

The

ENGLISH HOME



Celebrating the essence of English style

October 2024 | Issue 236 | £5.99 | UK Edition

NEW SEASON UPDATES

ABUNDANT INSPIRATION FOR AUTUMN INTERIORS

100

Best buys from the new collections

INTERIOR DESIGNERS' TRICKS TO ADD SPACE & LIGHT

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Photo: Featuring our Shaker Cabinetry painted in Little Greene's Dark Pearl, one of the five bespoke styles we offer

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A letter from home

Welcome to the October edition of *The English Home*, which finds us keen to share an early peek of the new season's collections with you. From the latest wallpaper and fabrics to furniture and accessories, we've curated our favourite new finds to update and refresh classic English homes for the months ahead. I'm tempted by the rich, warm tones and enticing mix of textural and sculptural pieces on offer this season, but there is much to explore for all tastes. What will you choose?

In this issue, you'll also discover how to harness the new neutral tones when decorating, and the tricks interior designers use to add visual space and light to interiors (without extending, building or raising the roof!).

It's at this time of year we start to spend a little more time indoors and the view outside perhaps comes in to prominence more than it did in the summer months, along with thoughts of getting ready for the cooler months ahead. We decided this was the perfect time to bring you a comprehensive guide to window treatments, including how to frame a view, work with tricky shaped windows and layer curtains, blinds and even shutters in your home.

We also celebrate British wool in all its glory for Wool Month, and explore seasonal pursuits, along with an in-depth look at buying the perfect greenhouse for an English garden.

Finally, we are hugely grateful to the homeowners who have been so generous in sharing their beautiful homes with us this month. We hope their colour-filled and characterful homes fuel further ideas for updates to usher in the new season.

Samantha

Samantha Scott-Jeffries, Editor

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2 OCTOBER 2024

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2 OCT 2024**

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NOTEBOOK

Insider news, people to watch, objects of desire and unmissable events ➤

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Elevating the everyday

Playful pieces in the home act as 'happiness triggers' to raise a smile and elevate the everyday with verve and joy. This is the spirit of homeware designer Birdie Fortescue's second collaboration with fashion stylist Sarah Corbett-Winder. Sarah's motto "more is always more" injects energy and personality into the capsule collection, while Birdie's keen eye for co-ordinating pieces allows different items to be layered cohesively. Nesting tables, rugs and runners, stools, an armchair, lamps, trays, candlesticks, bins and more feature bold tones anchored by a signature stripe. Birdie says: "I'm immensely proud of our second collaboration, which seamlessly marries classic with quirky – elevating interiors through fun finishes with a nod to the traditional."

birdiefortescue.co.uk



ABOVE Jess and Edward are paying homage to a natural wonder, acanthus. **TOP RIGHT** The finished light is artfully detailed.

RIGHT The lights are available in Olympian Green, Persian, Stone White and Malahide, and bespoke colourways.

Illuminating Partnership

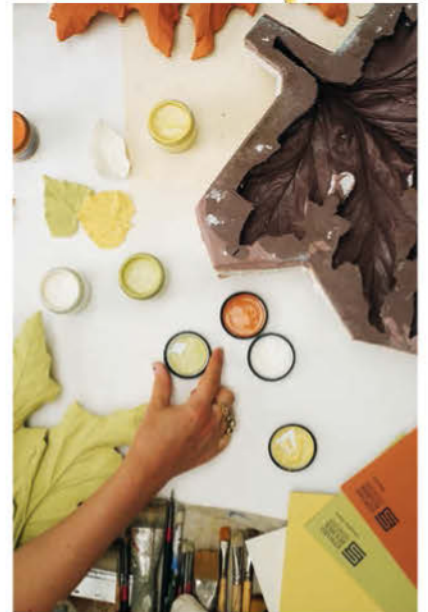
Edward Bulmer and Jess Wheeler

United by a shared passion for the raw beauty of nature, Edward Bulmer and designer and artist Jess Wheeler have collaborated on a new lighting collection, hand-painted in Edward Bulmer Natural Paint hues.

Inspired by Bulmer's garden and collection of antiquarian botanical books, the lights playfully rearticulate foliage from the sculptural acanthus plant. Jess, who works with metal, plaster and stone with a nostalgic, nature-driven narrative to remind us of the beauty and fragility of our natural world, says: "Walking around Edward's garden and woodland together led us to discover a shared love of the majestic plant."

Edward adds: "No other plant unites the ancient and modern world, architecture and sculpture, nature and artifice quite like acanthus. My roots are in classical architecture and its roots are in the adoption of forms first used over 2,000 years ago. Prince among these was the acanthus plant with its wonderful leaves and tendrils. I could think of no better leaf to offer Jess to work her magic - it grows today, as it did then, with the vigour to reach skyward with its towering floral bracts and luxurious lobed leaves."

edwardbulmerpaint.co.uk; jesswheeler.com



Crafted To Last

Fine furniture by Alfred Newall

From an early age, Alfred Newall learnt how to work with natural materials to craft furniture with care. Today his fine furniture and home accessories fuse his love of craftsmanship, tradition and utility, honouring the past while meeting the requirements of modern living. From beds, tables and desks to mirrors, lamps and more, everything is made to last a lifetime and improve with age.

Bobbin elements lie at the heart of his brand, including in the new Harvest range. "The bobbin leg is really an old design," he says. "This type of furniture, created using a lathe turning and a waving, bobbin effect is something that you see in lots of Victorian furniture or even earlier and my work is a reference to that. It's just such a simple thing that is really quite effective. You get a lovely cut into the wood, especially when we do them in oak. So you can see how the grain is affected by this cutting and waving pattern. It's an amusing design in a way - it's really pleasing."

Alfred trained at The Building Crafts College and worked for Plain English before setting up his own practice in 2010. He works alongside a team of skilled craftsmen in the South Downs using sustainably sourced wood and traditional methods.

alfrednewall.com ▶



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ABOVE LEFT William Yeoward Crystal glassware exemplifies fine craftsmanship.

ABOVE RIGHT Royal grocer Fortnum & Mason is world famous for its hampers.

LEFT Heirlooms is one of the world's leading manufacturers of luxury bespoke bed, bathroom and table linen.

BELOW Humble Cornish barber William H Penhaligon rose to the Royal Court with his experimental fragrances, founding Penhaligon's in 1870.

By Royal Appointment

New Royal Warrants

Their Majesties The King and Queen have granted the first Royal Warrants of their new reign. The ultimate accolade for any business, of the 145 companies chosen by The King, all of which supply the Royal household, seven of them were also granted a Royal Warrant of Appointment to The Queen. Royal Warrants are usually granted for up to five years and holders can use the Royal coat of arms on their products, packaging, stationery, advertising, premises and vehicles.

Known as 'the Royal grocer', Fortnum & Mason has been awarded the Royal Warrant of Appointment to both The King and Queen. The historic Piccadilly emporium was established in 1707 by William Fortnum and Hugh Mason. A joint Royal Warrant was also bestowed by Their Majesties upon Bond Street luxury stationer Smythson.

Historic fragrance houses Penhaligon's (established in 1870) and Floris (founded in 1730) were also named among The King's Royal Warrants. His Majesty is known to be a passionate gardener, and garden designers Julian and Isabel Bannerman have been awarded his Royal Warrant, as has greenhouse and coldframe specialist Woodpecker Joinery and floral designer Shane Connolly.

Interior designer Mikhail Pietranek was awarded The King's Royal Warrant, having worked with His Majesty since 2002 – when he was The Prince of Wales – aiding with the refurbishment of many royal properties.

His Majesty also bestowed his Royal Warrant upon William Yeoward Crystal and Devon crystal specialist Royal Brierley, Heirlooms fine linen, The Caverswall English China Company and *objets d'art* expert Halcyon Days. Antique rug, carpet and tapestry purveyor Mansour, Weldon hardwood flooring, tile specialist Porcelanosa and mattress maker Sleepzee also received The King's Royal Warrant. ▶





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LEFT Decorative artist Lucinda Oakes with her grisaille panel.
BELOW After gaining a Fine Art BA and MA and travelling, she started painting on silk and sold scarves to Liberty.
BOTTOM Her watercolour paintings form part of the sale.



Art Of Legacy

The Lucinda Oakes Selling Exhibition

For 30 years, artist George Oakes played a pivotal role at iconic interior decorating firm Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler, painting alongside John Fowler and overseeing the entire studio output. In 1973, the first off-the-shelf Colefax and Fowler fabrics launched, and George's first collections including Bowood and Fuchsia chintzes have remained in production ever since.

Fast-forward to this year, and Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler will host a selling exhibition of works by decorative artist Lucinda Oakes – George's daughter. Running from 7–26 October at 89–91 Pimlico Road, London, the sale will include her original watercolours, grisaille and *trompe l'œil* decorative panels and floral plinths displayed in the showroom

and in a window by chairman Wendy Nicholls. Founded in 1934, Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler is the longest-established interior decorating firm in Great Britain, this year marking its 90th anniversary.

Lucinda says: "My biggest influences are my father, with whom I painted often, and John Fowler. I began painting in the mid 1990s, when the art form was in demise. Fortunately, the decorators at Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler never wavered in their passion for murals, wall painting and panels in the classical style. The firm has been such an integral part of our family history. I continue to work with them today on private commissions, so it is the greatest honour to showcase my work as part of the 90th anniversary celebrations." sibylcofax.com

Diary



Discover new collections at Decorex at London's Olympia from 6–9 October, with expert speakers including a panel discussion at 1pm on 7 October hosted by *The English Home* editor Samantha Scott-Jeffries on where to invest and save when renovating an English home. decorex.com



For exquisite art and antiques, head to the LAPADA Berkeley Square Fair in London, 23–27 October, with treasures from over 80 exhibitors, including new names added this year. lapadalondon.com



Marvel at Britt Willoughby's photographs of tulips, capturing their unique markings, as part of the *Absorbed By The Beauty* exhibition at Thyme near Southrop in the Cotswolds from 5 September 2024 to 31 January 2025. thyme.co.uk ■

FEATURE SARAH FEELEY PHOTOGRAPHS P15 © BOZ GAGOVSKI P16 (TOP) © LOTTIE HAMPTON P18 (HERLOOMS) © ANDY CAHILL – PHOTOWORKS; IF (PORTRAIT) & MASON; P20 (PORTRAIT) © KATYA DE GRUNWALD; DIARY (MIDDLE) LENNOX CATO ANTIQUES FINE GILT BRONZE AND MALACHITE CASKET, FRENCH, 1870 © KAREN BENGALL PHOTOGRAPHY; (BOTTOM) © BRITT WILLOUGHBY



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DESIGN DISCOVERIES

Revel in the arrival of autumn by indulging in new ways with colour, sumptuous accessories and characterful designs with an enduring elegance



LUXURIOUS BED LINEN

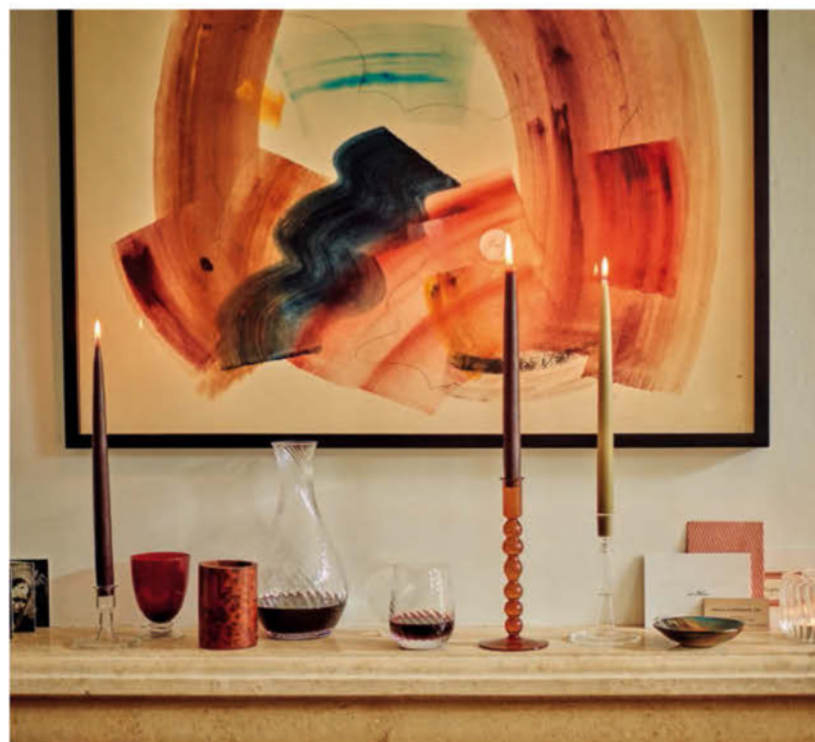
Rebecca Udall's Evora bedding (seen here) is one of four new designs made using extra-long cotton fibres for breathable bed linen that is also soft, smooth and comfortable. Perfect for creating a cocooning bed to climb into as the nights start to draw in.

Evora Double Row Corded bed linen, from £80 for a pair of standard Oxford pillowcases, Rebecca Udall

SINUOUS GLASS

The textured surface of this glassware will set a stylish tone for cosy autumn suppers. Mouthblown by artisans in Poland, the range includes tumblers, cocktail glasses, champagne coupes and a carafe.

Islington carafe, £49; Islington tumbler, £69 for a set of three; glass candlesticks, from £15, all Neptune



FURNISHING WITH FRILLS

Juxtaposing contrasting styles and colours can be the answer to enliven schemes. Here, this sofa evokes a smart mood with its sleek shape and tailored trim, while a bold striped vase and vibrant cushions with frilled edging add jaunty appeal.

Marlow three-seater sofa, £729; Striped Frill Olive cushion, £40; Chenille Stripe cushion, £60; Hand-painted Striped Stoneware vase, £15, all John Lewis & Partners

A COLOURFUL PALETTE

For those with a passion for incorporating colour in creative ways, Little Greene is introducing its concept of 'double drenching', the idea being to transform a room by painting two or more related colours on all available surfaces for a striking and impactful scheme. The colours can be as bold as each other, and from the same colour family (near or next to one another on the colour chart), but with different undertones.

Ceiling and cornice, Dark Brunswick Green, £57.50 for 2.5l Absolute Matt Emulsion; walls, Hopper, £64 for 2.5l Intelligent Matt Emulsion; skirting, Hopper and window surround, Citrine, both £80 for 2.5l Intelligent Eggshell, Little Greene ▶



SHOPPING



PICTURESQUE RUGS

For a practical rug that also serves as floor art, the Vista edit from Roger Oates Design is inspired by everyday patterns and natural shapes interpreted in abstract geometrical designs. Made from 100 per cent British wool, each rug is hand-finished by skilled craftspeople. *Terrain rug, £3,326, bespoke colours and sizes can be created up to 4m x 4m, Roger Oates Design*



REJUVINATING FABRICS

Revitalise is a new service from fabric house de Le Cuona, inviting customers to bring back any of the brand's fabrics which they are inspired to utilise in a different way. This includes fabrics damaged since purchasing, which can be transformed into another format to give the material a new lease of life.

This new cushion is created from a pre-owned throw; each transformation will be individually costed, de Le Cuona

BATHROOM COLLECTION

With an expertise of over 40 years in making timeless tiles and paint, Fired Earth is extending its product range to freestanding baths, basins and bowls, showers, furniture and brassware. Crafted by specialist artisans, the new lines complement its surface designs.

Pure speed lever shower in antique brass matt, £3,709; Provence Miramar tiles and Provence Toulon tiles, both £232.32 a square metre, all Fired Earth ▶



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MAKE AN ENTRANCE

Create a welcoming autumnal mood in a hallway or boot room with layers of texture. Sheepskins offer a warming visual and added comfort, while hanging storage baskets provide easy access and look stylish used in multiples.

Woven hanging storage basket, large, £70, small £65; New Zealand sheepskin single rug, Oyster, £150; and all other accessories, Cox & Cox

NATIVE SCENES

Capturing the charm of British wild animals in autumn inspired Sophie Allport's latest fabric design, which is suitable for curtains, blinds and cushions. Woodland Friends depicts playful red squirrels, hedgehogs and robins among falling leaves in earthy brown, orange and green.

Woodland Friends cotton fabric, £32 a metre, Sophie Allport



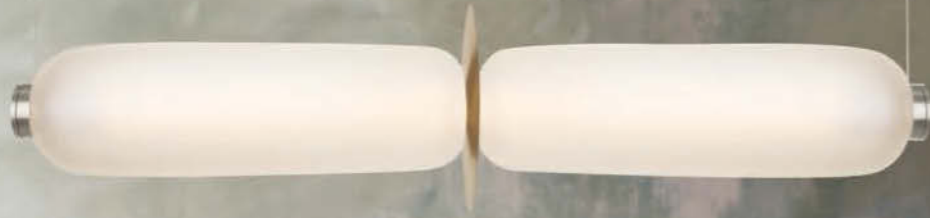
CONTAINING CHARACTER

This neatly sized cabinet opens to reveal a handwoven oak or ash back (seen in oak here). Practical for everyday use to store essential items and cherished pieces, the cupboard's intricate design creates a point of difference to add a decorative touch to a kitchen or dining room. Each cabinet is made to order and can be made with a Shaker pegs rail on the bottom. Customers can order the design as a bespoke piece and specify any personal alterations.

Weft cabinet, £799, Pilgrim ■



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Wicklewood Scallop dinner plates, £250 for a set of six, Maison Flâneur



Bespoke hand-painted lampshade, from £180, Bloomsbury Revisited

Growing Wild hand-painted lampshade, £665, Natasha Hulse x Beauvamp



Face plate, £210, Charlotte Salt at The Shop Floor Project



Karin's Portiere Sundborn cushion cover, £138, Cathy Nordström



Antinon tray, from £175, Luke Edward Hall for The Lacquer Company

PAINTERLY PIECES

Designs with a hand-painted aesthetic to add artistic flair and personal character to interiors

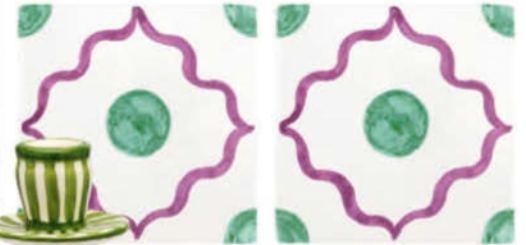


Indigo Brushstroke lamp, £135, Sweetpea & Willow

Romantic vase, available in various one-off designs, from £360, Polly Fern



Verdure, Blush/Petrol, £79 a roll, Ohpopsi



Beirut tiles, Mint and Lilac, £26 each Petra Palumbo



Unity earthenware candleholder, £45, Anna + Nina, Selfridges

Marni x Serax collection, from £65, Courthouse Interiors



FEATURE KATY MCLEAN



Ramble, from £3,349, The Rug Company

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SHOPPING



Venezia Sesitere handmade wood bookends, £295 for a set of two, Artemest



Pink glass art deco decanter, £55, Rocket St George



Vintage cut-glass tumbler with gold rim, £8, Rockett St George

Deckard marble paperweight, £175, Sweetpea & Willow



Paint (from left): Deep Reddish Brown, Charlotte's Locks and Orangery, £57.50 for 2.5l Estate Emulsion, Farrow & Ball



Nalla wool armchair, Charcoal, £1,150; Andro jute and cotton rug, from £125; Digha floor lamp, £325; Dantri jute and cotton cushion cover, £55; Puli recycled linen throw, £175, all Nkuku

Stanton brass floor lamp, £895, Lime Lace



Vaquero linen stool, Dijon, £395, Oka



Everyday Favourite Kato striped wool rug, from £243, Alternative Flooring

READING NOOK

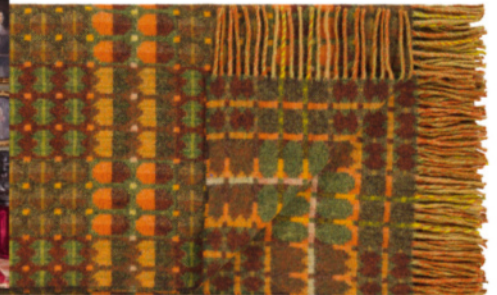
Classic essentials and little luxuries to create an elegant yet cosy corner to nestle in with a good book



Shinji wallpaper, £560.50 a roll, Zak + Fox for George Spencer Designs



Interior Design Review Volume 27, £59.95, Andrew Martin



Talbot Sienna merino wool throw, £170, Designers Guild

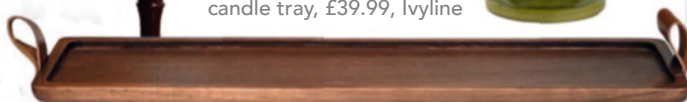


Airdrie chair in Parkwood wool Whiskey, £5,992 as seen, George Smith



Hourglass ceramic table lamp base in green, £295, Nix by Nicola Harding

Harvey walnut wooden candle tray, £39.99, Ivyline

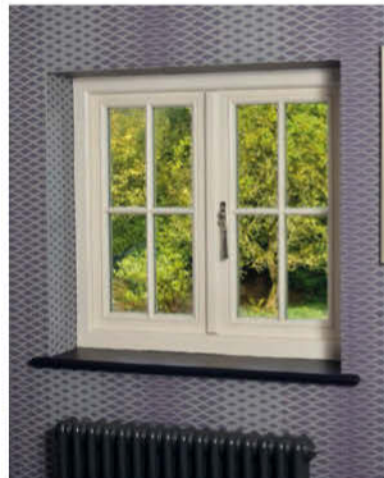


Chawton tall triple dresser with ladder, £14,660, Neptune



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THE EDIT

Timeless designs and enticing prints make these some of the British brands to watch this month

FEEL-GOOD FABRICS

Vibrancy is the hallmark of KaHo Prints, founded by Kate Murray, which specialises in beautiful, ethically sourced homeware fabrics.

A bohemian mood flows through the prints, which are designed by hand in West Sussex and inspired by Kate's love of French markets, before being hand-blocked by a two-generation family in Jaipur onto organic fabrics using AZO-free dyes.

The result is tablecloths, cushions, napkins and throws that actually soften as they age, adding unique character to a space – be it inside or outside – and are as carefree as they are colourful.

kahoprints.com



DRAWN TO PERFECTION

Linwood is a trusted British brand renowned for its originality and sustainable approach to fabric-making that takes classic English style and imbues it with patterns brimming with personality.

New for autumn 2024, its Small Prints III collection has been designed specifically with curtains in mind and will provide confident framing to any window in the home.

The four patterns, from a softly cascading ribbon to a Japanese-influenced 'smock' style, come in a range of shades from inky blues to warming oranges and browns, and are printed on 100 per cent linen sourced from Europe. They are suitable for upholstery too. linwoodfabric.com ▶



DISTINCT DESIGNS

The Fabric Collective, based in a townhouse in London's fashionable Chelsea, houses a carefully curated selection of wallpapers and fabrics from some of Britain's best designers.

Each of the designs are hand-blocked, woven, digitally printed or screen-printed on natural fabrics and in autumn 2024 several new designers will be added to the fold.

These include Nichola Taylorson, a textile designer who has launched a collection of wallpapers to sit alongside her hand-printed and embroidered pieces (*left*), and Zoe Glencross, whose fabrics (*far left*) are created using silkscreen or lino-carved techniques giving them a unique character for interiors. thefabriccollective.com

ROOMS WITH VIEWS

For the past four decades, Vale Garden Houses has been building luxury conservatories and orangeries that pay such close attention to a home's period features they look as though they have always been there.

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COUNTRY COMFORTS

Founded in 1997 by Katie Powell and James Thomas in the seaside town of Sidmouth in Devon, Forever England quickly gained devotees for its English-style selection of bedspreads and home accessories that stir memories of idyllic family holidays. Since then, the duo have begun designing their own range that includes their signature bedspreads, with the Constance patchwork style in shades of green and blue their best-seller.

With the beautiful landscapes of the firm's Somerset headquarters providing endless inspiration, it now has stores in Sherborne and Wells, and has even launched fashion lines for women and men. foreverengland.com ■

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PLAYFUL & PRACTICAL

A unique approach to the interiors has brought this Victorian villa in London back to life and created a family home filled with colour, pattern and joy

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPHY BOZ GAGOVSKI



Watts 1874's Ussé Chinoiserie wallcovering makes a statement in the kitchen, chiming with the decorative tiles on the splashback, which Alice was keen to include due to her love of birds. The existing kitchen has been repainted in a combination of Tea Green by Edward Bulmer Natural Paint and Sencha by Paint & Paper Library. The billiard room-style pendant light is from Empel Collections.



‘I like each room to have a distinct character. When you visit stately homes, they might have the Chinese room or the oak-panelled library’

A cohesive thread is often found woven through a house, a particular palette or mood that ties everything together, but this London townhouse is a veritable melting pot of styles. “I like each room to have a distinct character. When you visit stately homes, they might have the Chinese room or the oak-panelled library, and each has different types of furniture, colouring and decorations, and I really enjoy that,” says Alice Edwards, who has shared this home with her husband and three children for nearly two decades.

The couple are “honorary” south Londoners, having both moved to the area after university and remained ever since. Their previous home, located in the same borough, was of Victorian vernacular and “it really needed a lot of work done to it, so we’d already done a

renovation once before,” explains Alice. “But it was in a conservation area, so we weren’t allowed to do much in terms of extending and once we had three children it wasn’t quite big enough, so we decided to move.”

Their initial viewing of the three-storey Victorian house left Alice feeling deflated. “It was originally three flats, lived in by different generations of the same family. What is now our music room was a kind of motorbike workshop, so it was all blackened with greasy walls and there was a corrugated iron construction on the drive which looked like it had been adapted from an Anderson shelter,” she recalls. “My heart sank. We’d just finished renovating a house for seven years and I thought, ‘I can’t do this again.’” Yet, under it all, she could see the property’s potential. ▶

ABOVE LEFT Miniature long-haired dachshund Lulu lies in the utility room’s bespoke dog bed, complete with matching curtain, in Marcel linen by Antoinette Poisson.

ABOVE RIGHT An existing chair re-covered in Issa fabric in Indigo by Linwood alongside walls in Farrow & Ball’s moody India Yellow sets the tone for the snug.

A silk Oi Soi Oi umbrella ceiling light from Andlight brings a soft elegance to the snug. The bespoke ottoman was made by Laura Stephens' studio and covered in Sanderson's Lydham in Citron to complement the walls. On top sits a Bamboo tray from Studio Hám. A jute rug from Bombay Sprout anchors the seating area.





The previous configuration influenced the immediate structural changes Alice and her husband made. “Downstairs there was a shower in half of what is now the kitchen, so we knocked that through to make one big room,” she says. “The flat above also had a kitchen which we ended up using while the work was being done, before eventually turning it into an ensuite for the main bedroom.” Period features which had been removed over the years were restored and the house’s once-lost character began to reemerge.

The family’s first 15 years in their new home flew by. “Life was busy and we didn’t have time to think about anything,” explains Alice. However, a troublesome pre-existing addition to the property was the catalyst for change. “On the back of the kitchen there was a slightly rudimentary structure. It wasn’t too bad inside, but it wasn’t insulated and it got quite damp and cold. We would sometimes sit there in our coats having breakfast,” she remembers. “We always knew that we’d have to tackle that at some point, and the rest of the decoration had gotten very tired and really needed some updating.” ▶

ABOVE A bespoke armchair by Laura Stephens is covered in GP & J Baker’s Poppy Sprig fabric for an added floral touch in the dining area. A jib door leads to the utility room.

RIGHT Above the antique dining table and chairs hangs an armed pendant light from David Hunt Lighting. Built into the dresser, wall lights from The English Lamp Company highlight the antique ceramics sourced by Laura and Alice.







‘One constant in each room is the clever mixing of antiques among newer pieces. I think antiques give humanity and a soul to a house’

ABOVE Walls in Paint & Paper Library’s Canvas V set off the red and black accents in the music room. Shipped over from Denmark, the antique Gustavian secretaire was one of Alice’s big indulgences. A Love Your Home sofa, in Susie Atkinson’s Ticking fabric, is flanked by two Woodville table lamps from Vaughan Designs.

Having decided she didn’t want to tackle the remodel alone, Alice searched for a local interior designer and came across Laura Stephens. “Laura’s work looked very relaxed, with beautiful fabrics and lovely colours,” says Alice. “She came round and she just had a great smile and she was fun and really down to earth. I felt safe with her immediately.” Alice and her husband had planned to bring in a designer to help with the final touches to the house but ended up engaging Laura earlier to lead the build on one of the most significant changes: the downstairs extension.

Eager to avoid the “big white boxes with wall-to-wall windows” she’d frequently seen online, Alice wanted to make sure the extension felt in keeping with the house. Laura took a bespoke approach and designed several of the elements herself to allay Alice’s concerns, including the French windows with arch detailing and

the Gustavian-style dresser. “We needed a lot of storage space and although we considered an antique cupboard, it would never have been big enough. Laura came up with the idea of creating one and we used Eugenia Barrios Osborne, a specialist painter, who aged it to bring it together with the antique dining table and chairs,” says Alice.

When it came to decorating, creating a distinct character in each room meant Laura and Alice could let their creativity flow. “Laura was endlessly coming round with beautiful papers and fabrics, a cornucopia of colours and textures. It was a joy. It was like having someone come round with a big box of chocolates every week,” laughs Alice. Together they have created an exciting assortment of schemes, each welcoming and layered but relaying an intriguing narrative, from the vibrant yellow snug with an Asian twist to the ▶



ABOVE LEFT In the principal bedroom, an antique dressing table has been paired with a stool from Soho Home.

ABOVE RIGHT A bespoke wardrobe made by Laura's studio features decorative touches such as Jessica Light tassels and panels in Chelsea Textiles' Cupid fabric.

LEFT Paint & Paper Library's Caddie on the walls adds warmth to the bedroom scheme and sits beautifully with the headboard covered in Osborne & Little's Patara fabric. The Avalon bedside tables are from Trove by Studio Duggan.



garden room-inspired dining area infused with Swedish elements.

One constant in each room, however, is the clever mixing of antiques among newer pieces. “I think antiques give humanity and a soul to a house,” says Alice. Some were inherited by the couple, such as the Parker Knoll armchairs which belonged to Alice’s parents and have now been reupholstered and sit handsomely in the music room, while others were sourced from fairs and dealers. “I bought quite a few things from an antique dealer called Adam Calvert Bentley. His premises in Battersea, which I really

need to stay out of, is like an Aladdin’s cave and sumptuously beautiful things are piled around you everywhere you look,” she adds.

Indeed, Alice’s own home can be described as being full of beautiful things, and each room, with its prominent personality, offers a different type of escape from the world outside. While Alice enjoys each space for its own unique qualities, she can often be found in the music room. “I enjoy playing the piano and going into that room and shutting the door takes me to another world. It’s just so serene and peaceful,” she finishes. ■

ABOVE The main bathroom unites simple, classic designs for a timeless look. An elegant basin from London Basin Company sits on an antique stand. The Imperial plinth bath is from Albion Bath Company and the lantern is from Hector Finch.



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Potpourri vase (potpourri gondole).
 French, Sèvres, 1757.
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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VIBRANT REVIVAL

Working with a designer on the renovation of her 19th-century country cottage has given Joanna Nel the chance to rediscover her confidence and create artfully bold schemes

FEATURE CHARLOTTE DUNFORD PHOTOGRAPHY BOZ GAGOVSKI



Jewel tones and tactile materials bring warmth to the sitting room. Eliza sofas in Dijon and Leaf from Love Your Home and Neptune's Olivia armchair surround a footstool from The Bespoke Footstool Company upholstered in Colefax and Fowler's Delgado fabric in Red/Sienna.



‘We spend a lot of time together and reading books, so I really wanted to create some kind of cosy, inviting, warm space’

The pastoral scenes of Oxfordshire are a far cry from the desert backdrop of Saudi Arabia, a change welcomed by Joanna Nel, her husband, Neels, and their three sons during the pandemic. “We were looking to have more green and nature in our lives. We came for a visit to Oxfordshire and were blown away by how pretty it is,” recalls Joanna. “Having been in a concrete city in the middle of a desert for around five years, we were just so desperate to see trees and parks and footpaths.”

The couple began searching for a home towards the end of 2020, but with another lockdown looming, their plans were unexpectedly accelerated. “We had a window of a week where the estate agents were still showing properties. We flew out as the country went into another lockdown, and we’d only seen four or

five. It was either wait a really long time or just go for one of them,” Joanna explains. Luckily, one had caught their eye. Originally one of two farm cottages dating back to the 1800s, the home had been converted into a private dwelling around the 1980s. “It had been lived in since then, but not much had been done with it,” she adds. While it was on the small side for the family of five, the views over the fields and picturesque surroundings won them over.

It was the family’s love of the countryside that kept them going through the first taxing couple of years. “Because we came during lockdown, we couldn’t do anything. We’d come with just our suitcases so we had to order everything, every fork and spoon, every sofa and bed. We couldn’t be very creative or permanent in our decoration because we were just setting it up to ▶

ABOVE LEFT Vintage plates are a charming addition to the kitchen. The walls are in London Stone and the ceiling in School House White, both by Farrow & Ball.

ABOVE RIGHT AJ Joinery created the bench seating for the kitchen alcove, with seat mattresses and cushions in fabrics from Christopher Farr Cloth, Linwood and Fermoie made by Kim Fazackerley-Sale.

A deVOL Shaker kitchen in Mushroom and Clerkenwell Blue fills the new extension. A deVOL Heirloom Gaselier light and stools from The Wainhouse Company create a separate, less formal seating area at the kitchen island.





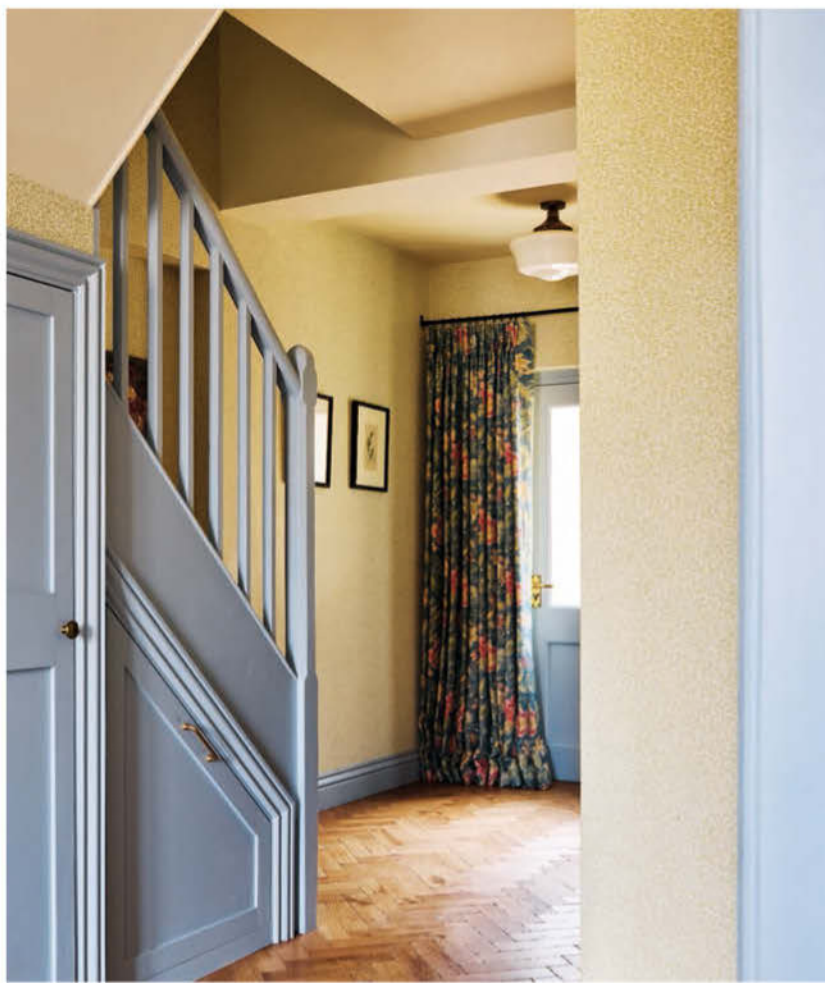
‘We definitely wanted to bring the outside in because that’s what we love about the location, all the green, plants and flowers’

live in,” says Joanna. “It was pretty tough, but we really enjoyed the surrounding areas. We walked into a gorgeous park over the back and found some old Georgian bathhouses where we would sit and have picnics.”

Eventually, restrictions were lifted, and a full renovation began. After putting plans in place and liaising with an architect, Joanna, who homeschools her children, realised the project would be too disruptive, so the family returned to the Middle East and spent time travelling while work was underway. The addition of a kitchen extension, with the principal bedroom and en-suite located above, was a transformative part of the project, leading the former kitchen to become a utility and cloakroom, while the garage was converted into a work-from-home space. Yet, with distance came complications. “If you’re not there every day, watching over what’s going on, mistakes happen which can be hard to rectify,” she explains. One such hitch was the placement of a waste pipe in the wrong location in the kitchen which resulted in a boxed-in area having to be built around it.

It was while having to navigate these issues that Joanna decided she needed professional guidance, which came in the form of interior designer Uns Hobbs. “I’d come across Uns’s Instagram by chance, having looked at lots of interiors pages,” explains Joanna. A bold red kitchen Uns had designed, featuring the same Delft tiles Joanna had admired and already bought for her own kitchen, sealed the deal. “Uns’s work has elements of classic style but with fun colour and it felt like a good fit,” she adds. Composing the initial brief, feelings of warmth and cosiness were at the forefront of Joanna’s vision. “As a home-educating family, we spend a lot of time here, so I really wanted to create an inviting space,” she says. “I wanted to keep the country cottage look but have it still feel fun.”

Colour is one of Joanna’s biggest passions, but she felt overwhelmed by choice and less confident than she



ABOVE LEFT Floor tiles from Fired Earth (now discontinued) lead from the utility room into the cloakroom. The wallpaper is Morris & Co’s Bower in Indigo/Barbed Berry. The painting was sourced from Willis and Co Antiques.

LEFT Woodwork painted in Parma Gray by Farrow & Ball contrasts against the subtle Standen wallpaper in Fennel by Morris & Co in the hallway. The School House flush ceiling pendant is by Mullan Lighting.

Living Quarter's Creeping Toadflax wallpaper lines the walls and sloped ceiling of the principal bedroom, and sits beautifully with Unnatural Flooring's sisal-look herringbone carpet and the chunky jute rug from Loaf. The vintage painting was sourced from Fern & Green.





‘Red is a colour I’ve never really worked with before and I was nervous to bring that in to our schemes, but we’ve really fallen in love with it’

ABOVE LEFT Situated off the principal bedroom, this characterful bathroom features Little Greene’s Ashes of Roses on the walls and panelling, next to crackle glaze Mediterranean Blue tiles from Tiles Direct.

ABOVE RIGHT A bath from Aston Matthews, painted in Farrow & Ball’s Calke Green, offers a spot for relaxation. The floor is Mandarin Stone’s Rosso Di Scacchi marble tiles.

once had been. “As a young London gal I used to love decorating with mad colours. I painted all my flats in crazy combinations, but then in my mothering years that courage just disappeared and I became really bland in my decorating,” she explains. Together with Uns, Joanna has rediscovered her sense of adventure.

Strong hues that feel bold but still have a softness to them dominate the house. From the rich, earthy palette in the sitting room to the playful pink-and-green bathroom. Yet, there were moments of hesitation along the way, including when Uns proposed a statement red for the bespoke bookcases and a pale blue for the woodwork. “Red is a colour I’ve never really worked with before and I was very nervous to bring that into our schemes,” says Joanna. “I was also anxious that some of the woodwork being blue was going to look odd, but we’ve really fallen in love with it all. None of the colours are too shouty, so they all blend together well.”

Alongside the colour palette, Joanna and Uns employed several clever techniques to create cohesion between the original rooms and newer extension. A vintage parquet flooring was laid in the kitchen, sitting room and entrance hall, decorative corning was installed in the kitchen and a mix of antique and contemporary furniture has been chosen, all working together to create a seamless, lived-in and layered look.

“We did quite a lot of antique painting sourcing, too. One of Uns’s thoughts was, to give the house more character, we should try to stick to original artworks as much as possible,” says Joanna. “As time goes on, I’ll definitely add more. You can’t just go out and get everything all at once, you’ve got to take your time, but one of the best things about working with Uns for me has been that I’ve learned so much from watching how she chooses things and puts them together. It’s given me a lot more confidence to make those choices myself.” ■



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The central core of the Grade II* listed house was built in the early 18th century, later extended to the left to form a stable block. To the right is the new drawing room extension.



INHERENT FLAIR



To the layers of gracious good taste inherited from her illustrious forebears, Esther Cayzer-Colvin has brought her own gimlet eye for colour and design to the restoration of her Wiltshire home

FEATURE CAROLINE DONALD PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES MCDONALD

Landscapes hanging over the chimney piece in the apple-green sitting room are by French artist André Dunoyer de Segonzac. The fabric on the armchairs is Hermant Pink/Red by Penny Morrison.



'I loved meeting all these extraordinary, creative people and learning the vocabulary of the buildings, even the chimney pots'

Accompanied by her pack of four dogs, Esther Cayzer-Colvin is an English gentlewoman of the old school, with perfect manners, a ready humour and a modesty unusual in this world of self-promotion; even her Instagram account is private. When it comes to the restoration of her early 18th-century home and the creation of a garden in a Wiltshire village straight out of a Jane Austin novel, she insists: "I don't think I have ever had an original thought; it is all plagiarised."

That, of course, is nonsense, though she could hardly not draw inspiration from her family: her father Michael Tree was an artist and also worked for her grandmother Nancy Lancaster, the influential post-war Anglo-American designer and co-owner at Colefax and Fowler; her mother, Lady Anne Tree, set up Fine Cell Work, a charity selling needlepoint sewn by prisoners. Lady Anne was a daughter of the 10th Duke of Devonshire, so grew up at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, and was sister-in-law of the eternally stylish Deborah, Duchess of Devonshire, née Mitford. Esther and her sister, the writer Isabella Tree, grew up at Shute House in Wiltshire, where the garden was designed for their parents by Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe.

However, the eight-bedroomed house that Esther and her husband Jamie bought in 2005 has been decorated in a classic-yet-contemporary, colourful and comfortable manner that is all her own. "It is my form of creativity. I used to paint, and in the ►

ABOVE RIGHT Esther Cayzer-Colvin sitting on the entrance steps to the house with her dogs Lucca and Effie.

RIGHT The entrance hall, with a view through to the garden. The side table was made for Ditchley Park, the Oxfordshire estate owned by Esther's grandparents Nancy Lancaster and Ronald Tree, which Winston Churchill used as a secret weekend base during World War II. The wallpaper is de Gournay's Askew and the leather stool came from an antiques fair.





early 1990s did backdrops for parties, but this is more my thing – I love colour and fiddling around with it.”

When the couple spotted the Grade II* red-brick manor house being advertised for sale in a magazine, they had been looking for a house for a while and had almost given up on ever finding somewhere. “We had got rather fussy as we actually loved where we were,” Esther explains. “But we came to have a look, rather talking ourselves out of it on the way.” Although very pretty, the house was in a state of gentle decline – they counted 27 buckets collecting rainwater on the top floor – but there was something rather romantic about the place. “We drove back home in almost complete

ABOVE LEFT The distressed leather chairs in the dining room were once owned by Esther’s uncle, the racing trainer Jeremy Tree. The painterly rug design is by Melissa Wyndham for Robert Stephenson, and the sconces are by Douglas McCleod Framing, based in Salisbury, Wiltshire.

ABOVE RIGHT A selection of blue-and-white Chinese porcelain is displayed in the hall, where the marks on the hall floor are the legacy of a house fire in the 1840s. Esther has used Moon Gold for the decorative slip details on the walls, inspired by Deborah, Duchess of Devonshire and “a softer colour than usual”.

LEFT Esther was inspired by the red leather walls of a Parisian hotel lift to cover the walls of the library-cum-card room in the same. The curtains are a reprint of a Colefax and Fowler archive fabric.



Italian-strung curtains in a Turkish-inspired patterned linen by Carolina Irving dress the drawing room's windows in the new wing. The sofa is from Howard & Sons, while the ottoman is from Robert Bradley Antiques.



The kitchen table is draped in a hand-blocked fabric by Speronella Marsh. Famille verte Chinese porcelain collected by Esther and Jamie lines the original dresser, where a Guy Taplin swan sits; it was a present from Esther's mother for her 18th birthday.



‘Decorating the house is my form of creativity. I used to paint, but this is more my thing – I love colour and fiddling around with it’

silence and then I burst out: ‘That is it. That is just the house.’” Jamie, fortunately, agreed.

There is no need for the buckets any more as the roof has been both repaired and raised, in order to make the upper floor less pokey, and the rest has been “replastered, replumbed, rewired, re-everything. There was quite a lot of structural work that had to be done,” Esther adds. The couple have also added a handsome new drawing room wing, also in red brick, with tall

windows looking out to the garden on three sides, so the light floods in. The entire renovation took over two years to complete. “I loved meeting all these extraordinary, creative people and learning the vocabulary of the buildings, even the chimney pots. I went to the place where they made them and chose all the pointy-cage tops to stop the jackdaws,” Esther says.

Each room is now filled with art, paintings and furniture, much of it made by creative friends or ►

ABOVE There was an arch in the brick outside but there was no longer a central window in the kitchen, so Esther and Jamie replaced it, including the mouldings and panels.



Esther's dogged attention to detail is what makes this place so personal: 'If one person does a house, you feel it has their signature and everything fits'

inherited by Esther. A fire destroyed Tangley House, Jamie's large family home in Hampshire, so there are only a couple of pieces from his side. "It is terribly sad but let's always try and look at the good things," he says. "It allows you to go off and collect your own stuff: so much here is an aide-memoire of where we have been or what we have done."

Although it might have been easier to bring in a professional designer (her cousins Jane Churchill and the late Melissa Wyndham, for example), Esther was determined to orchestrate the decor herself. "If one person does a house, you feel it has their signature and everything fits," she says, and it is her dogged attention to detail that makes the place so personal.

Manifestations of this include commissioning manganese tiles from Delft for the kitchen fireplace to tie in with the painted feathers of an antique porcelain duck she and Jamie bought in Paris; mixing greens with her friend Alice Clark, a specialist decorative painter, for stippling the walls of the sitting room until they got a particular cooking-apple hue she remembered from a photograph; or making sure the chinoiserie wallpaper from de Gournay that seems to bring the outside into the entrance hall had no depictions of man-made objects, or blue in it other than the birds and butterflies. "I wanted it to be green and silver, with not too much going on. It feels like air; I like it being a bit more uplifting," says Esther.

It is the same in the four-acre garden, much of which she designed with help from her friend, garden designer Frances Rasch, of Heale House in Wiltshire. ▶



ABOVE LEFT Esther used to sleep in one of these twin beds as a child when she would visit her grandmother Nancy Lancaster at Haseley Court. The original fabric was "a particularly 1950s green; it was very American and like sleeping in a salad bowl". They are now covered in Colefax and Fowler's Eaton Check.

LEFT Soane Britain's updated fern motif cloaks the "50-pence bathroom" on the upper floor, so-called because of a coin wedged in by the plumber to keep the cistern level.



The canopied bed is a copy by Christopher Clark Workshop; the original was made by Thomas Chippendale for the great 18th-century actor/manager David Garrick and is now in the V&A. The rug was handwoven on Hydra in Greece, one of the first things Esther and Jamie bought together.



With no views to write home about at the back and a desire for some privacy, as the house is in the middle of the village, they created a series of “rooms” hedged by yew and beech that turn the garden inwards and create their own microcosm. “The indoors merges into the outdoors and it works very well,” says Jamie.

Esther has brought some of Nancy’s Virginian influence to the garden too. Two white clapboard pavilions with ogee, cedar shingled roofs near the swimming pool are based on a folly at Colonial Williamsburg, which was built at roughly the same time as the house. “That simplicity is very much what my grandmother brought into her gardens,” says Esther. “They were never a ‘statement.’” Whether it is by osmosis, or the straightforward lifting of ideas that she declares it is, she has learnt well from the best. ■

ABOVE The terrace dining set was passed down by Esther’s grandmother, Nancy Lancaster. The wall is smothered in ‘The Generous Gardener’ rose.

LEFT In the front garden, a 19th-century Coalbrookdale bench is a place to rest in an allée of stilted hornbeam trees, box parterres and tall yew hedging.

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Filled with colour, pattern, antiques and whimsical modern collections, the sitting room has a joyful feel. The Rochester sofa, Wave bench in yellow velvet and Connaught stool are all from David Seyfried. A Nomad Letoon rug from Weaver Green anchors the seating area.





COLOUR *Confidence*

A vivacious and assured redesign has given this Oxfordshire cottage – a converted 18th-century farm building – unexpected character and verve

FEATURE KERRY HARPER-CUSS PHOTOGRAPHY BRENT DARBY



'I love that the sitting room feels like a little jewel box: the wallpaper makes it feel really special. Every time you sit in it, you notice some new detail in the print'

Some people develop decorative confidence through years of trial and error, others feel soothed only within cossetting neutral settings, rarer are those born with deep-seated instincts as to how to deploy the full potency of polychromatic design. Stepping into this cottage, which was developed in the 1980s from an 18th-century farm building, it is obvious that owner Olivia Emery is in the latter camp.

From the richly coloured woodwork to the treescape mural wallpaper which wraps its painterly branches around the sitting room, it is clear this home has been transformed by an assured hand. In her working life, Olivia regularly creates polished yet vivacious interiors for her interior design clients, and she has been able to fully give free rein to her creative expression since moving in May 2023 from a rental property in London to her new home in Oxfordshire.

When Olivia and her husband, Sam, determined to move to the country with their six-year-old daughter it was – as often is the case – for location, schooling and a better quality of life as well as because leaving London offered the best opportunity to gain more floorspace. It took two attempts to buy this five bedroom, two bathroom house at the heart of a pretty village but it was worth the wait.

“This was a very special house in comparison to everything else we had seen within our budget,” Olivia explains. “We loved the split layout, which has two staircases – one to reach three bedrooms and a bathroom on the family side, the other to go up to the two guest rooms and bathroom on the other. When friends come to stay – as they often do – everyone has privacy and you don’t hear each other at night.

“While the people who lived here before had very good taste – everything was in quite good condition – it just wasn’t my taste. I wanted to create a fun family home that represents what I do for a living while making the interiors comfortable and practical. Sometimes I can’t persuade clients to be as brave as ▶



ABOVE Olivia has worked in interior design for over 20 years. She set up her eponymous business in 2014 and now has clients across the UK. To find out more, visit oliviaemery.com

LEFT Using a large-scale mural wallpaper – Mythical Land Day Break by Kit Kemp for Andrew Martin – adds whimsy and character in the sitting room. The teal curtain fabric from Romo is trimmed with a Corinne border from Samuel & Sons.

The kitchen-diner features a characterful blend of old and new pieces including a vintage table from Sunbury Antiques Market, Chortler dining chairs from Loaf, and an Academy three-light ceiling pendant from Dar Lighting. The Ants artwork is by Maria Thurn und Taxis.





The staircase is painted in Play The Blues by Johnstone's. Deciding it needed details on the newel posts, Olivia found a set of acorn-shaped curtain-pole finials at Sunbury Antiques Market which fit perfectly.

BELOW The 18th-century former farm building in Oxfordshire sits on the edge of a tiny market square opposite the village pub.



‘I wanted to create a fun family home that represents what I do for a living while making the interiors comfortable and practical’

ABOVE RIGHT The family bathroom was enlarged by moving one wall a little further into the neighbouring bedroom. The Astonian Rimini roll-top bath from Aston Matthews is paired with taps from Lefroy Brooks. The wooden folk chair was sourced from The Old Flight House near Bicester.

I think they could be, so it’s nice to have been able to fully express my style here, knowing exactly what will work and seeing it come together.”

Olivia and Sam did invest in modest structural work, including moving walls for a bigger family bathroom and building in storage, but it is the decor that captivates attention. There are layers of pattern, detail and intrigue throughout – cushions and curtains are finished with braid or bobble trims, the dining room ceiling is papered in grass cloth, art injects wit and antiques add character. Even the original wooden beams are painted in tonal hues – a confident and successful decision.

“The beams were very dark, which I definitely didn’t want,” says Olivia. “The obvious solution was to strip them back and make them lighter, but my immediate inclination was to add colour. In fact, I always paint

beams where I can. I also almost always use one colour on all doors in common areas to create uniformity. I’ve done that here, although you’ll notice that each of the door frames are painted in the woodwork colour of the corresponding room. Here, the paint for the doors and both staircases was the first thing I chose.”

Tones of teal and blue appear throughout the house, as does the complementary hue of burnt orange. The observant visitor will also note an almost subliminal repetition of yellow from the sitting room sofa to cushion trims to bedspreads and accessories. It is this subtle linking from room to room that creates such effective visual flow.

The sitting room is Olivia’s favourite space. Using a large-scale mural wallpaper was a brave and unexpected choice against a relatively low ceiling but it wraps the room with atmosphere. “I love that it feels like a little ▶



‘You can mix a lot of layers and details as long as the tones are good, but each thing should answer to something else’



ABOVE The Dormy House headboard in the principal bedroom is cleverly upholstered with a William Yeoward tablecloth, while the curtains are in Colefax and Fowler’s Seaweed with a Fara Tassel fringe from Romo. A bedspread from Sarah K ties the look together. Oban wall lights from Vaughan Designs hang above the bedside tables Chelsea Textiles.

LEFT In Olivia’s daughter’s bedroom, a Greyhound armchair in Glacier Paradise from Andrew Martin adds a bold flash of colour. The curtains in Linwood’s rose small prints are finished with Romo’s Tufty Braid in Tutti Frutti.

jewel box: the wallpaper makes it feel really special. Every time you sit here you notice some new detail in the print,” Olivia says. She is a huge advocate for illuminating rooms with generous amounts of lighting and reveals: “You need a lot more lamps than people realise to really make a room work well and come alive at night. I have nine lights just in this one room, which – on paper – might sound excessive, but each has a different function and together they create zones and gentle layers of light.”

When asked how she has managed to pull together such a bold and seemingly eclectic array of details, Olivia says, “You can mix a lot of layers and details as long as the tones are good, but each thing should answer to something else. Everything has to have a connection in a whole house scheme – although not too connected, otherwise it looks twee. If you were to put all my fabric choices into one pile, they would all work together and that is what is so important because here the doors between the rooms are open all the time.”

Olivia’s self-assured and generous use of colour and pattern has created a home that is surprising and welcoming in equal measure. The kitchen awaits her touch when budget allows but already the cottage has been transformed to offer the warm embrace and optimistic mood she envisioned. ■

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STYLE INSPIRATION

Expert advice on window treatments and clever design illusions, using neutrals with panache, facts about versatile wool, and over 100 tempting buys from the new collections ►

CAPTURE THE MOMENT

The new Ottavia collection from Romo features painterly mural-like wallcoverings that depict the beauty of different seasons. Capturing the changing light and different flora throughout the year, this Turner-esque design encapsulates the moody, changing skies of autumn in soft heather tones. Also of note from Romo is the beauty of tumbling late-summer roses depicted in the mural on page 79, part of our selection of over 100 inspiring new designs to update the home as the season turns.

Cielo Mural, Heather, £195 a roll, Romo

100 NEW SEASON BUYS

This autumn sees the launch of hundreds of beautiful new fabric, wallpaper, lighting, furniture and accessories collections, these are a few favourites for classic English interiors

Every autumn we anticipate an exciting delivery of new designs for refreshing and revitalising English homes. Major industry events such as Focus at Design Centre

Chelsea Harbour and Decorex at Olympia are platforms for showcasing some of these new launches and we excitedly pore over previews, picking out our must-see and must-buy products. Here we have curated over 100 newly launched designs into

decorative themes – from rich, warming palettes and interesting textures through to light, pretty pastels and ever-popular florals. We hope this tempting selection helps to crystallise ideas for a large project, inspires a quick update to refresh a scheme, or simply provides a moment to dream...



LEFT, FROM TOP

Prices all a metre:
Acanthus, Slate, £36;
Strawberry Thief,
Slate/Blush, £64;
Mallow Weave,
Chartreuse, £36;
Willow Boughs, Linen,
£36; Strawberry Thief,
Denim, £40; Acanthus
Weave, £46, all
William Morris
Weaves collection,
Clarke & Clarke





RIGHT Flores wallpaper, Cornflower/First Light/Denim, £99 a roll; curtain, Suisai, Sky/Sweet Pea/First Light, £79 a metre; chair, Pepita, Sky/Linen and Fleur de Joie, Sky/Forest, both £69 a metre, all Idyllic Retreat collection, Harlequin

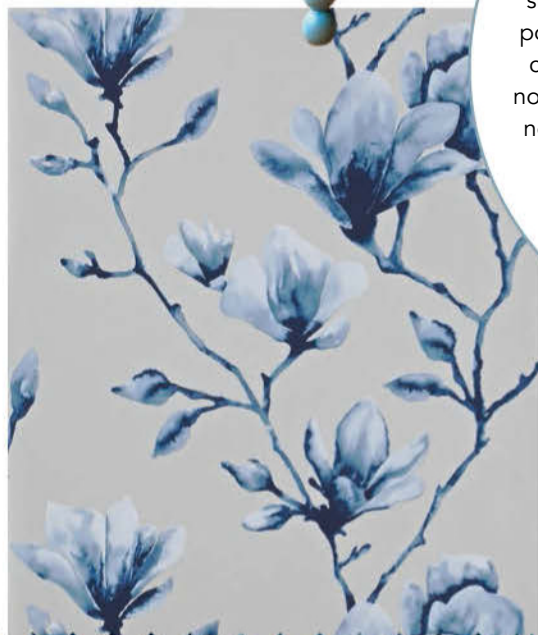


ABOVE Sorilla Damask, Delft/Linen, £99 a metre, Lymington Damasks & Stripes collection, Sanderson

RIGHT Tilton Stripe, Iberian Tile, £120 a metre, Ian Sanderson. Coco armchair, Clock House Furniture

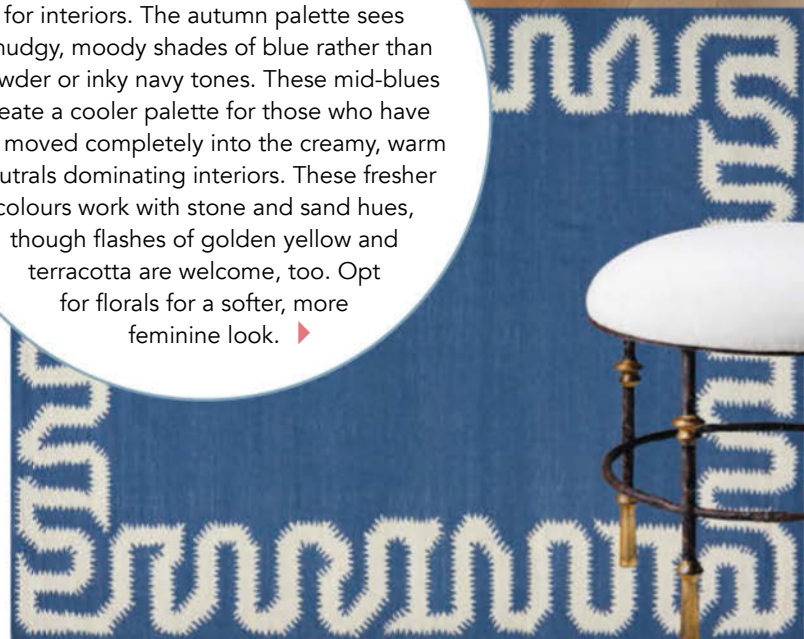
BELOW RIGHT Albaicin border rug, Blue, £330 a square metre, Amy Kent

BELOW Lotus, Indigo, £85 a roll, Idyllic Retreat collection, Harlequin



MOODY BLUES

Shades of blue are always a popular and very useable choice for interiors. The autumn palette sees smudgy, moody shades of blue rather than powder or inky navy tones. These mid-blues create a cooler palette for those who have not moved completely into the creamy, warm neutrals dominating interiors. These fresher colours work with stone and sand hues, though flashes of golden yellow and terracotta are welcome, too. Opt for florals for a softer, more feminine look. ▶



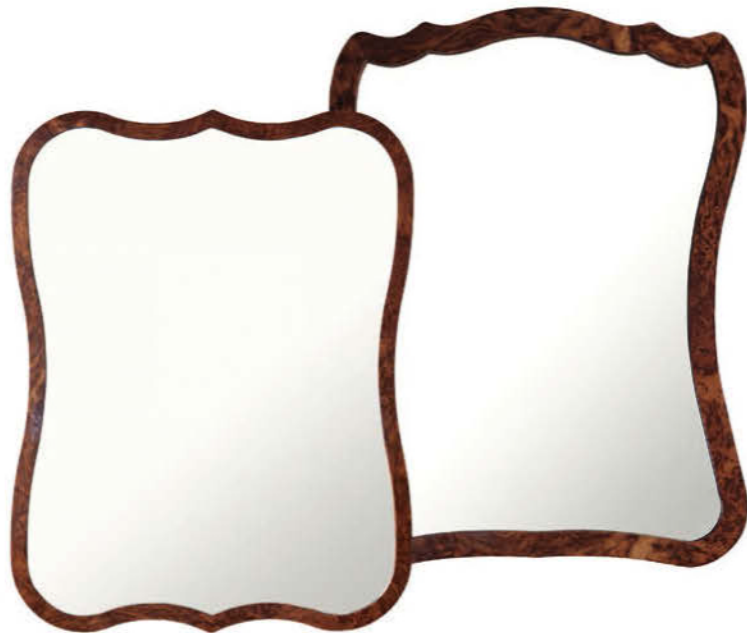
ABOVE Stanley round stool, £3,654, Porta Romana

SWATCHES, FROM LEFT All prices a metre: Highgate Floral, £188.90, Hodsoll McKenzie at Zimmer + Rohde; Kelp Forest, Depths and Storm, both £240, Lake August at The Fabric Collective; Anastacia, £252, and Lily, £232, both Thesign at Altfield





LEFT Corfe chandelier, £2,250, Vaughan Designs
RIGHT Tiger mirrors, from £800, Trove by Studio Duggan



SWATCHES BELOW, FROM LEFT
 Peafowl, Cider, £310 a metre; Heligan, Xanadu, £342 a metre; Lion's Paw, Croquet Green, £300 a metre, all Watts 1874
BELOW RIGHT
 Haddington, Ivy League, £438 a metre, Jeffrey Bilhuber for Le Gracieux at Tissus d'Hélène



THIS IMAGE Bois de Féés wallpaper, £171 a roll, Pierre Frey



RICH & WARMING
 Perfect for cosy autumnal updates yet also appealing for the rest of the year too, a rich palette of warm reds, oranges, browns and deep greens sets a country mood. Natural designs featuring native trees, flowers and foliage chime with a rural setting, and bring country charm to more urban homes too. The classic English country house aesthetic embraces an eclectic feel with prints and patterns that have a global influence, so mix in ikats, suzanis and other motifs which work well in these rich tones. Add a few contemporary touches if seeking a less overtly traditional look – consider lighting in clean-lined sculptural forms or some lacquer or velvet finishes for an opulent mix of old and new. ▶

BELOW Mulberry, Wheat and Spruce Veneer Ruched cushions, £175 each, Susi Bellamy

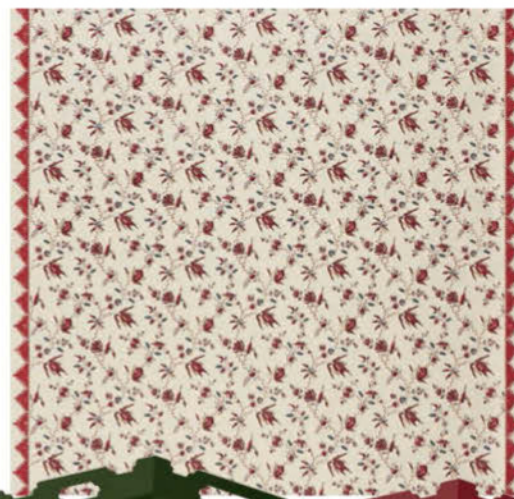




LEFT Feuille throw, £161, Ligne Roset
SWATCHES BELOW, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
 Inveraray, Red/Green, £149 a metre; Harlech, Charcoal/Red, £149 a metre; Lindisfarne Stripe, Russet/Slate, £126 a metre, all Wools V collection, Mulberry Home at GP & J Baker; Somborne Wreath, Somborne Stripe, and Waverley Stripe, all in Merlot, all £178 a metre, Inchyra



Sofa, Tamarind, Antique Red, £116 a metre; Bullion fringe, Tomato/Olive, £136 a metre; cushions, Cosima, Sienna, £115 a metre and Foss, Myrtle, £96 a metre; ottoman: Cosima, Olive, £115 a metre; Conway, Flax, £138 a metre, all Colefax and Fowler. Fairfax sofa, Kingcome; Hailes ottoman, Clock House Furniture; rug, Robert Stephenson



FAR LEFT Trims (in bowl), Decorer, Gunmetal and Greenware, both £59 a metre, Mark Alexander
LEFT Dotty fabric, £198 a metre, Sarah Vanrenen
BELOW Margot trays, Dark Olive and Bordeaux Red, from £195 each (small), Rita König x The Lacquer Company





ABOVE Sadie embroidered cushion £160, Molly Mahon
LEFT Queen Anne Squiggle wallpaper, Rose, £203 a roll, Totty Lowther at The Fabric Collective
RIGHT Posy Flower fabric, Original and

Blue/Pink, both £186 a metre, Penny Morrison
BELOW Damask wallpaper, Yellow, £86.60 a metre; cushions: Damask linen, Blue, Pink and Aqua, all £138.60 a metre, Peggy Angus Legacy collection, Blithfield

PURE ROMANCE

Florals are an evergreen choice for bringing femininity and grace to a scheme. Amplify the romantic nature of this choice with gentle shades of blush pink and other natural floral colours of green, blue, yellow and cream or white. This look is about layering different botanical designs, ruffled finishes and ornate trims. Adding stripes or ticking will add definition, while including accessories and furniture in block colours or natural finishes and in shapely forms will create a harmonious connection with the natural world. ▶

BELOW, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

All prices a metre: Fanery, £192; Imbue, £220; Idris, £124; Sitara, £114; Astella, £182; Tegan, £112; Andaz, £188; Umbra, £124; Cathaldra, £132; Naish Geo, £210, all The Natural Nuances collection by Fabricut at Christian Lee



LEFT Dawes Bobbin wooden table lamp with shade in Ash, £395, Neptune

BELOW LEFT ZigZag side table, Raith, from £1,125, Georgie Wykeham

BELOW Aquarelle wallpaper, available in four colours, £538 a roll, Schuyler Samperton at Tissus d'Hélène





SWATCHES, FROM TOP

Solveig, from £88 a roll, Sandberg; Primavera, Crème, £438 a metre, Classic Cloth at Tissus d'Hélène; Lowonsford in Peony, Lettuce and Plum, all £174 a metre, Cloth & Clover at The Fabric Collective

RIGHT Ottavia wallpaper, Lichen, £195 a roll, Romo

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DESIGN CENTRE CHELSEA HARBOUR



LEFT Frida pendant, £685, Curiousa

RIGHT Birdsong wallpaper, Sky, £120 a roll, Warner House

BELOW RIGHT Tagliatelle rechargeable wall fitting in Antique Brass with 20cm empire shade, £142.80, Pooky

BELOW Hummingbirds wallpaper, Blush/Sage/Mulberry, £174 a roll, Cole & Son

SWATCHES BELOW, FROM LEFT

Peony Garden fabric, Blush, £192 a metre, Flora Roberts for Hamilton Weston; Abbeville fabric, Rose/Calico, £89 a metre, Country House collection, Sanderson



NATURAL PASTELS

Many fabrics and wallpapers in the new designs feature birds perched among trailing flowers and trees – from exotic hummingbirds, parrots and lovebirds to native pheasants and garden birds. These feathered editions bring additional life and character to floral designs, and many come in pastel colours – a palette available in a multitude of other patterns, trims and luxurious plains to create light, cheerful schemes. To keep the look from being overly saccharine, introduce contemporary or geometric shapes in similar hues. ▶



ABOVE Loveseat, Merveilles, Petal, £152 a metre; cushions (from left), Macaron, Mineral, £128 a metre; Brûlée, Rose, £122 a metre; cushion trim, Audrey, Verdigris, £202 a metre; curtains, French Fancy, Eau de Nil, £166 a metre; curtain lining, Madeleine, Marine, £152 a metre; curtain trim, Brûlée, Ocean, £122 a metre, all Petits Fours collection, Madeaux

LEFT Wild Garden collection: Berries & Leaves, Dotty Check, Fine Foliage, and Sunflowers fabrics, available in various colours, all £69 a metre, Vanessa Arbuthnott

BELOW LEFT Lovebirds, Papaya, £159 a roll, Divine Savages

FAR LEFT Embroidered Rosette border, available in various colours, £99 a metre, Orange Hill Farm collection by Mark D. Sikes for Samuel & Sons



RIGHT Flore wide-width wallpaper, £214 a metre, Pierre Frey

RIGHT MIDDLE Acapulco chandelier (large), £13,205, Villari, Artemest

FAR RIGHT Sofa, Orange Grove, Lemon & Lime, £90 a metre; cushions, as before and Beauchamp Velvet, Fir, £97.50 a metre, with Brush fringe, Almond, £40.50 a metre, all James Hare

SWATCHES BELOW, FROM TOP

Lavinia, Green, £198 a metre; Stella Stripe, Moss, £198 a metre, both Veere Grenney x Schumacher; Calabash, £576 a roll, ZAK+FOX at George Spencer Designs; Pineapples, £962.40 a roll, Sheila Bridges for Adelphi Paper Hangings at Tissus d'Hélène

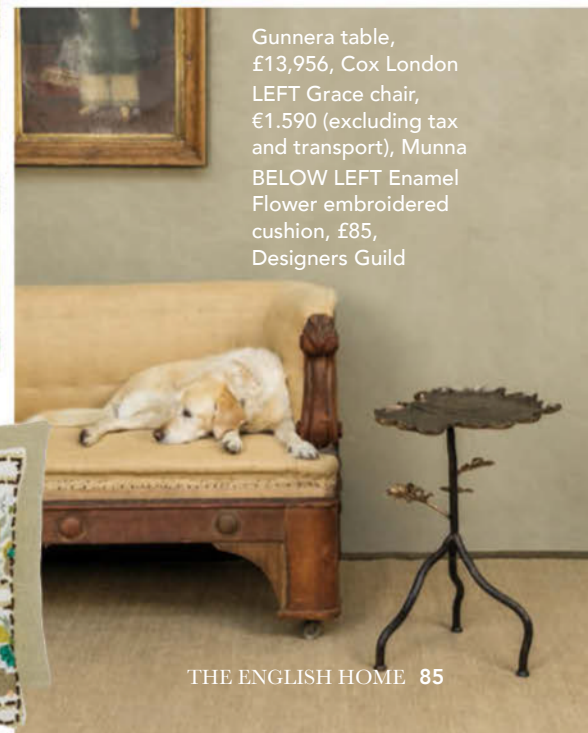


TREE SPOTTING

Nature is a constant source of inspiration for designers, so it is no wonder they lean into the organic structure and beauty of trees – from native British to more exotic fruit species. Leaf motifs on fabrics and wallpapers are always appealing when in natural greens, tones which can be further enlivened with pinks or blues, or enriched with neutrals and browns. The structural nature of trees informs furniture and lighting designs too, resulting in shapely pieces emulating the irregular curves and edges of branches and leaves to add interest and character to interiors. Citrus fruit features prominently in the new collections and can be a playful way to introduce a co-ordinating or contrasting hue. ▶



LEFT Limone wall light, £186; Matcha Satin knife pleat shades, from £111 each, all David Hunt Lighting
LEFT MIDDLE Athena Elsie, £85 a metre, Nina Campbell at Osborne & Little



Gunnera table, £13,956, Cox London
LEFT Grace chair, €1,590 (excluding tax and transport), Munna
BELOW LEFT Enamel Flower embroidered cushion, £85, Designers Guild



FAR LEFT Lotus fabric, available in five colours, £132 a metre, Brentano at Altfield

LEFT Mythos pendants, Brushed Brass, £825 each, Lee Broom

RIGHT Raphia braid trim, Crème, £27 a metre, Houllès

LEFT Mariner cabinet, £3,200, Julian Chichester

FAR LEFT Tassel tieback, Neox collection, £101.40, Houllès

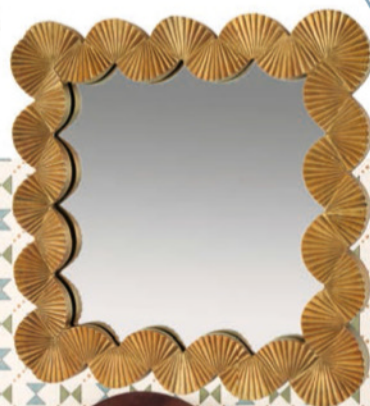
BELOW Bench, The Map Mini, Satsuma Soot, £160 a metre; cushion, Asha Stripe, Cedar Smoke, £137.02 a metre, both The Srinagar Map collection, Lewis & Wood

TEXTURED LUXURY

Intricate details, sumptuous tactile textures and luxurious finishes always catch the eye. When using a muted palette, it is even more important to let the quality of the pieces do the talking, so find fabrics with incredible detail, even if the colour is subtle, or in irresistibly soft and silky fibres that provide a subtle sheen and are a delight to sink into. Contrast these with metallics or carved woods that elevate furniture and lighting into pieces of art. This is all about each piece being carefully crafted and considered to create an elegant yet inviting aesthetic. ■

BELOW Ethos mirror, £2,022, Arteriors

BOTTOM Bow Tie Quilt wallpaper, Blue & Green, £178 a roll, Ottoline at The Fabric Collective



ABOVE LEFT Ginny lamp, Decayed Gold, £3,138; Ginny empire lampshades, £120 each, Porta Romana

LEFT Quiet I round rug, £4,915, Tai Ping

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NEW NEUTRALS

Creative Combinations

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

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE

Taking their cue from gentle tones found in nature, neutrals have acted as a decorative backbone for centuries. At times maligned or considered insipid, they are more than the off-whites, beiges and greys that came to the fore a couple of decades ago. In fact, almost any colour that is dialled down in terms of its saturation can act as an effective neutral in a scheme. These days, interiors are

returning to the idea that earth pigments such as oxide red, ochre and umber offer a warm yet muted quality. Of course, natural materials make effortless neutrals too. “Timber, soft terracotta and limestone feature inherent textures which can be an ideal neutral base,” says Squire & Partners’ Maria Cheung.

In addition, texture, from cork and micro-cement to limewash and sisal, is the natural bedfellow of neutrals, ▶



OPPOSITE Soft sand and warm terracotta tones create a layered neutral palette in this bedroom and bathroom scheme by Polly Ashman. Walls are papered in Nina Campbell's Torosay in Gold/Aqua and the bathroom is in Farrow & Ball's Blue Gray.

THIS PAGE In this semi open-plan space by Maddux Creative, two distinct areas are united by a palette of neutrals ranging from rust to duck egg blue. Natural elements, from vintage Danish dining chairs to parquet flooring, create visual cohesion.



ABOVE LEFT At the Byblos hotel in Saint Tropez, interior designer Laura Gonzalez has combined walls in woven raffia, rattan bedside tables and vintage armchairs covered in fabric by Thorp of London for a playfully rustic look.

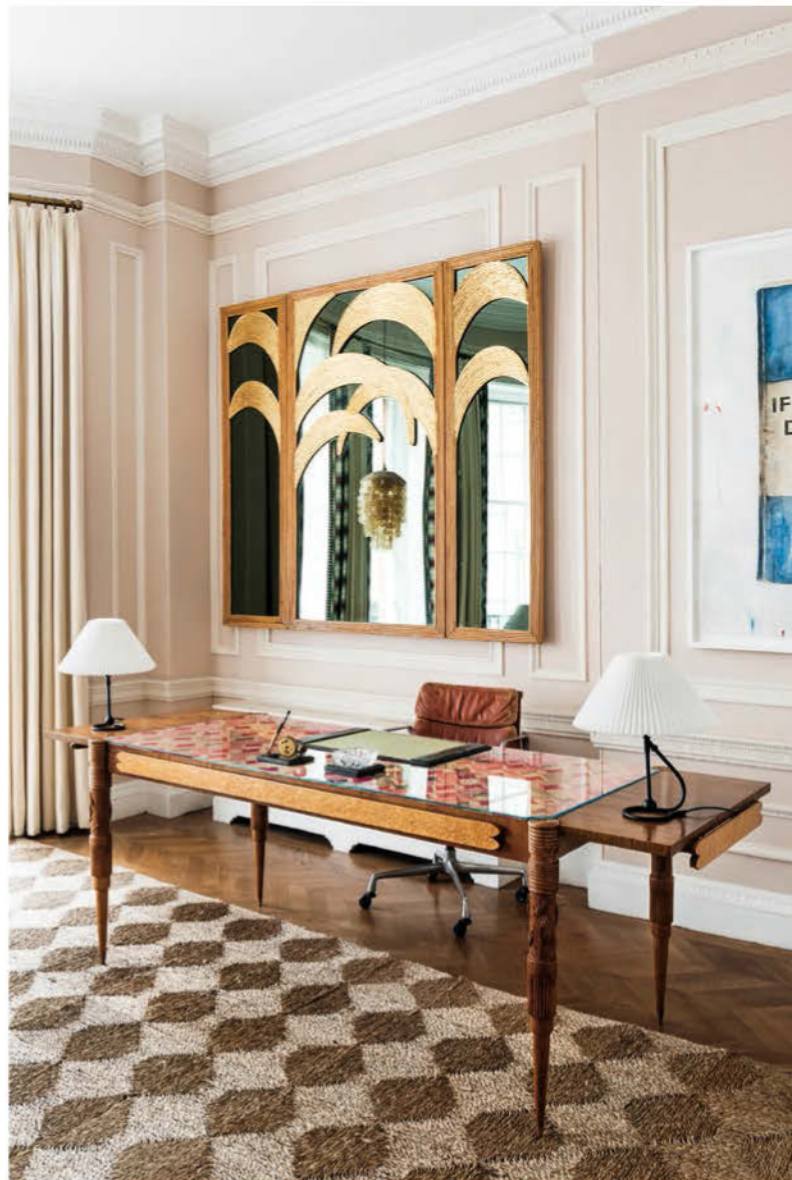
ABOVE RIGHT Interior designer Olivia Outred has lent elegant appeal to this smart central London office with a dining table by Pier Luigi Colli and a mirrored screen from Gallery 25.

resonating with the principles of biophilic design and offering a timeless, harmonious aesthetic.

Back to nature

Neutrals play an important part in our well-being. “Gentle tones and textures help us slow down and offer space to think, leading to innovation and creativity,” believes interior designer Anna Møller. “They allow the eye to travel uninterrupted around a space. It’s a little like looking across a field or beach and understanding what is coming next. For me, neutrals lend a sense comfort and safety; they are anchored by materials that in their rawest forms are derived from nature, whether solid wood, undyed leather or soft bouclé.”

Warm neutrals and considered schemes are of course not a new aesthetic. “Just look at houses designed by architects such as Edwin Lutyens, which were always part of the landscape and connected to the garden,” says Home & Found’s Tamsin Saunders.



“Or consider how artists including Vanessa Bell, Roger Fry and Georgia O’Keefe used colour, textiles and antiques in their homes, resulting in simple, natural and responsive environments. Fabrics, ceramics, studio pottery and original art, as well as the shapes of furniture, are the elements that add interest.”

Warmer neutrals represent a shift away from the cooler, blue-toned greys prevalent in recent years. Earthier hues have an inherent warmth. “When a serene colour palette is applied across a room, it allows the eye to appreciate the full spectrum of design elements – from the architectural framework to the curated artwork on display,” say Studio QD’s Lucy Derbyshire and Jena Quinn. “This inherent simplicity generates a visual strength by minimising distractions and fostering a sense of openness. Without the interference of colour blocks or intricate patterns, each element within the space gains prominence.”

As a result, neutrals work well across a broad spectrum of design styles. “They suit all kinds of

looks,” says Anja Revenda, who designed the nature-inspired apartments and cabins at The Lakes by YOO in the Cotswolds. “They can be dressed up or down, fresh or moody, tranquil or edgy. We connect with them due to their being grounded in nature and so imbuing a feeling of calm and tranquillity.”

Layer by layer

Key to a successful neutral scheme is a rounded mix of texture and tone for a result that is dynamic rather than flat. “Remember that texture is the quiet storyteller,” says fabric designer Bernie de Le Cuona. “Raw linen, lustrous silk, superfine merino and matt velvet all come alive when layered together in a neutral palette that suggests looking over a beautiful landscape at dawn.”

Cleverly combined neutrals allow the eye to roam freely. “Tonal harmony involves blending shades within a particular spectrum to create a modern and cohesive feel,” explains Maddux Creative’s Scott Maddux. “Neutrality in design is not limited to specific colours; rather, it depends on shades and how they are used. Any colour can be considered neutral as long as it contributes to a unified design. For instance, transitioning from plaster to terracotta and on to brick red maintains a consistent direction and visual flow. This approach focuses on crafting environments where colours and textures guide the eye.”



‘When a serene colour palette is applied across a room, it allows the eye to appreciate the full spectrum of design elements – from the architectural framework to the curated artwork on display’ Lucy Derbyshire and Jena Quinn, Studio QD

Even if neutrals are not predominant in a scheme, their presence enables a vital pause point, as well as acting as a useful foil for bolder accents. They can highlight focal points such as artwork, furniture, or accessories, lending every element weight and contributing to an overall visual narrative. “If you have busier schemes in a house, then a neutral corridor for example can allow for a visual resting place,” says interior designer Lucinda Sanford. “That way, pockets of colour can come off a hallway but the centre of the house retains a calm aesthetic.” Conversely, the opposite approach is also effective. “Bold tones can help a space fade away,” says Pringle & Pringle’s Sophie Pringle. “Navy blue for example, leading into a light, bright sitting room can help the corridor fade into the background as a precursor to the main living space.”

Over time, our understanding of neutrals has grown to incorporate a greater range of tones. “Colours including warm browns, honeys and gentle taupes blend effortlessly with a variety of palettes,” advises Little Greene’s Ruth Mottershead. “Perhaps the easiest to incorporate is muted green; neither too warm nor too cool, it works beautifully with other earthy colours, creating a sense of harmony.” ▶

ABOVE In this bedroom scheme by VSP Interiors, a cosseting four-poster bed is the perfect vehicle for soft cream drapes and a matching pelmet, echoing the shades of the walls, flooring, and window treatments.

RIGHT Soft silhouettes and contrasting graphic shapes combine to add gravitas to this otherwise simple scheme, featuring Malabar Two Fold carpet in Husk from Cormar Carpets.





ABOVE Timber, sand tones, metro tiling and marble combine to add texture in this relaxed Classic English Kitchen by deVOL. The bespoke paint finish blends a soft brown-toned yellow on the cabinetry and a rich purple-brown on the island.

LEFT Neutral-toned furniture and flooring provide an anchoring backdrop to colourful artwork in this relaxed scheme by Studio Duggan. For softening appeal, the walls are painted in a textured finish by decorative artist Eugenia Barrios Osborne.



It is worth paying attention to the tones of neutrals, as pairing cool (such as grey-white) with warm (pink or brown-based tones) can look jarring. “Avoid assuming all neutral colours are the same – there are so many nuances with colour undertones and the amount of light a room receives,” advises Consult by FD’s Vanessa Fernandes. “So pin up samples and sit with them through the day. Lately we’ve been adding accents in sage, olive, antique rose, ochre, and terracotta for a warmer look.”

Modern touch

Using neutrals in a relaxed, contemporary way is key to keeping the look timeless. “Incorporate materials unusually,” advises Anna Møller. “Hang natural yarn rugs on walls, use limewash paints on ceilings to give more movement, use tiles or marble as skirtings or door frames and try sculpture instead of traditional artwork. Pinks, oaty tones, and muted rich hues create a sense of warmth and cosiness.”

To avoid a flat look, consider finish. Interior designer Laura Stephens recently invigorated a box extension by using a specialist decorator to apply a fresco effect to walls and ceiling, giving the illusion of an aged appearance. Meanwhile Olivia Outred regularly uses panelling in her schemes. “Recently, ▶

DESIGN INSIGHT

For a neutral look with plenty of warmth, interior designer Laura Stephens used Paint & Paper Library's Mink on the ceiling and Powder V on the walls of this sitting room. The Rotondo chairs from The Socialite Family are upholstered in Robert Kime's Tazuna while the rug with a cream jute border is from Nordic Knots.





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‘Any colour can be considered neutral as long as it contributes to a unified design. Transitioning from plaster to terracotta and on to brick red maintains a consistent direction and visual flow’ Scott Maddux, Maddux Creative

I installed raised and fielded panelling to a large room, which I painted in Edward Bulmer’s Milk White,” she says. “I finished the ceiling in Farrow & Ball’s India Yellow, in three coats of full gloss. The sunny, reflective ceiling and soft white walls enhanced the room and created a wonderful space to spend time.”

Another option is to use a colour washing approach, incorporating the ceiling too, whether in a plant green or midnight blue. “I enjoy ‘drowning’ a room, top to bottom, in this way,” says interior designer Polly Ashman. “It creates a wonderfully soft result.”

Dynamic pattern, used in muted tones, always acts as a brilliant neutral. “I’m a firm believer that animal print is a ‘new neutral,’” says designer Victoria Covell. “It works with all fabrics, and is a lovely way to add interest to a simple scheme. We recently upholstered a bespoke banquette in an open-plan kitchen-diner with a Pierre Frey zebra print for instant but subtle verve.”

Metals are not often thought of as neutrals but are integral to a layered look. “How to effectively mix them is a decorating conundrum, especially in bathrooms and kitchens where there is potential for a number of different finishes,” says Sarah Limbert of Poets Corner Interiors. “We always suggest treating bronze, cast-iron and black metals as neutrals as they tend to mix well with both warm and cool finishes, from antique brass and copper to silver and chrome.”

Finally, bear in mind that, often, the greatest strength of a neutral scheme is its ability to deliver quiet impact. “Materiality is key in creating depth and movement in a space designed around neutrals,” counsels MAIE’s Theres Hoyos. “Simplistic in form and rich in texture is a guiding design principle of mine.” A reminder perhaps that the most enriching of spaces are often those that are gently but thoughtfully considered. ▶

ABOVE LEFT Natural textures, from wood to raffia, including Neptune’s Marina pendant and Kenilworth dining chair in Cactus, add organic appeal to this welcoming country dining room.

ABOVE RIGHT Tonal colour blocking, including earthy brown, deep green and rust shades, all by Little Greene, creates a striking effect in this kitchen.

SHOPPING



NEUTRAL BALANCE

Add pieces in a wide range of light to rich neutrals for sophisticated strength and depth

1 Cornice Crown wallpaper, £120 a roll, Timorous Beasties 2 Erin square cushion, £225, Soho Home 3 New Objectivity stool, £100, Amy Somerville 4 Ticking, Union, £170 a metre, Fermoie 5 Willa scalloped edging or moulding (made with MRMDF moisture resistant MDF), £22 a section, Camilla Hampton Interiors 6 Christie 36 pendant, Natural White, £495, Original BTC 7 Avalon console table, from £3,600, Trove by Studio Duggan 8 Sunset sleeper sofa, Venice Cognac, £4,800, Jonathan Adler 9 Little wavy pots, £16 each, Maro Home 10 Thera Star handmade tile, Terrocotta, from £14.52 a tile for five-inch tiles, Douglas Watson Studio 11 Tay cast-iron bath clad in burnished copper, £13,550 Drummonds 12 Atouk textured natural and black stoneware lamp, £139, Cotswold Company 13 Malia side plate, Cream, £69 for a set of four, Kayu Home 14 Paint swatches (from left): Della Casa, Coming Up Roses, Cotta, £60 for 2.5l True Matt Emulsion, Atelier Ellis ■

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SCAN FOR MORE INFO



The art of ILLUSION

Interior designers and experts reveal how to add magic with paint effects, mirrors and hidden elements



LEFT Kelling Designs clad one wall entirely in mirrored glass to enhance the sense of space and light in this sitting room design.

BELOW LEFT Emma Deterding, founder of Kelling Designs.

THIS IMAGE & BELOW

A bespoke antiqued mirror by Dominic Schuster (*below*) runs all the way up to the ceiling to enhance natural light and add a sense of height and grandeur to this entrance hall.

Thriving on creating homes that surprise and delight, interior designers and experts in their field use their skills to make the most of any space. To add to the impact of a scheme, they employ a host of artistic and design devices to introduce the illusion of more space, enhance natural light or conceal surprise features.

Mirror mirror

Antiqued mirror glass specialist Dominic Schuster understands how mirrors can be used to trick the eye and transform a space. "Placement is crucial," he says. "To maximise the impression of space, place mirrors opposite windows or close to other sources of ▶





‘Long, vertical mirrors can draw the eye upward, making a room seem taller, while horizontal ones can make a narrow room appear wider.’

Dominic Schuster, antiqued mirror glass specialist



ABOVE In this design by Studio Vero, walls have been hand-painted to resemble marquetry to accentuate the scale of the room. LEFT Romanis Brihi, co-founder of Studio Vero.

light, which will not only make a room feel instantly brighter and more open but will also reflect outdoor scenery giving a sense of depth.” Long, vertical mirrors can draw the eye upward, making a room seem taller, while horizontal ones can make a narrow space appear wider. Large, unframed panels of mirror can create a seamless look, blending into the walls and creating the illusion of a larger room.

When cladding a wall in mirror, Emma Deterding, founder and creative director of Kelling Designs, says, “You want to make sure that the reflection isn’t just a blank wall and actually adds something more to the space. Hanging lights in front of mirrors is another great way of reflecting more light back into the room, making it feel bigger and brighter – just be sure to check that the light has a flat back so that it can be fixed directly on to the mirror, with no reflections of fittings, wires or anything else unsightly.”



TOP & ABOVE LEFT
Panelled doors open and slide into side pockets to reveal a surprise bar in this design by Tamsyn Mason.



ABOVE In this design by Guy Goodfellow, decorative artists Mathew Bray and Matthew Collins painted and stenciled the columns to look like marble inlaid with decorative mosaic.

RIGHT Guy Goodfellow and creative director Steven Rodel.



'Paint effects can be used to add unexpected detail, enhance a mood or add playful interest'

Guy Goodfellow, interior designer

Pictures and curtain poles can also be hung directly on to the surface of the mirror, creating a floating illusion, but care needs to be taken to find the precise position before the mirror is cut for fixings.

While framed mirrors can also be used to make a room feel larger, Dominic Schuster has more suggestions. "Mirrored furniture, including smaller pieces, can be a lovely way to introduce more light and interest into a room, especially in spaces where it isn't feasible to install entirely mirrored walls or large panels of glass," he says. A mirrored back to a bar cabinet or an alcove can add depth, while antiqued, gilded, smoked and bronzed finishes can introduce glamorous warmth and softness.

Art of deception

Paint effects and murals are also useful in creating illusion, as is *trompe l'oeil*, an artistic effect which deceives the eye into thinking a flat surface is three-dimensional. Known for richly layered, expressive interiors, Guy Goodfellow enjoys using decorative paint effects to add imaginative elements to his designs. In his drawing room for WOW!house at the Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour ▶



‘Central to this transformation is a bespoke bookcase that conceals a hidden entrance to a snug’

Lauren Gilthorpe, interior designer



ABOVE Studio QD added playful character to this holiday house bedroom with painted panelling and bookshelves.

ABOVE Jena Quinn and Lucy Derbyshire, co-founders of Studio QD.

this year, painted and stencilled columns created the look of real marble inlaid with decorative mosaic. “Paint effects can be used to add unexpected detail, enhancing a mood or simply to add playful interest,” he says. “Unless you are a confident artist yourself, it is important to work with a painter whose work you admire, because, while you can explain the look you want to create, you also need to give the artist some freedom of expression to create real magic.”

As well as adding fun and character, paint effects can be used as an alternative to sourcing rare, unusual or impractical materials, while murals and *trompe l’oeils* can add decorative delight. Interior designer Jo Aynsley of Jeffreys Interiors commissioned an artist to paint horses on a merry-go-round, making the most of a curved wall and adding charm to a child’s bedroom design. Studio QD opted for a painted *trompe l’oeil* design to suggest real wall panelling, ceiling detailing and shelves filled with books in a new-build room which was previously largely featureless. Romanos Brihi, co-founder of Studio Vero, chose a hand-painted design to resemble marquetry, adding something unique to the walls of a contemporary living room in a recent project. “It is such a vast space, we wanted to find a wall finish which brought the room to life,” he says. “The technique plays with the scale of the room and the colour palette of blue, teal and off-white shimmer in the light that pours in through the windows.”



OPPOSITE RIGHT Interior designer Lauren Gilberthorpe. **ABOVE** A hidden door in this bespoke bookcase opens to access a cosy snug in this design by Lauren Gilberthorpe.

RIGHT Jo Aynsley of Jeffreys Interiors. **FAR RIGHT** Jo Aynsley used the unusual curved wall of this bedroom to create the illusion of a magical painted merry-go-round.



Secret entrances

Concealed doorways are another way to introduce illusion to a design. “A hidden door will always add an element of intrigue,” says interior designer Lauren Gilberthorpe, who reconfigured the ground floor of a house by transforming a neglected boot room into a snug, tailored for family movie nights and quiet relaxation. “Central to this transformation is a bespoke bookcase in the living room – it not only serves as an elegant storage solution but also conceals a hidden entrance to the snug,” she explains. A fun, secret space like this can be what Gilberthorpe describes as “a private retreat away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life”, but it can also be eminently functional – hiding away wardrobe storage or an appliance-packed utility room, for example. ▶



INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

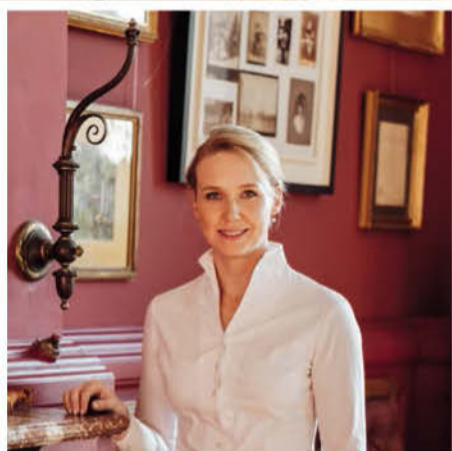


ABOVE Victoria Wormsley, founder of French-Brooks Interiors.

LEFT French-Brooks Interiors designed a jib door to blend into the backdrop, so that the eye is drawn instead to the key features of the room – in this case the painting above the bed.

‘Jib doors benefit from being concealed in a wallpaper, panelling or with a skirting board which runs across the opening’

Victoria Wormsley, French-Brook Interiors



LEFT Interior designer Lucinda Martin.

ABOVE Adding to the elegance of this bedroom design by Lucinda Martin, the position of the curtain poles and design of the drapes create the illusion of extra height.

There are practical considerations to creating the surprise of a hidden door. It could be built into bespoke joinery, as in Lauren Gilberthorpe’s design (p101), or flush-fitted into the wall, without an architrave, as a jib door. “They benefit from being concealed in a wallpaper, in panelling or with a skirting board which can run across the opening, otherwise it can be hard to conceal them in a blank painted wall,” advises Victoria Wormsley of French-Brooks Interiors. “They can even be hung with art so that they completely blend in.” A jib door can be particularly effective if using a panoramic wallpaper to create the illusion of a beautiful view or a painterly scene, as the ‘picture’ need not be interrupted.

Be aware, however, that jib doors are more susceptible to knocks, chips and signs of wear, so Wormsley recommends they are not used for busy doorways. Also pay attention to how the door should be opened, as she explains: “The most secret way is to have a spot which you can press to magically open the door, but this may not be practical, as not everyone will know how to open it and the decorative finish will get damaged over time.” For this reason, many designers opt for a small handle, often with a back plate to avoid handprints reaching the wallpaper. Note that the handle can almost disappear from view if the wallpaper design is highly decorative. Alternatively, glass plates over the push-to-open latches can protect the surface of the wallpaper.

Clever tricks

More techniques to deceive the eye into making a room feel larger than it is to use wall-hung cabinetry to free up floor space, a popular trick in bathrooms for vanity units and storage cabinets, while window treatments can be designed to enhance the height of a room. By hanging a curtain pole well above the window frame – but balanced with the height of the ceiling – curtains will be longer and the room will appear taller. “Curtain or blind design is crucial to creating the illusion of symmetry and elegance,” says Lucinda Martin, who positioned the curtain poles three quarters of the way above the window in a recent project, with drapes made so that the front side of the fabric is always on show. “These curtains are made in three parts and fixed directly on to the pole – an illusion on three levels, as it were!” ■

FEATURE AMELIA THORPE PHOTOGRAPHS (EMMA DETTERING) © BRENT DABBY (KELLING DESIGNS, AND VICTORIA WORMSLEY PORTRAIT) © MARK BOLTON (DOMINIC SCHUSTER) © BARRY MURPHY (IRONMANS BRILL) © BEN PIPE (STUDIO VERO) © PAUL MASSEY (TAMMYN MASON) © CHRISTOPHER HORWOOD (GUY GOODFELLOW, AND FRENCH-BROOKS INTERIORS) © JAMES McDONALD (STUDIO QD) © GEORGINA VINEY (LAUREN GILBERTHORPE) © EMMA LEWIS (JAC & ZAC, (LUCINDA MARTIN) © MIKE GARLUCK

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TAILORED TREATMENTS

Curtains, blinds, sheers or shutters? With aesthetic and practical considerations in mind, we look at how to select the right dressing for every window

These curtains both feature intricate leading edges: Cellini embroidery on Capri silk velvet in Pistachio (shown with Claudia tie back), and Sandro embroidery on organza, all Beaumont & Fletcher.



A key element of almost every room, window treatments require careful choice in order to complement the overall scheme and fulfil a variety of practical functions, from providing privacy to softening acoustics. “They can transform a room,” says Ann Grafton, creative and managing director of GP & J Baker. “They add colour, comfort and personality, whether tailored and elegant or something jolly for a children’s room or guest bedroom. They can change the atmosphere, alter the scale, hide something ugly and even pick up colours from a view and extend the room into the outdoor space.” Options range from full-length curtains and breezy sheers to understated blinds or traditional shutters, and there are solutions for every window, whatever its size and shape.

CURTAINS

Curtains work in almost every room and for most windows, though are perhaps best avoided in bathrooms and kitchens where they may suffer from splashes or humidity. They also combine beautifully with sheers, blinds and even shutters for additional privacy, sound absorption, warmth, darkness or simply an attractively layered effect. They may not be the best choice, however, for dormers, when there is a window seat or a radiator below the window, or at unusually shaped windows. Designer Nina Campbell says that fan lights, for example, are quite tricky to curtain, and she tends to leave them uncurtained where possible, or simply adds a pole across the top hung with a pair of simple curtains at each side.

To help make fabric decisions, Campbell says it is essential to borrow a large, returnable sample of fabric in order to check its pattern repeats and impact on the room. “I would never think of buying curtain material without taking a returnable,” she says. “It is also important to consider whether the window is very sunny and the fabric is likely to fade.” When making curtains for wide windows, Grafton advises looking for extra-wide fabric that will not require joining. In addition, very long, full curtains can be awkward if made from heavy fabric; there are plenty of medium-weight options, she points out.

Accurate measuring is essential, as is high-quality making up (using a professional is advisable), and almost all curtains should include a good-quality lining as well as appropriate weights. The designers at Bennison always suggest that curtains are interlined with bump or domette to prevent sun damage and draughts and, like many professionals, use a decorative lining so that the reverse of the curtain is as attractive as the front. “With all the curtains lined in the same

STYLE GUIDE

- Curtains are a good choice for almost all windows. When working with an unusually shaped window, a solution could be to simply hang a pole above with curtains hanging either side.
- Always request a large ‘returnable’ fabric sample when choosing curtain fabric to check its pattern repeats.
- Well-made curtains should include appropriate weights, interlining and lining – the latter could be matched across all windows for a pretty view from outside the house.
- For an elegantly timeless solution, choose an antique brass pole with ivory linen pencil-pleat curtains, or perhaps a ticking, stripe or small print.

LEFT A lath and fascia system, as used here by designer Sarah Vanrenen, is a great solution in a low-ceilinged room as it cuts out less light than a pole or pelmet while concealing the track and showing off the curtain heading.



fabric, perhaps a little pinstripe – it's lovely to look at from outside," says Campbell.

A timeless solution is to use an antique brass pole with ivory linen pencil-pleat curtains, says Grafton, while tickings, stripes and small prints are classic choices that are also in demand at present. Tracks with fabric-covered fascias (known as lath and fascia) are very smart and are a good solution in low-ceilinged rooms. As for pelmets, while they are useful for hiding tracks and add a finishing touch to vertical windows, they are becoming smaller and simpler, says Campbell, who recently completed a project in America where she designed pretty, scallop-edged pelmets. ▶

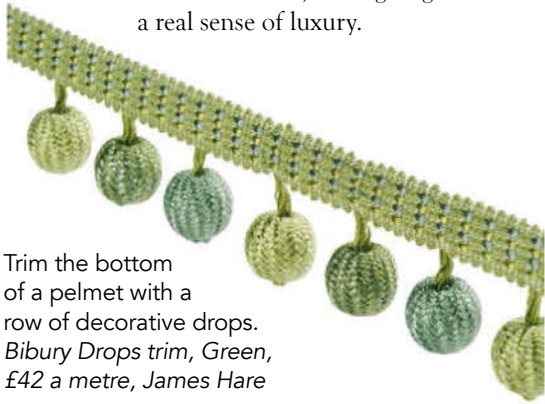
ABOVE LEFT The lining can be as important as the curtain fabric itself. This curtain fabric is Langley, Red/Blue, lined with Sherborne Gingham, Red, both GP & J Baker.

ABOVE In this London study Nicky Dobree used a De Le Cuona linen on a bronze corded pole. Taking the curtains right up to the underside of the cornice enhances their length and draws the eye upwards.

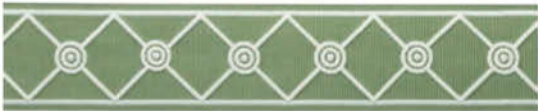
LEFT Swing-arm poles, either single or a pair, provide a solution for dormer windows. The curtains are made from Hailsham, Hayden Green, trimmed in Foss, Red Earth, both Colefax and Fowler.

PASSEMENTERIE

Traditional passementerie – decorative trimmings such as fringes, tassels, braids and borders – provides a smart finishing touch for any formal window treatment. Trims can be used to incorporate additional colour, pattern or texture to curtains and blinds, adding elegance and a real sense of luxury.



Trim the bottom of a pelmet with a row of decorative drops. *Bisbury Drops trim, Green, £42 a metre, James Hare*



Adorn a plain blind with a pair of geometric vertical trims. *Embroidered Lattice border, Mint, £90 a metre, Mark D Sikes collection for Samuel & Sons*



The ultimate border for the leading edge of a luxurious curtain. *Flores swagged base tassel fringe Palest Green/ Coral, £POA, Watts 1874*



This versatile wide braid would make an excellent curtain hem. *506 Check Braid, Azure, £49 a metre, George Spencer Designs*



Add a flash of colour across the bottom edge of a blind or curtain. *Delmont tape, £45 a metre, Thibaut*



BLINDS & SHEERS

Sheers may be the unsung heroes of the window treatment world. “They’re vital in many cases,” says Nina Campbell. “Certainly, they’re important for privacy, but they also soften the light.” In daytime, a sheer will reduce glare through a very sunny window, while at night it will conceal the darkness outside prettily. Sheers work beautifully as both cafe and full-length curtains, and add a gentle softness to a room, usually with less formal headings – perhaps clips, eyelets or simply a deep hem pushed over a slim pole. For light, draught or sound prevention, they are usually layered with curtains or blinds, adding an additional sense of luxury.

While blinds, like curtains, can add colour and pattern, they can be employed in awkward situations too, ranging from bays with window seats to out-of-reach skylights – where they can be controlled with a wall switch or a remote. “Factors like privacy, blackout, and thermal protection are the most common points to consider when choosing blinds,” says Alison Gore, global creative director of Blinds2go. “Blackout styles are perfect for bedrooms, while waterproof options are ideal in bathrooms and kitchens, or even opt for a sheer or voile fabric for living rooms where you want to enjoy natural light without the glare.” ▶

ABOVE Made-to-measure Roman blind in Bijou Linen Alabaster, with a 9cm Willow Onyx border from the William Morris by V&A collection, Blinds2go.

OPPOSITE TOP LEFT

In this bathroom, designer Nicky Dobree used a Mimi Pickard wallpaper with matching fabric for the pelmet and roman blind. A voile blind provides privacy without obscuring the light.

OPPOSITE LEFT

A softly elegant London blind fits neatly into this bedroom window recess. It is made in Flori, Cherry Rose, from The Orangery Collection by James Hare.



STYLE GUIDE

- Layer sheers with lined curtains or Roman blinds for an attractive look as well as light, draught and sound prevention.
- Blinds of all types are highly versatile. Electric blinds are ideal for skylights that cannot be reached to be opened manually, blackout blinds are perfect for bedrooms, and waterproof blinds are the best choice for a bathroom or kitchen.
- The tailored lines of Roman blinds never go out of fashion. For a softer look, choose a London blind. The fuller pleats and gathers of festoon and Austrian blinds work best in grand schemes.

ABOVE On the left of the window, the curtain is made in embroidered linen sheer Vaucluse, while the curtain on the right is in Fiore d'Acqua, Peony. Both fabrics are from Designers Guild.



TOP Bespoke solid hardwood shutters from Shutterly Fabulous fold away neatly during the day providing maximum light in this room.

ABOVE Here, Shaker-style solid panel hardwood shutters from The Shutter Shop have been colour-matched to order and echo the design of cabinetry doors.

In terms of style, roller blinds tend towards the utilitarian, but may be a practical, wipe-clean choice for a kitchen or bathroom. They can also be used behind curtains to protect them from fading. Roman blinds are the go-to for many designers, giving a tailored look, and can have standard or cascaded folds, the latter being more decorative. London blinds have more fullness and are often used as dress blinds, combined with a roller or Roman blind, while balloon and Austrian blinds have even more gathers and work best in grand schemes where a traditional, opulent look is required. Sheer blinds are another option, and there are other specialist types available, such as thermally lined blinds to keep the heat out of conservatories and pleated blinds with honeycomb pockets for insulation.

SHUTTERS

As well as providing privacy and darkness, shutters can also offer sound and draught reduction. Solid-panel shutters, which are ideal for period properties, may also offer additional security. Plantation shutters (with tilting slats) precisely control the amount of light that enters the room, and both styles are low-maintenance, durable and timeless. “Shutters are a versatile window treatment that can be used effectively in various window shapes and styles,” says Alison Gore. “Custom shutters can be made to fit



unusually shaped windows, with shutters suited to standard rectangular windows, speciality shapes, bay windows and French windows.”

For tall windows, or simply for flexibility, tier-on-tier shutters are the best option. By comparison, café-style shutters, paired with curtains, provide privacy at eye level while still allowing natural light in, says Gore. Layering shutters with curtains introduces more colour, pattern and texture, though there is also the option of custom-coloured shutters to add depth and interest.

As for material, real-wood shutters are available in the widest range of styles, colours and finishes, advises Gore. Faux wood, although heavier (so may be tricky to install in some situations) is resistant to moisture and warping, so would be a better option for damp or humid rooms. ■

STYLE GUIDE

- Solid-panel shutters can offer additional security, while slatted shutters precisely control the light. Both offer good sound and draught reduction, as well as blocking light.
- Shutters can be fitted to almost all shapes and sizes of windows, and are available as full length, café style and tier-on-tier.
- Consider faux wood shutters for damp or humid rooms. Real wood, however, offers more options in terms of styles, colours and finishes.

ABOVE In this room by Georgie Wykeham Designs, four Roman blinds in a Guy Goodfellow fabric reflect the window design and neatly allow plenty of light into the room.

BELOW These pearlwood shutters from Plantation Shutters have been custom colour-matched to Farrow & Ball's Lamp Room Gray.



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10 things to know about wool

Discover the interesting facts about this versatile, sustainable and desirable natural material



Wool from the hardy Cheviot sheep, which originated in the Cheviot Hills on the English/Scottish border, is primarily used in Harris Tweed and carpets.



One of the most natural of all fibres – wool – is in fact one of the most versatile. From its temperature-regulating properties, to being completely biodegradable, wool scores top marks in so many ways, not least for its softness. It is not surprising then that so many industry professionals continue to champion wool as the premium fibre that it is, as well as its benefits to the wider environment, which in turn ensures farmers and their livestock receive the credit and rewards they deserve.

October is earmarked as Wool Month, and *Check It's Wool* is the title of this year's initiative by The Campaign for Wool, which proudly boasts HM King Charles III as its patron. As the British consumer grows increasingly more discerning and ever more socially and environmentally aware, there has never been a better time to celebrate one of the best of British resources and reignite our respect for this most marvellous material. Be inspired by these fascinating fleecy facts and feel the love for wool.



1 There are more than 90 breeds of hill, mountain and lowland sheep in the UK. According to British Wool, the national organisation that promotes the British Wool industry here and abroad, these are cared for by 35,000 farmers who handle 10 to 11 million fleeces of wool each year. No other country in the world can boast as many sheep breeds as the UK, categorised into seven main groups – Fine, Medium, Cross, Lustre, Hill, Mountain and Naturally Coloured. As well as the well-known Herdwick, Shetland or Wensleydale, have you come across a Derbyshire Gritstone, Bluefaced Leicester, Lleyn, Lonk and Soay yet?

2 Wool is HOME GROWN

Sheep in the UK each grow between one and three kilograms of raw wool annually. This must be sheared for the health of the animal, then all it takes for a sheep to produce a new fleece each year is a simple blend of water, air, sunshine and grass.

LEFT The Bronte by Moon British Wool Collection of throws are all made entirely from British lambswool and in collaboration with the British Wool Board and Campaign for Wool in colours and designs inspired by the British landscape. *British Wool collection throws, £95 each, Bronte by Moon, Abraham Moon & Sons*



3 It takes at least 10 processes to get wool from sheep to cloth. These are shearing, grading, auctioning, scouring, carding, combing, spinning, weaving, dyeing and finishing. Wool has been invaluable as a textile commodity in Britain for centuries: it is believed that spinning and weaving first started around 1900BC, with British sheep being reared specifically for their wool, long before the Romans invaded. Considerable profits were made from exporting British-produced wool and woven cloth for centuries and it was only after the industrial revolution that sheep were reared more for their meat in order to feed a growing urban population.

The tactile quality of a pure wool textile is second to none, particularly when it is produced in one of our last remaining vertical mills – where every process is done on the same site, such as at Abraham Moon. Its Bronte by Moon British Wool Collection is inspired by the colours of the local Yorkshire landscape and has British heritage and textile provenance at its heart.

OPPOSITE ABOVE The Bluefaced Leicester is a hill-grazing sheep that produces soft, predominantly white wool that is well-suited to weaving or knitting into blankets, throws and cushion covers.

Wool is naturally temperature regulating.

This means that it provides warmth when the weather is cold and coolness when it is hot, and it outperforms alternative filler materials such as feather, down and polyester, making it a perfect option for duvets and pillows. According to The Clean Sleep Report conducted by Woolroom, the natural sleep specialist, one in five of us say that being too hot or too cold is the number one reason for an interrupted night's sleep. Confident in its conviction that wool can provide a better night's sleep, Woolroom is happy to offer its customers three unique sleep guarantees of 30, 60 or 100 night trials if their sleep is not significantly improved. ▶

ABOVE Wool is temperature regulating so is the ideal filler for duvets, pillows and mattress toppers and protectors. Duvets from £84.99, pillows from £56.99, mattress toppers from £169.99, and mattress protectors from £119.99, all Woolroom



5

WOOL IS NATURALLY FIRE-RESISTANT, which makes it the perfect fibre from which to make all sorts of products for the home, including mattresses. It is also hypoallergenic, so it can be used to produce the perfect sleeping platform for asthma and eczema sufferers too. Invest in a premium mattress from The Wool Origins Collection from Hypnos Beds, the first brand to use British traceable wool

certified by the Responsible Wool Standard, and be assured of a product that is not only superbly supportive and comfortable but is ethically and sustainably produced. Each mattress contains 100 per cent British wool that can be traced back to source and supports fair prices thanks to initiatives such as the Wool Standard from Red Tractor, the UK's largest farm food standards scheme.

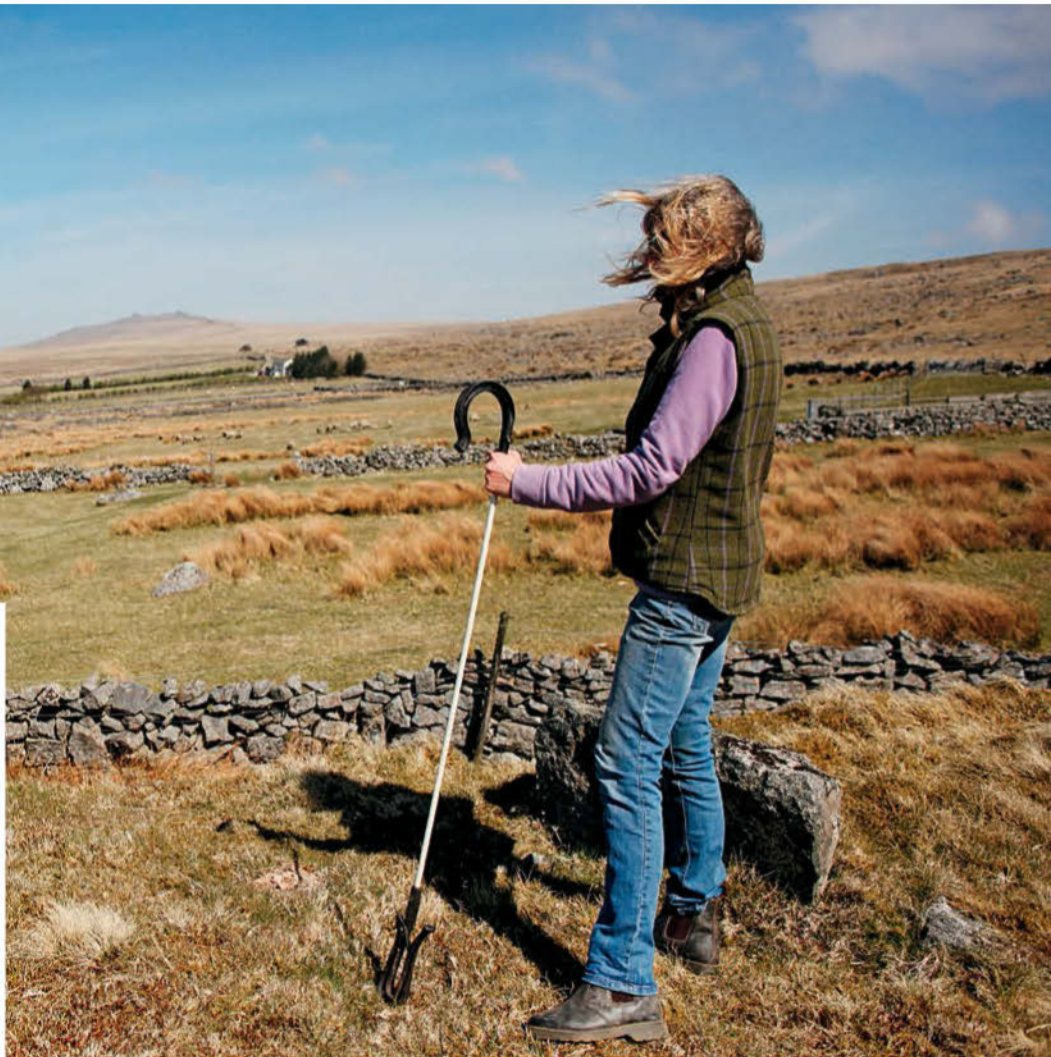
The Wool Origins 6 mattress contains eight fleeces of 100 per cent British Red Tractor wool. *Wool Origins 6 mattress, from £1,699 for a single mattress, Hypnos Beds*

WOOL IS 100%

natural | renewable | biodegradable

6 Wool's eco credentials are virtually second to none. It not only biodegrades in soil, adding nutrients back into the earth, but it also biodegrades in the ocean and water, so does not impact the planet in any way with microfibre and plastic pollution.

7 Wool in the UK can now be fully traceable right back to the farm from which it came. The Woolkeepers (woolkeepers.co.uk) initiative was formed a decade ago and has boldly led the way in ensuring wool traceability and assurance in the UK wool market, creating a fair price programme that rewards farmers for improving their land and animal practices. In very much the same way as Fair Trade supports the growers and producers of small enterprises in developing countries, The Woolkeepers does the same for the UK wool industry by co-creating a new model with livestock farmers, shepherds and shepherdesses. Not only does the initiative provide sourcing integrity but it ensures a fair price is paid for the wool, communicates farm provenance and develops positive animal welfare. The Woolkeepers initiative works with over 750 farmers and brings over one million kilograms a year into its Yorkshire headquarters at Salts Mill. During its relatively short existence, the programme has paid over £2 million more back to the farmers than other traditional buying models. ▶



ABOVE Know which farmer grows the wool from The Woolkeepers traceable supply chain, including farmers located across the South West, Scotland and Yorkshire.

LEFT Farmers, shepherds and shepherdesses nationwide are paid a fair price for their wool as part of The Woolkeepers community.



8 Wool has natural odour-absorbing properties and is also naturally stain-resistant. Thanks to the lanolin content, many wool products such as cushion covers, blankets and throws just need a good dose of fresh air rather than washing or dry cleaning to keep them clean. So, opting for a woollen textile product makes so much sense as it can cut down on time spent on the laundry, reduce the amount of chemicals and amount of wear created by the cleaning processes, resulting in a product that will look better for longer too.

9 WOOL IS VERSATILE. Ingenuity lies at the heart of any creative industry, and no more so than furniture design. Trying to find a way to use the discarded and undervalued coarse wiry fleeces of Lakeland Herdwick sheep led to the development of Solidwool: statement furniture that is produced by encapsulating the fibres in a bio resin which is then moulded into chairs and tables. Every part of the process has low environmental impact and the end results are impressive. Originally, designs took on a monochromatic marble-like appearance once the black, grey and white fibres were suspended in the resin, but now a range of colours produced from the fleeces of Welsh Mountain sheep are available, including cobalt blue, forest green and ochre yellow, all equally transformative in terms of functionality and aesthetic within the home.

ABOVE A pure wool throw is not only soft to the touch but superbly simple to maintain. *British Wool Classic Check throw, Pink/Camel, £95, Bronte by Moon, Abraham Moon & Sons*

RIGHT Inventive in its design, a chair made from discarded wool is the epitome of modern thinking. *Hembury chairs, £575 each, Solidwool*



10

As well as adding immense visual appeal and providing an extra layer of insulation to a home, whether long pile or short tufted, the soft, sensual feel of wool underfoot makes it worth the investment. Industry leader Roger Oates Design celebrates the provenance of UK wool with its New Classics Collection. It is 100 per cent British to the core, using traceable wool exclusively sourced through The Woolkeepers (see p121) from sheep reared in Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Wiltshire and Surrey. The yarn is then spun and dyed in Yorkshire, the runners are woven in Devon and finished in Herefordshire, all reducing emissions from transportation. The end result is a superb product that will add sophistication and heritage style in an instant. ■

FEATURE SARA EMSLIE PHOTOGRAPHS (BLUEFACED LEICESTER) © BRITISH WOOL; (SHEPHERDS) © THE WOOLKEEPERS;

Create contemporary calm with a monochromatic striped herringbone design in soft 100 per cent British wool. Swanson Clay rug, from £1,565, The New Classics Collection, Roger Oates Design

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LIVING THE SEASON

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

WILD MUSHROOM AND CREAM CHEESE TART

Natural edible treasures growing in the British countryside, wild mushrooms add an earthy balance to this creamy tart recipe with their rich and fruity flavours heralding autumn's arrival

For eight to ten slices

INGREDIENTS

6 sprigs parsley	Freshly ground black pepper
6 sprigs dill	Freshly grated nutmeg
400g cream cheese	300g ready-rolled shortcrust pastry
100g double cream	150g wild mushrooms
2 eggs	1 tbsp olive oil
40g Parmesan, grated	
salt	

METHOD

- Preheat the oven to 180°C/356F/gas 4. Grease a 24cm tart tin with butter.
- Roughly chop most of the herbs. Mix them with the cream cheese, cream, eggs, Parmesan, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Halve or slice the mushrooms.
- Unroll the pastry and use it to line the tin, pressing into the base and sides.
- Pour in the cream mixture and dot it with the mushrooms and the remaining herbs. Brush the mushrooms with oil.
- Bake for 50 minutes until set and golden brown. Serve.



What to do in OCTOBER

This is the month for sewing home accessories for a seasonal update, investing in stationery, seeking comfort in flavoursome dishes, and sourcing an extra layer for the bed for when the nights turn cooler

GET *creative*

Early autumn is a great way to sign up for a new course with the specific aim of making home accessories that have the potential to inject a fresh new feel to a room. Simple sewing skills are often sufficient to enable beginners, as well as those more experienced, to create a personal home accessory that is bespoke and handcrafted. Be inspired by a favourite fabric design to introduce a joyful touch to a room in the form of soft furnishings and accessories. Enjoy a day or two in the picturesque Cotswolds and learn how to make lampshades, rag rugs, baskets decorated with fabric flowers and butterflies, or even tackle the skills needed to upholster a footstool with renowned fabric house Lewis & Wood. The courses take place in The Top Floor, the creative workspace studio at the headquarters at Woodchester Mill, Stroud, Gloucestershire. Alternatively, visit eventbrite.com to find similar courses in other parts of the country. ▶

Choose from a selection of fabric accessory-making courses, from £95 for a one-day workshop, Lewis & Wood





COOK *kale*

Take early autumn comfort in light but tasty dishes inspired by the best of British pubs with recipes by celebrated chef and one of our favourite television personalities, Matt Tebbutt. Celebrate kale at its seasonal best combined with black garlic and onion with this warming, flavoursome dish.

GNOCCHI, ONION PURÉE, KALE AND BLACK GARLIC

This is an easy-to-follow gnocchi recipe made very tasty indeed by the addition of onion purée and black garlic paste.

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

2 large baking potatoes (around 600g), scrubbed
80g Parmesan, freshly grated, plus 20g to serve
2 free-range egg yolks, beaten
150g Italian 00 plain flour, plus extra for dusting
salt and pepper
10g salted butter

FOR THE ONION PURÉE

1 tbsp olive oil
1 white onion, peeled and chopped
8 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
1 bay leaf

FOR THE BLACK GARLIC PASTE

10 black garlic cloves, peeled
2 tbsp olive oil
a pinch of salt

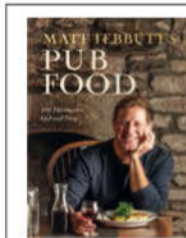
FOR THE KALE

200g kale, thick spines discarded and leaves chopped
50ml olive oil
juice of 1 lemon



METHOD


- Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6. Place the potatoes on a baking tray and cook for 1 hour, or until cooked through.
- Once cool enough to handle, remove the flesh from the potatoes and push through a fine sieve or ricer into a large bowl. Leave to cool completely and then stir in the Parmesan, yolks and flour. Season with salt and pepper. Bring the mixture together to form a dough. Lightly dust a work surface with flour and roll the dough out into a long sausage shape. With a sharp knife cut the dough into dumpling shapes of about 2cm. Set aside.
- For the onion purée, heat the oil in a frying pan and add the onion, garlic and bay leaf. Sweat for a few minutes until the onions are softened but not coloured. Remove the bay leaf and place the onions and garlic in a blender or food processor. Blitz to a purée and pass through a sieve into a small bowl.
- For the black garlic paste, blitz the garlic, oil and salt in a blender or food processor to create a paste. Add water if you need more liquid.
- Put the kale on a chopping board and massage the leaves with the olive oil, until they soften and break down. Add the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper.
- Meanwhile, bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil and add the gnocchi pieces. Simmer until they rise to the top of the water and then remove them with a slotted spoon. Throw them into a hot sauté pan and fry in a little butter until golden all over.
- To serve, spoon the onion purée onto warmed plates. Swirl on the black garlic paste and add the gnocchi and kale on top. Scatter with grated Parmesan.



FURTHER READING
Matt Tebbutt's Pub Food
by Matt Tebbutt,
(Quadrille, £26),
photography by
Chris Terry

COLLECT *foraged fruits and flowers*

Embrace the changing of the seasons with a relaxing countryside walk or a potter in the garden and forage for a few of nature's beauties. Enjoy the early autumn light and the colours of the leaves gently turning from vibrant green to glorious orange, copper and bronze. Keep an eye out for any late flowering stems and branches of berries such as elderflower or brambles that may still be around and bring a few home to make a pretty display on the dining table. Vintage glass bottles are ideal for this purpose as their slender shape will showcase the single stems of flowers and foliage perfectly, allowing each a space of its own. ▶



Aqua glass bottles £30 for three, Jam Jar Edit

Ciel handbound journal, £85; Ciel Floral boxes, from £65; Ciel pen pot, £35, all Lucy Berridge Interiors



ORGANISE *stationery*

Why not enforce a touch of seasonal order into the home office coupled with a dash of decorative style? Gather up all those unruly piles of bills and home maintenance paperwork and create harmony with some co-ordinated stationery pieces. Keepsake boxes and magazine files are ideal for stashing away paperwork, while pen holders, journals and letter tidies will all make household administration and home office desk work that little bit more appealing. Select products that are British-made by specialist craftspeople and artisans for a winning

combination of quality, functionality and timeless elegance – custom marbled papers, grosgrain ribbon and bespoke designs are all part of the appeal of the luxury stationery collection by creative stylist Lucy Berridge. Then, all that is required is to set aside a few hours in the early autumn evenings ahead to organise recipes, bills, letters and perhaps also postcards and keepsakes of recent holidays stored together in a beautiful box, safeguarding memories to cherish forever.

FEATURE SARA EMSLIE PHOTOGRAPHS (JAM JAR EDIT) © HELEN CATHCART

UPDATE *the bed with an extra layer*

Depending on how cool the nights turn once autumn really sets in, be prepared with a couple of extra blankets or quilts. A pure wool blanket is always useful throughout the house, either in the bedroom, living room or even for summer picnics, so it is a good idea to ensure a stash of clean, laundered wool blankets are neatly folded away and ready for when needed. Alternatively, a cotton quilt is a great addition to the bedroom, and indeed all year round. As well as providing an extra layer on top of the duvet in the autumn and winter, it can also be handy in the summer when teamed with a flat sheet as a lightweight alternative. Why not be inspired by the nostalgic qualities of a classic patchwork quilt and consider the purchase of a new one as a potential heirloom that can be passed down through future generations. Choose a quilt that fully celebrates the integrity of craftsmanship with a classic motif design in handwoven fabrics, beautifully finished with tactile hand-stitched quilting. ■

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Room to GROW

Finely crafted greenhouses bring structural beauty, utility and sanctuary to a garden

A timeless feature of many classic English gardens, greenhouses have become more than just a work zone. Exquisitely crafted using highly honed skills and techniques, these horticultural havens are focal points in the landscape, providing architectural structure, detail and a continual contrast to verdant lawns and borders.

Within each light-filled interior is an area of quiet industry where seeds germinate, seedlings are tended and crops and exotics can be nurtured in a sheltered and steady environment. Peaceful yet energised, these much-treasured spaces also offer a place to experiment with growing newly found favourites while also lending a moment for mindful solitude.

“I love our greenhouse space at Perch Hill so much that we now have two!” says gardener, writer and cook ▶



ABOVE Double doors and a large entrance porch make this versatile greenhouse supremely accessible. *Victorian Lodge with double porch, £POA, Hartley Botanic*

LEFT Elegant and versatile, this aluminium design has a flat-fronted lobby. *Mottisfont Greenhouse, from £26,717, National Trust Collection, Alitex*

RIGHT Make planting up pots efficient with a potting tray and handy shelf.

Potting Pal, £139, Rhino Greenhouses

OPPOSITE TOP An attractive central porch makes this compact greenhouse an aesthetically pleasing addition.

National Garden Scheme Collection Thyme Greenhouse, 2.6m x 3.7m, £POA, Griffin Glasshouses

OPPOSITE BELOW

Use the warm, light-filled interior to grow and unwind.

The Ickworth Greenhouse, £53,504, National Trust Collection, Alitex

BELOW Frame a greenhouse with chunky rattan planters with hidden plastic liners.

Square Rattan Planters, £175 for two, Cox & Cox

Sarah Raven. “We have just as much produce in the greenhouse between October and April as we do the other half of the year. Hardy herbs and salads a-go-go as well as cut and edible flowers, giving us such wonderful things to eat and pick for the vase at a lean time for the outside edible garden.”

Style and substance

Careful planning and consideration will result in the perfect greenhouse to suit each garden’s and gardener’s individual needs. Assessing how the space in and around the greenhouse will be used, where it will sit and how it will complement the garden and style of house are all key points.

“Many people might automatically think that greenhouses are for die-hard, green-fingered enthusiasts only – but they’d be wrong,” says Nelly Hall of Alitex. “If you’re just getting stuck into growing your own fruit, vegetables or flowers, a greenhouse provides the optimum conditions, and if you invest in a high-quality, expertly crafted structure, you’ll also be adding a beautiful focal point to your garden that will last a lifetime.”

While the Romans are credited with originating the greenhouse, England’s first heated example was established in 1681 at Chelsea Physic Garden to cultivate medicinal plants. This was considered such a success that many wealthy landowners and royals had their own constructed to conserve and display the much sought-after exotic species being brought back by globe-travelling sailors and plant-hunters. Architecturally pleasing and highly decorative, these glazed horticultural display cabinets were



‘If you’re getting stuck into growing your own fruit, vegetables or flowers, a greenhouse provides the optimum conditions, as well as adding a beautiful focal point to your garden’

Nelly Hall, Alitex

adorned with ornate cresting, tie bars and finials, all leading to the familiar designs seen today.

“Over recent years, the Victorian theme with attractive outside roof decoration and traditional Victorian-shaped and -sized glass panes have become firm favourites with gardeners,” says Linda Lane of Griffin Glasshouses.

Greenhouse design has evolved steadily since the 17th century, with styles, shapes and detailing advancing as materials and construction methods have allowed. “Pitch and window spacing are usually primary to the aesthetic of a greenhouse,” explains Ross Acklam Hirst of Woodpecker Joinery.

“A 40-degree pitched roof with narrow panes creates the classic Victorian look, while a 30-degree pitch with wide panes makes for a more contemporary look. Porches and taller eaves can increase the presence of a greenhouse in a garden and facilitate additional doors and windows.”

The footprints of domestic greenhouses are increasingly varied, with today’s buildings including T-shaped, L-shaped and cross-shaped freestanding designs, as well as lean-tos, hexagonal, octagonal and hybrids that marry potting sheds and storage with fully glazed areas.

Construction materials continue to evolve, with robust but lightweight aluminium proving popular and rich-grained timber highly desired. “Traditionally we manufacture our greenhouses out of western red cedar which requires very little maintenance,” says Acklam ▶





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THE ENDURING CHARM OF A POTTING SHED

An exquisite shed, handcrafted from UK-grown cleft oak, was the standout centrepiece of designer Tom Stuart-Smith's National Garden Scheme show garden at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Attracting wide praise, it indicated the timeless appeal of the humble potting shed. A place to retreat away from the gaze of others and out of the sun and rain, these intimate spaces are ideal for whiling away the hours sowing seeds, designing borders or simply for some quiet contemplation.

KEY POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN PURCHASING A NEW POTTING SHED ARE:

- Intended use: How is the internal space to be used? A fitted bench and shelving suit gardening tasks, while for relaxation, full-length glazing and open floor space are useful for reading and garden-gazing.
- Footprint and configuration: Bespoke potting sheds can be designed to maximise a specific location. Choose from linear, square, rectangular, lean-to or L-shaped.
- Design details: Period features such as Georgian-style windows, corrugated metal roofing and bargeboards add character and should echo the style of the main property.
- Useful extras: Power points, lighting, opening glazing and split stable doors can all enhance use.

Premium potting shed companies include: The Cosy Shed Company, Crane Garden Buildings, The Posh Shed Company, and Malvern Garden Buildings.

ABOVE Inspired by a 17th-century outbuilding, this shed features an apex roofline and black, corrugated roofing. *National Trust Felbrigg Shed, from £4,235, Crane Garden Buildings*



A cedar glasshouse with automatic roof vents, in a choice of 24 colours. *Victorian Glasshouse, from £5,235 (1.60m x 1.93m), Malvern Garden Buildings*

Hirst. "Over the last three years, we have been developing the option to manufacture our greenhouses from Accoya timber, an even more sustainable and durable choice."

Perfecting the position

Deciding on where in a garden to site a greenhouse requires thought and, often, ingenuity. "It is not necessary to have a huge garden space to recreate the opulent Victorian look," says Hartley Botanic CEO Tom Barry. "The benefits of year-round growing, plant protection and edibles can be experienced even with our smaller structures."

Greenhouse designers and professional gardeners advise careful orientation for the best results. "In terms of positioning, generally you should find a location for the greenhouse with the ridge running from east to west, as this ensures maximum sunlight exposure throughout the day and seasons," says Hall. "Avoid surrounding trees or shadows from buildings that may block sunlight."

ABOVE RIGHT Add a waist-height potting bench for sowing and potting tasks. *Sowing accessories from a range at Dobbies*

RIGHT Keep the greenhouse tidy with a stylish dustpan and brush made of coppiced wood and natural bristles. *Artisan dustpan and brush, £45, Little Garden Shop*





Design differences

As it will be an enduring garden feature, it pays to customise any greenhouse design, particularly when it comes to ventilation. “It is essential to reduce the temperature inside a greenhouse during warm weather to maintain the ideal growing environment,” says Lane. Most quality glasshouse designs will feature sensor-operated automated vents.

“There aren’t really any don’ts with greenhouse ventilation, says Acklam Hirst, “other than you should design in more than you think you will require. Consider upgrading ventilation systems if in a coastal area or exposed to high winds. Blinds should also be considered for a south-facing greenhouse.”

Future-proofing measures are also highly favoured. “The majority of Griffin Glasshouses customers specify rainwater harvesting,” says Lane. “This is collected from the roof into a large tank underneath the greenhouse benching. The water is always at the correct temperature and is easily pumped out using the hand pump provided.” Fitting air bricks into a greenhouse wall that links directly to adjoining cold frames is also beneficial, as this enables the warm air to benefit maturing plants.

A tailored interior

Depending on how the interior is to be used, finely crafted, bespoke fittings will keep the space practical and organised. Benches and shelving can be installed to define areas and floor space can be left for moveable planters, a bistro set or a reading chair.



ABOVE Constructed from cedar, with a dwarf wall and double doors, this design has a dual-pitched roof to fit neatly into a corner.

Bespoke lean-to greenhouse supplied to BBC Gardeners’ World, £POA, Woodpecker Joinery
LEFT Made from galvanised steel, this chic water butt comes with a removable lid, a tap and an internal grate to gather leaves. *Galvanised 100 litre steel water butt, £279.99, Crocus*

Growing spaces are a matter of personal preferences, but Sarah Raven says: “I recommend earth beds – or as large a container as you can fit in your greenhouse – so you create an under-glass garden. This will extend not just the seasonal range of produce, but also what you can grow.”

The larger a design, the more layout options are available, as Jason Preece of Malvern Garden Buildings explains: “More serious gardeners can add a partition in larger greenhouses as an optional extra to create two climates and a smaller area for propagation.” ■

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‘An airy, open-plan kitchen-dining area is a must so the cook doesn’t feel left out of the fun!’

What are your secrets to creating a practical home kitchen?

I do all my recipe development for books, magazines and television in my kitchen, which my friends and family love as it means there’s always food to enjoy. I wrote my latest cookbook here with my baby strapped to my chest. We have an airy, open-plan kitchen-dining area, which is always a must so the cook doesn’t feel left out of the fun! Storage is also key.

Do you grow any ingredients?

We’ve got all the usual herbs growing, despite the slugs having the time of their lives trying to eat them! Rosemary, thyme and basil are my favourites, and chives, too. I’ve got a big bay tree, grown from my mum’s cutting, and a lemon balm plant that makes gorgeous tea.

What is on your stove in autumn?

I am really enjoying making the grated halloumi traybake with hot honey, olives and tomatoes, the no-bake chocolate peanut bars and the one-pot lazy lasagne from my latest book.

What is a treasured possession?

I have my late father’s beautiful, tall glass cabinet that he used to store vintage toys in. During my childhood alone, we moved house around the UK and Germany a dozen times, as my father was in the army, and I’ve moved house many times as an adult, so it has survived a lot. We mostly keep photo frames and small artworks on the shelves, and a large plant lives on top.

What should no English home be without?

A dog! And a kitchen cupboard dedicated to pantry staples – favourite spice mixes, dried herbs, tins of tomatoes, coconut milk, beans, chickpeas and jars of delicious things so you can easily assemble a simple hearty dinner every night of the week without stress. ■

Real Healthy by Melissa Hemsley (Ebury Press, £26), photography by Lizzie Mayson

My English Home

The cookery writer, chef and sustainability champion Melissa Hemsley finds joy in her Grade II listed Victorian home in North London, where she lives with her family

Who do you live with and where?

I live in a conservation area in North London with my partner Henry, an art curator, our one-year-old daughter Summer Eliza, and Nelly, our beloved Staffordshire bull terrier. We walk as a family in Regent’s Park or Primrose Hill every day.

Can you tell us about your home?

It is a Grade II listed Victorian terrace in a friendly street with young children and dogs. The previous owners had lived in the house for 50 years, and we’ve lived here for just under a year. We got the keys the month before I gave birth, then we did five months of intense renovations.

How would you describe your interiors style?

Fresh, classic English with a contemporary twist and lots of stripes! We love Pooky, especially its new rechargeable wall lights, and also Little Greene’s Shirting paint, which we have used throughout the house as it’s such a gorgeous white and it works well with the colourful art we have everywhere. We like to buy vintage pieces, but we did invest in a new large white Sophie Conran sofa and lots of charming Angie Burret patchwork quilts. Our Vitsœ shelving (*in the background, above*) has moved endless times with us as we have masses of books on art and cooking.



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