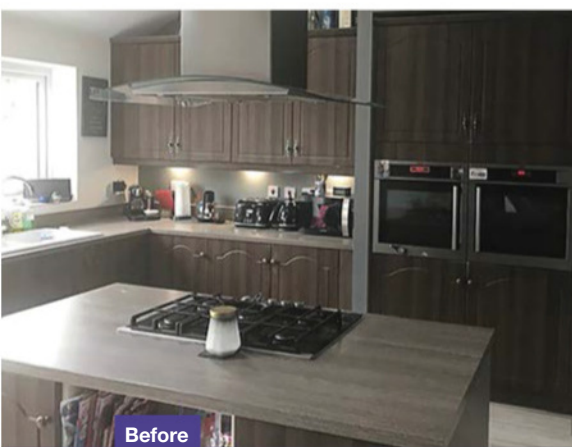
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This kneeling cushion makes lots of gardening jobs much more comfortable. It also makes a pretty and practical present for a keen gardener – and it could not be easier to make one with our step-by-step instructions.

YOU WILL NEED

40cm of 130cm-wide PVC or oilcloth fabric
50cm x 30cm cushion pad
About 25cm of 2.5cm-wide cotton webbing, for the handle
Matching thread

INSTRUCTIONS

- Cut two rectangles of the PVC or oilcloth fabric, each measuring 54cm x 33cm. With the right sides of the fabric pieces together, pin and machine stitch along both of the long sides and across one end, making 1cm of allowance for the seam. Turn the cushion cover right side out.
- Insert the cushion pad into the fabric cover. Fold under 1.5cm of the fabric on both edges at the open end of the cushion cover. Take the length of cotton webbing and insert the ends of the webbing handle and pin to hold them in place. Machine-stitch the edges together, stitching in the handle along the way.







What to do in AUGUST

Escape to the seaside and search for seaweed, plus savour the taste of tapas and style the greenhouse for a small summer gathering

FORAGE *for seaweed*

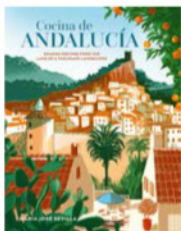
Paddle in rock pools and collect species of seaweed such as bladder wrack, dulse, sea spaghetti and velvet horn – commonly found around the coasts of the British Isles – to draw, paint, or even press. It is a wonderful way to while away an afternoon but remember to forage responsibly: always gain permission from the landowner before collecting, only take a small quantity of seaweed specimens that are already detached and avoid pulling plants up from the seabed. Take inspiration from Julia Bird and Melanie Molesworth of molesworthandbird.com, and sign up for one of their seaweed pressing workshops later in the year in the beautiful Dorset town of Lyme Regis. Alternatively invest in a copy of their book, *Seaweed: Foraging, Collecting, Pressing*, and learn how to transform this superb seaside staple into all sorts of home accessories and bathing products as well as edible delights too. ▶

Seaweed: Foraging, Collecting, Pressing by Julia Bird and Melanie Molesworth, £30, published by Pavilion Books, is out now



HARVEST *tomatoes*

Enjoy the full flavour of homegrown tomatoes that have been beautifully ripened by the sun and rekindle memories of Mediterranean holidays with this classic Andalusian dish. Transform homemade sourdough bread rolls into a sensational tapas dish by topping them with tomatoes, olive oil and Ibérico ham and serve alongside a chilled glass of rosé as the perfect way to start a summer feast.



FURTHER READING
Cocina de Andalucía: Spanish Recipes from the Land of a Thousand Landscapes
 by María José Sevilla,
 photography by Nassima Rothacker (Ryland Peters & Small, £20)

MOLLETES ANDALUCES

Andalusian bread rolls with tomatoes, olive oil & Ibérico ham

MAKES 10

Andalusians love these bread rolls simply sprinkled with extra virgin olive oil and sea salt or, even better, with a sauce of fresh tomatoes and with or without Ibérico ham.

INGREDIENTS

2–3 large tomatoes
 Spanish extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling
 Sea salt, to taste
 Ibérico ham, to serve (optional)

FOR THE STARTER

3g fresh yeast
 75ml tepid water
 75g plain flour, plus extra for dusting

FOR THE DOUGH

475g medium strong flour, sifted
 7g fine sea salt
 25g pork lard, broken into small pieces, at room temperature
 2g fresh yeast
 A baking dish lined with baking paper

METHOD

- To prepare the sourdough starter, dissolve the fresh yeast in tepid water. Place the flour in a mixing bowl and add the dissolved yeast. Using your fingers, work it together for a few minutes, then shape into a ball. Cover with a clean cloth and leave it to rise for 10–12 hours in a warm place.
- To make the dough, in a large bowl, mix 270ml plus 2 tablespoons water with the flour, little by little, then knead to obtain a homogeneous elastic dough that is difficult to handle. Add the ball of starter dough and the salt. Carry on kneading until it is possible to form a larger ball. Place the dough on a surface sprinkled with flour. Knead for another 10 minutes to a more consistent dough, while incorporating the lard. Reserve the dough in another large bowl that has been lightly coated with oil. Cover with a clean cloth and leave it to rise in a warm place for another hour.
- Preheat the oven to 240°C/220°C fan/Gas 8. Place the dough on the floured surface again, and patting lightly with your knuckles, remove some of the air. Knead again into a ball. Divide this into 10 equal flat round shapes before placing in the prepared baking dish. Bake in the preheated oven for 10–12 minutes until they are light in colour.
- Grate the tomatoes to a pulp over a bowl. Pour in the olive oil and season to taste with salt.
- Once the molletes are baked and cooled, split each one open, spread with the tomato sauce, drizzle with olive oil and serve.



GATHER *in the greenhouse*

If space allows, set up a table and chairs in the greenhouse and enjoy a dining experience made that little bit more special with the fragrance of scented summer plants. Style the table to celebrate the late summer setting with a tablecloth and cushions in floral or leafy print designs. To continue the theme, use garden plant markers in mini plant pots as place setting cards and, for evenings, illuminate the space with a string of fairy lights wrapped around

a vintage chandelier suspended from the ceiling, dot a few garden lanterns on shelves between the plants, or transform a few humble terracotta pots into a greenhouse-inspired candle holders. ▶

Tablecloth, Fern and Dragonfly, Lichen, £69 a metre; cushions (from left): Fern and Dragonfly, Hay, £69 a metre; May Blossom, Light Peach/Charcoal, £76 a metre, all Vanessa Arbuthnott

ESCAPE *to the beach*

Make the most of the warm sunny days and head to the coast. Whether for the day, or a little longer, there is nothing more soul satisfying than the sight and sound of the sea, the smell of saltwater and, of course, the feel of the sand between the toes. Pack a towel, chair, sunscreen and a picnic and find a spot away from the crowds. With hundreds of miles of coastline, our island nation is home to plenty of quiet coves and long stretches of sand. Visit the beachguide.co.uk to find something to suit any taste, from the wild, windswept sand dunes and majestic setting of Bamburgh in Northumberland to the creative hub of St Ives in West Cornwall with its cobbled lanes and coastal charm.

Mandisa beach chair, £83.50, from a selection, Lene Bjerre



LINGER *for longer*

If the weather allows, make the most of lasting warmth and stay at the beach into the evening and wait to watch the sun set. There is something quite mesmerizing about the sunlight twinkling on the ocean, so find a spot with a panoramic view, pour a cool drink as a prelude to a supper on the sand and watch the sun go down. Beach locations often have picnic-style wooden tables and benches, which, with a few accessories, can be transformed into a stylish set up for a seaside supper. If it is permitted, light a barbecue or fire pit and enjoy the warmth of the embers. For classic coastal style, team tableware in fresh white with accessories in natural materials and rustic textures such as woven seagrass placemats and wooden serving boards and bowls. Add plenty of cushions, lanterns and a stack of blankets for when the temperature dips, then sit back and enjoy. ■

Picnic tumbler glasses, £8 each; White melamine plates, from £8; White melamine dipping bowl, £6; Blue Stripe Tufted seat pad, £25; Bruton cutlery, £165 for a set of 24; Marble pinch pots, £45 for a set of two; Whitewashed rattan round placemats, £16 each; napkins, from £28 for a set of four, all The White Company





SUNNY DAYS

Enjoy the heat of late summer with garden gatherings set against a cheerful combination of bold stripes, nostalgic gingham, joyful sunflowers, and foodie treats made from garden-grown produce

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



It is easy to think sunflowers only come in yellow but there are many different varieties, including blush pink and chocolate brown. Combine them with flowering fennel, echinacea or whatever is most abundant in the garden currently and tie the whole together with silk ribbons in matching colours. *Hand-dyed silk ribbons from a selection by Cfleursdesign via Etsy.co.uk*



Eating in the garden is one of the most joyous treats of summer, so make it special by creating a tablescape inspired by the season. Position a garden table close to the most floral spot in the garden so guests can benefit from a full and colourful border view. Forgo the need for shade as this gathering is a celebration of good weather, just make sure sunhats and sunscreen are available. A jolly yellow block-stripe tablecloth (made from Eston Sunflower fabric by romo.com) sets the scene on the table and is a perfect base for a summer floral centrepiece.

Even if the English weather is not on our side, sunflowers will bring a cheery feel to the table. The large heads of the flowers and thick stems require sturdy vases when displayed in an arrangement. Choose a heavy ceramic jug for the main arrangement and amber-coloured glass vases for shorter stems. Here (on the previous page), the large floral arrangement includes sunflower heads, rudbeckia, dahlias, echinacea cones and eupatorium, all haphazardly arranged in a vintage ceramic jug embossed with a sunflower design. Junk shops, charity shops and bric-a-brac stalls at summer fairs are great places to search for and find unusual vintage jugs and vases; look out for any with sunflower designs.

Comfortable seating around a table is always important, especially if planning to linger long after lunch in the sunshine. Make metal bistro chairs more comfortable with an array of gingham and striped cushions with ruffled edges in mellow tones of terracotta and yellow (available from a selection handmade by studioblackwell.co.uk). Make wooden benches more inviting with a seat pad fashioned from a roll-out mattress.

‘Position a table close to the most floral spot in the garden so guests can benefit from a full and colourful border view’



SUMMER MENU

On the table top combine amber-coloured water glasses with classic plates and linen napkins in muted plaster pink, mustard and soft brown colours. From plot to plate, sunflower seeds are not only a great food source for garden birds, they can also be used to bake cakes, breads and crackers for us to enjoy. Bring the sunflower theme directly to the menu by making a lemon and sunflower seed cake (right) to serve guests with cups of tea or coffee after lunch.

ABOVE Embroidered accessories are so popular and this is a perfect bag for shopping, gathering flowers or heading out into the garden with a book, blanket and bottle of water.

LEFT Create a comfortable spot to relax by arranging cushions and throws on a garden bench or low wall. *Check and stripe cushions, from £55, Studio Blackwell; Sunflower yellow cushion, £105 for a pair, Sylvia & Margot; Bloomingville Cianna throw, £25, Trouva*

BELOW This plate, a lucky find a few years ago at Anthropologie, happily joins a muted mustard linen napkin for sunflower season. A Helianthus 'Lemon Queen' sunflower is laid on each place setting.



LEMON AND SUNFLOWER SEED SLAB CAKE

This is an easy cake to make with a food processor – the seeds get chopped up which adds a lovely texture and flavour and it breaks them up so that the nutrients are easy for the body to absorb. It is possible to use a handheld mixer instead, just chop the seeds roughly before adding them to the cake mix.

Makes one 24cm x 24cm cake

INGREDIENTS

200g soft butter
200g caster sugar (or honey)
75g sunflower seeds
4 free-range eggs
200g self-raising flour
zest of 2 lemons

For the icing:

175g icing sugar
3 tbsp lemon juice
50g sunflower seeds, toasted in a dry pan over a medium heat

METHOD

- Preheat the oven to 175°C. Line a 24cm x 24cm tin with baking paper.
- Put the butter, sugar and sunflower seeds in a food processor and pulse until the ingredients are combined.
- Add the eggs and pulse again until incorporated. Add the flour and lemon zest and process again briefly until just combined.
- Scrape the batter into the prepared tin and bake for 20–25 minutes or until golden brown and springy to the touch. Allow to cool in the tray.
- To ice the cake, simply mix the icing sugar and lemon juice together until no lumps remain and pour over the cooled cake.
- Decorate with the toasted sunflower seeds and a few edible flowers. ▶

ABOVE Serve the lemon and sunflower seed cake decorated with edible sunflower petals and nasturtium flowers.



CREATIVE SPACE

Make a shed, summer house or outbuilding a dedicated space to potter, paint, or arrange flowers in this summer. Think charming country cottage with a garden spilling over with rambling roses, dancing sunflowers and a relaxed tapestry of other blowsy blooms. This type of setting is a positive concept that embraces the rural lifestyle, one that works in harmony with nature and focuses on growing our own food and flowers. Aesthetically, it is a look that takes inspiration from the English countryside, and features nostalgic and romantic ideals.

Start by giving the chosen space a clear out and tidying it up. Make room to introduce a sturdy table, ideal for creative projects, then style the area with pretty gardenalia, such as Sussex trugs, terracotta pots, vintage flower show buckets and plenty of baskets. Add inspiration by dotting vases of freshly cut flowers on the surfaces. Any garden building is also a great space to condition freshly cut blooms as it will be cool. Pin up some fabric against one wall as a backdrop for a still life display to paint or draw from or simply admire. Gather a selection of garden and botanical books which can be laid out on the table, so they are to hand when inspiration strikes or to look up a new flower spotted in the garden. Green metal vintage flower vases and buckets bring a sense of nostalgia to the space. Find these via Etsy or at vintage fairs and events. ■

LEFT Add a large table or workbench to ensure there is enough room to carry out creative projects, from

flower arranging in an array of vintage vessels to still-life watercolours to adorn the home or give to loved ones.

ARTWORK: SARAH PRALL SUNFLOWER VARIETIES COPY THE ENGLISH GARDEN MAGAZINE

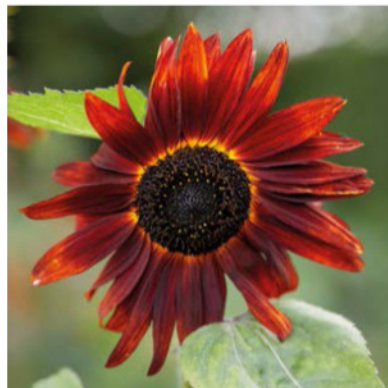
CHEERY VARIETIES TO GROW

With their sturdy stems and flamboyant flowers, sunflowers are the perfect addition to a cutting garden



SOLAR FLASH

This dwarf sunflower reaches around 50cm tall, so it is ideal for growing in a container or at the front of a border. The flare is particularly eye-catching, making it a super choice for cut flower arrangements and a brilliant addition to any garden.



RED SUN

A traditionally tall sunflower, this variety reaches 1.8m, so is best at the back of the border. All annual sunflowers are easy to grow from seeds sown from March to May. Sow two seeds together and thin out the weaker seedling if both come through.



EARTH WALKER

Expect flowers in a range of warm, autumnal, bronzey shades in this vigorous variety (which is not strictly a sunflower) which can reach a staggering 3m tall. Flowers are abundant as the stems are multi-headed, so it is a great choice for cutting.



LEMON QUEEN

This perennial sunflower will return year after year to form large 1.5-2.5m-tall clumps of foliage topped with dancing, pale yellow flowers. They are daintier than those of an annual sunflower but very pretty. Try the Chelsea chop in May to prolong the display.

Freshly cut flowers will benefit from being plunged into cold water and left to drink for a while in a cool place like a shaded shed or workroom before being arranged in vases to style a table or as bouquets to give to guests as they leave.





A magical ESCAPE

Discover and seek inspiration from a horticultural wonderland with garden writer Vanessa Berridge at lesser known National Trust property Packwood House in Warwickshire

ABOVE Laid out in the 1930s by Baron Ash, the Sunken Garden has raised brick beds around a rectangular pool. Planting features ant grasses, sisyrinchiums, self-seeded verbascums, *Stipa tenuissima* and *Erysimum* 'Bowles's Mauve'.

LEFT Pleached 'Golden Hornet' crab apples give year-round structure to the kitchen garden, as well as providing golden fruit in autumn. Planting mixes sunflowers, *Sidalcea* 'Party Girl', *Echinops* 'Veitch's Blue', self-seeded *Digitalis purpurea* and grape vines.



The dipping pool is a 2012 recreation of an earlier 18th-century pool in the kitchen garden. It is at the centre of double borders of *Salvia sclarea* var. *turkestanica*, annuals and six-foot 'Summer Drummer' alliums.

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About the expert

Dr Lucy Worsley is chief curator at Historic Royal Palaces and the author of several books. She has presented TV shows for Channel 4 and the History Channel.

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Packwood House has settled comfortably over the centuries into a sleepy Warwickshire hollow, with red brick walls softened by planting and always those magnificent topiary yews – perhaps one of Packwood’s most intriguing features. This is not a grand mansion, but a squire’s home divided from farm buildings and a walled kitchen garden by a country lane.

Between 1924 and 1931, Baron Ash, the son of a wealthy industrialist, took Packwood back to its Elizabethan roots by removing Georgian and Victorian additions and replacing later sash windows with leaded ones. His vision of improvement also took in the garden, noting its early 17th-century framework: the iconic Yew Garden, the front gazebo and the entrance court and kitchen garden walls all appear on a 1723 estate plan with many of the yews and much of the box hedging dating from the early 1600s. The result of Ash’s work and most recently that of Mick Evans, head gardener from 2000–2023, is a garden perfectly in sympathy with both house and parkland.

The curious collection of trees that make up the Yew Garden is known as the Sermon on the Mount – a ‘multitude’ of smaller yews lead up the slope towards the Master, reached by a box spiral and flanked by four Evangelist and 12 Apostle yews.

Yet this is more than a standalone feature; expectation builds towards it through clever use of colour, starting with pale blue and silver borders in the entrance court. The branches of a 19th-century ‘Brown Turkey’ fig on one wall are trained in elaborate spirals to draw attention to its leafless structure in winter.

A Sunken Garden, created by Baron Ash in the 1930s, has a stone-edged pool surrounded with raised beds of crushed brick. Planting has been adapted to drought-tolerant grasses, sempervivums, parahebes, deep blue *Eryngium x oliverianum* and fierce-looking Himalayan *Morina longifolia* with pink flowers.

Among the lawns of the Carolean Garden, borders are planted in the ‘mingled’ style, advocated by the early 19th-century garden writer and designer John Claudius Loudon in which individual plants or groups of plants are repeated through a border. A textured, contemporary blend of hardy and tender perennials, annuals and wild flowers flourishes in the Yellow Border through supporting cages of hazel coppiced from the estate.

The Double Borders, along the stone path between the house and the Yew Garden, also reinterpret Loudon for the 21st century. Structural yucca, *Stipa gigantea* and cardoons are repeated – the golden hues of giant oat ▶

ABOVE Some yew shapes in Packwood House’s Sermon on the Mount garden possibly date from the early 1600s. A 10-year project began in 2014 to help regenerate yews struggling in heavy clay soil compacted by visitor numbers.



grass picking up on the render of the house, and the cardoons its silvery drainpiping and window frames. Among these uprights are lower-level perennials and annuals in pinks, purples and blues, and self-seeded echiums and poppies.

A semi-circle of red brick steps leads up to the hotter-coloured borders of the Raised Terrace planted in bronzes and reds. Evergreen laburnum, *Piptanthus nepalensis*, repeats on the diagonal along the borders. *Aeonium* 'Zwartkop' and *Phormium* 'Bronze Baby' pick out a copper beech in the park, while fiery red *Hemerocallis* 'Stafford' and *Abutilon* 'Patrick Syngé' tone with the garden walls. Tender perennials, such as cannas and tibouchina, are over-wintered in greenhouses before replacing tulips and wallflowers. "In summer, we're planting out annuals," says senior gardener Robyn Booth. "Then in autumn we're cutting back, mulching, lifting and planting bulbs."

Across the lane from the house is the walled kitchen garden, a medley of flowers, fruit and vegetables. Booth calls this her "kingdom; a place to have fun and play with colour". The garden was restored in 2012 and planted out with four main productive plots, as in the 1723 estate plan. A dipping pool of traditional lime mortar marks the centre while pleached 'Golden

Hornet' crab apples and stepover and espaliered fruit add a framework. Robyn looks for diversity rather than quantity: she enjoys trialling new varieties, such as tomatillos or 'Nine Star' cauliflowers, short-lived perennials that produce several smaller heads over two or three years.

Globe artichokes, raspberries, strawberries, gooseberries, garlic, cherries and asparagus are mixed in one quarter; runner and broad beans, radishes, beetroot and herbs in another. Flowers add froth but also attract pollinators to tomatoes and pumpkins, and nasturtiums distract aphids and caterpillars. "We are trying to keep things in balance," explains Robyn. "We don't use sprays, so accept a certain amount of damage."

Running through wide central borders are six-foot spears of purple-stemmed *Allium* 'Summer Drummer' and *Salvia sclarea* var. *turkestanica*, above self-seeded nigella, poppies, marigolds (to lure black fly away from beans) and *Achillea* 'Cerise Queen' for hoverflies and butterflies. As a guest in 1934 wrote in the visitors' book, Packwood is "a house to dream of, a garden to dream in". Centuries on, Packwood's history continues to grow and fulfil such garden dreams. ■



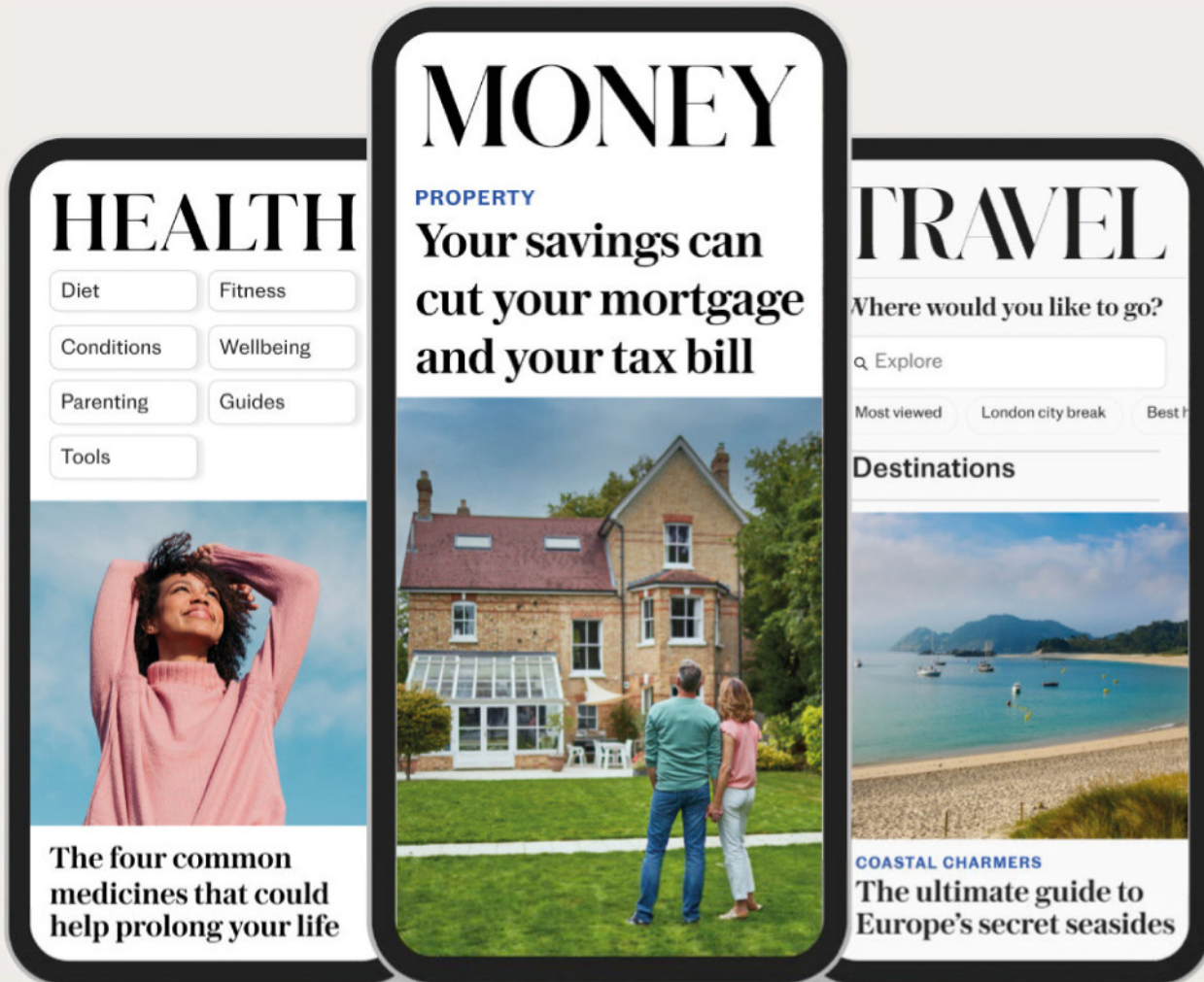
FURTHER READING

Garden Heaven by Vanessa Berridge is published by National Trust Books and priced £16.99.

ABOVE A *Catalpa bignonioides* 'Aurea' fronts a 17th-century gazebo. Packwood House in Warwickshire is open daily throughout the summer. For full information to plan a trip, visit nationaltrust.org.uk/packwood

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'Nothing makes me happier than being surrounded by nature'

place to play with his friends. We used Cole & Son's Secret Garden wallpaper which is beautiful. My favourite room is the kitchen (left), painted in Beetle Green and Rebecca's Room, both by Claybrook.

How does your eye for jewellery design translate to your interior design aesthetic?

Nothing makes me happier than being surrounded by nature and I love bringing the outdoors into our home too. We have lots of natural oak, mixed with blues, greens and pink fabrics and botanical wallpapers. The house is always full of flowers and plants and the large windows mean we have beautiful light and views from every room.

Are you inspired by your home?

My collections have a strong theme of nature running through them, celebrating its millions of mini miracles. Much of this is inspired by the secret island in our garden, which has the River Coln running around it. We can sit in the evenings and watch everything from kingfishers and otters to frogs and water voles here depending on the time of year. The inspiration is endless.

Your jewellery is made in England, do you like to surround yourself with English designs at home?

I was born in Colombia, before moving to the US for a few years and then Scotland, so from a young age I have had an eclectic style. From our travels, we have ceramics from Vietnam, and rugs and cashmere blankets from India. But supporting English and local designers is important to me too. We love upcycling so have a 1970s sofa we had reupholstered in Nina Campbell's Altai fabric and some vintage armchairs upholstered in Christopher Farr cloth. Many of our curtains and blinds are made with fabrics by Barneby Gates.

What should no English home be without?

A daybed in the garden covered in scatter cushions and a throw. Somewhere to relax with a book and a glass of chilled rosé. ■

catherinezoraida.com

My English Home

Catherine Zoraida finds inspiration for her eponymous jewellery brand (worn by HRH The Princess of Wales and Beyoncé among others) from the Cotswold countryside surrounding her home

Where do you live?

I live in the Cotswolds with my husband Ollie, our 18-month-old son August and our Bedlington-whippet cross, Fox-in-Socks.

What kind of house do you live in?

It was built in the Edwardian era, around 1906 and was originally used as the village hall before we converted it into our home in 2013. We were newly married and when we saw it, we knew it would make the perfect home. There was so much work to do, but the potential was huge, with its beamed apex ceilings and views out to the meadows.

Why do you love living in the country?

I love that you can just walk out of the door and feel yourself unwind. It is such a beautiful area, with miles of rolling fields and meadows, but we are also lucky enough to have good friends who live nearby.

How have you made it your own?

Our home continues to evolve as our family does. It is full of colour and prints and art, including pieces from Tom Hammick. We have just finished August's playroom where we built a stage with a slide and an arched wall with curtains so he has a really cosy



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