

The ENGLISH HOME



Celebrating the essence of English style

September 2017 | Issue 151 | £4.30 | UK Edition

Refresh & Renew

Farmhouse style • Window dressing • Verdant green schemes

Restore to glory
Bring a period
home back to life

Learn new skills
From upholstery
to fabric printing

Names of note
Rose Prince
Liz Earle
Andy Sturgeon

STORAGE SOLUTIONS



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A couple and their dog enjoying a bracing walk, is an original acrylic painting on canvas by British artist, Roger Hann. From a collection painted exclusively for us and framed in Devon using a reverse profile gold leaf frame with deep rebate.

Width 40" (103cm) | Depth 1¼" (5cm) | Height 40" (103cm) £1,990

VIEW IN YOUR HOME PRIOR TO PURCHASE | PAINTING COMMISSIONS UNDERTAKEN

British artist, Roger Hann, has always been passionate about painting since an early age attending Exeter Art College, in Devon. Roger developed his technique at every available opportunity but retirement has allowed him to fully immerse himself in painting, predominately in acrylics and his prolific work is widely represented throughout the West Country.

Roger has an extraordinary visual memory and from his imagination transforms what he views and feels on his many walks along the East Devon Coast onto his blank canvas in his studio.

The structure of the sky and sea gives a feeling of calmness but also of movement, which give the whole composition a beauty of nature, as intended. The subtlety and gentle lyricism of his marine, cloud and seascapes marks him out as one of the country's leading practitioners in this genre.



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A letter from home



My personal hoard of fabric samples, collected over the years, is reaching dizzying proportions (my husband is a very understanding man). I sift through it regularly, dreaming of new schemes, but more often than not it all gets re-hidden tidily from view. However, having read the feature on learning a new skill (page 126) I am determined to make time to refresh my sewing skills and put them to good use. I have made Roman blinds for past homes and a basic patchwork quilt for my daughter's first bed. And although I'd always rather pay a professional for beautifully made curtains, it would be lovely to enjoy a sense of accomplishment in making a cushion with professional piping. Come to that, there's an antique occasional chair in my bedroom that really could do with reupholstery – perhaps I might even turn my hand to that? Time is always in short supply – I am sure you find the same – but part of the pleasure of owning a home is putting a stamp on it, whether in restoring it to former glory, tracking down the perfect fixtures or fittings or making even small details to enhance and add personal touches to every room. Whatever stage you are at in creating your own home, I hope this issue will inspire and offer valuable resources. And if you decide to take a course, or have another to recommend, please do let the *English Home* team know.

Behind the scenes

This month I have been...

Attending the launch party for **Original House** – a great resource for vintage industrial furniture and accessories based in a barn in an idyllic Cotswolds hamlet. Visits by appointment only. originalhouse.co.uk

Being completely bowled over (again) by the passion of Nicola and Christopher Cox – husband and wife designer-makers at Cox London. Their new showroom just off the Pimlico Road in London, showcases lovely furniture, mirrors and lighting in situ. coxlondon.co.uk

Discovering hidden treasures in Cheltenham including a fabulous dome inside a building currently being turned into a new Ivy Restaurant, by Caprice Holdings, due to open in autumn. With this, the influx of interiors brands, and a huge John Lewis under construction, 2018 is going to be an important year in our home town.

With warmest regards,

Kerry Harper-Cuss, Editor



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PLUS Exclusive profiles of the most high profile names in interior design



Contributors



ROSE PRINCE, the well-known food expert, has been writing about food for 20 years. She is the author of four cookery books, including *The New English Kitchen* and *Kitchenella* and four food guides. She writes occasionally for *The Spectator*, is a columnist for the *Telegraph Magazine* and *Tablet*, and contributes to BBC Radio 4's *Food Programme*, *Woman's Hour* and *Today*. Inside this issue, she invites readers into her house and kitchen with a self-penned feature on her own home (see page 46). Rose is currently working on a new book, *Dinner & Party*, about the perils of entertaining, due to be published in September. You can also sign up to take lessons in cookery with Rose at her own home in the hills of north Dorset. Visit roseprince.co.uk for course details.



ANDY STURGEON fell into landscape gardening after having second thoughts about his childhood plans to join the Army, and discovered his true calling and a natural talent he never knew he possessed. He fell in love with the creative fulfilment gardening gave him and the chance to do a physical job in the great outdoors, with the opportunity to stand back after a hard-working day and admire what he had achieved. Today, he is one of the UK's most talented garden designers, having won seven Chelsea Flower Show gold medals and twice been named Chelsea's Best In Show. His striking modern designs conjure wonders from natural materials and innovative planting. In this issue, on page 134, he shares his expert advice on creating a garden from scratch.



MAGGIE STEVENSON is a highly respected journalist who has written about homes and interiors for many years. She is the author of several books on various aspects of furnishing and decorating, including *Architectural Details: A Home Source Book* and *The Bathroom Design Planner* (which she co-authored), both published by Ryland Peters & Small. "I am fascinated by the way people shape their home environments and especially interested in interiors where craft and tradition play an important part," she says, also naming an interview with the late great photographer Lord Patrick Lichfield about his bathroom as a memorable career moment.

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Top strata

Create a sophisticated yet breezy scheme with the addition of silk taffeta striped curtains for an extra hint of opulence.

Curtains and large cushions, Belle Meade Stripe, colour 584, £120 a metre; sofas, Astor Velvet, colour 893, £160 a metre; small cushions: Colibri, colour 434, £80 a metre; all Travers

HOME Comforts

Golden hues, breezy fabrics and captivating accessories to gladden the eye





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Lingering look

Enjoy the long, balmy days for a while longer, enticing guests outdoors with a prettily laid table. Top with delicious food and refreshing drinks in readiness for a leisurely repast. *Daisy Bunch* tableware, from £5 for a plastic tumbler, Cath Kidston

Child's play

Free of chemicals, toxins and other nasties, Edward Bulmer Natural Paint's new Nursery collection was created with children in mind and comes in a selection of 12 uplifting hues. The brand says it will not cause allergic reactions and, not least, it is easy to wipe clean.

Evie colourway, £45 for 2.5 litres, *The Nursery Collection*, Edward Bulmer Natural Paint

Enchanting prints

It is almost possible to sense the sounds and fragrance of the garden with these evocative print cushions.

Fritillary natural cushion (left); *Rowan* natural cushion (right), both £45, Emily Burningham ▶



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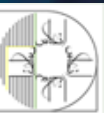
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Beyond summer

On chilly evenings it is still life-affirming to sit outdoors with a warming mug of tea, keeping the nip in the air at bay with a charming throw. *Indigo drop mug, £12.95; Honeycomb throw in Rose Pink, £69.95; Decorator's Notebook*

China fusion

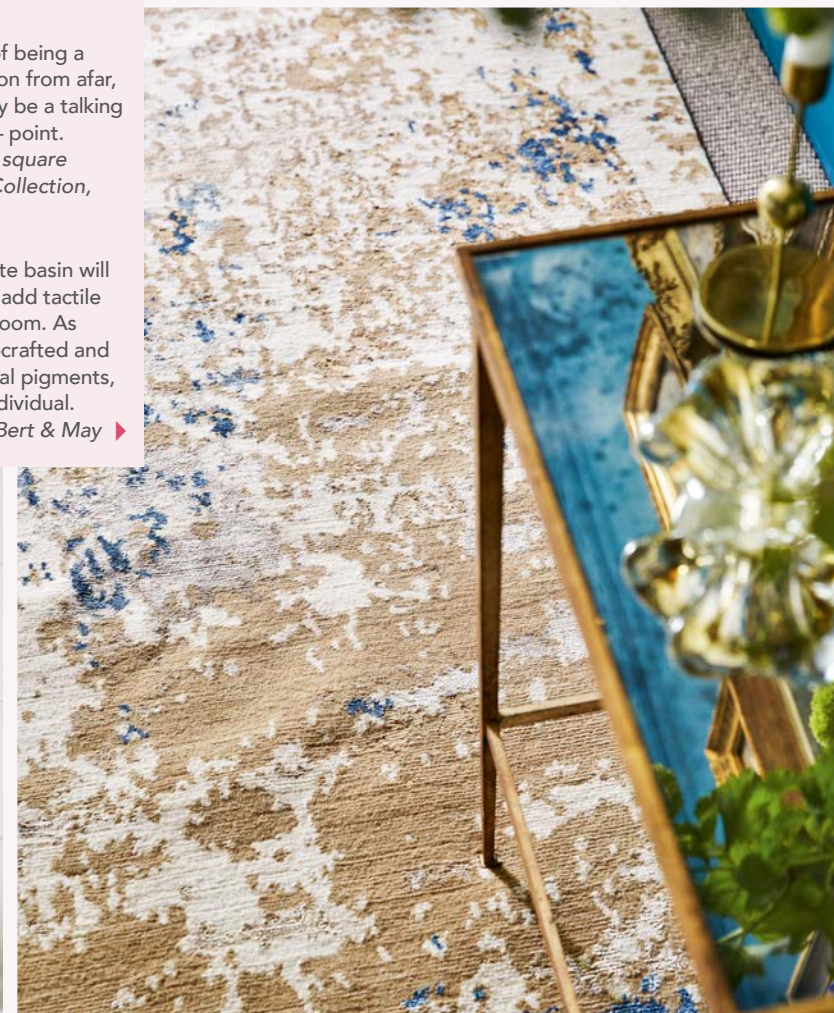
Delicate wallpaper designs high-fired onto ceramic tiles make a refreshing change to the usual humdrum types of kitchen or bathroom wall coverings. *Spitalfields Silk ceramic tiles, Sir John Soane's Museum Collection, from £195 for 600mm x 600mm, surfaceview.co.uk*

Chamber piece

Giving the illusion of being a crystal rock formation from afar, this rug will certainly be a talking – as well as a focal – point. *Geode rug, £715 a square metre, The Stone Collection, Jennifer Mannners*

Bowled over

This shapely concrete basin will be just the thing to add tactile elegance to a bathroom. As every basin is hand-crafted and coloured with natural pigments, each will be truly individual. *Rho basin, £1,242, Bert & May* ▶





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE

In the round

The concentric circles of this lamp base add a deftness of detail to a scheme and create decorative silhouettes as light floods in through the windows.

Oromo lamp base in antique brass, £545; Versailles side table, £785; Arion the Racing Horse, £225, all Oka

Bathtime blooms

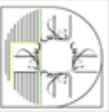
Full of heady romance, a floral sheer adds a divine decadence to a bathroom when made into full-length curtains that pool luxuriously on the floor.

Lady Kristina Ramie Voile in Pianissimo, £72 a metre, Liberty

Heading to bed

Transform a bedroom and inject timeless luxury with a grand, tall headboard in six standard sizes or bespoke options. Deep buttoning, piping and sumptuous velvet impart a further sense of opulence and comfort.

The Easdale headboard shown in Flat Velvet Wedgwood, available in a variety of fabrics, from £399, The Headboard Workshop ■



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Warwick dressing table with Calcutta gold marble top, leather upholstery and metal frame, £5,995, The Sofa & Chair Company



Provocateur sofa in Turquoise with petite brass legs, £3,295, Eichholtz from Sweetpea & Willow



Glaston nesting tables, set of three in stainless steel, £665, Barker and Stonehouse



Pulcina aluminium coffee maker, £65, Alessi

CURVE APPEAL

Following the sensual curve of a chair or a chaise longue adds sumptuous style and a sense of tailored craftsmanship to the look and visual flow of a room setting. From contemporary stainless steel to luxuriously decadent sofas, a sinuous element imbues interiors with harmony. Smooth natural wood, plush upholstery and symmetrical bevelled edges all add a deliciously deco undercurrent, too.



L'Atelier du Vin Carafe Spirale, mouth-blown glass with a fabric topper which allows the wine to breathe, £115, The Conran Shop



Elm and Ash 'cowhorn' design chair, inspired by traditional Windsor chair designs, £650, Burford Garden Company



Alameda bevelled mirror reminiscent of Moroccan architecture, £265, The French Bedroom Company



Deneuve cabinet, available in high gloss ivory, black or teal (seen here) with brass detailing, from £6,429, Julian Chichester

FEATURE HOLLY VON BOCK & LEA TACEY

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Wellies change of address cards, £20 for 10; Typography correspondence cards, £20 for 10, both Fraser & Parsley



Juliet Travers luxury notecards, £12 for a pack of eight different designs, juliettravers.com

Christian Lacroix Love Who You Want hardcover journal, £29.95, Liberty



Scarab Beetle correspondence cards, £26 for 10, Smythson



Matthew Williamson Pineapple Paisley wedding invitation, from £1.09 each, Papier

PAPER TRAIL

Whether for invitations, writing thank you notes or simply for the joy of owning it, there is something special about beautiful stationery – particularly in this era of digital correspondence. The thrill of opening a drawer and finding a stash of paper goodies embossed with a sweet motif or a pithy line, or adorned with a pretty floral print, is hard to replicate on a screen, as is the satisfying feeling of writing on smooth paper with a fountain pen.



Serena Notecards, £30 for nine, Serena Linley for Linley



Rifle Paper Co. Assorted Botanical Set, £15.25 for eight, northlighthomestore.com



Isla Simpson Dachshund Envelope Correspondence Set, £22 for 10, islasimpson.co.uk

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Kyoto table lamp, £2,495,
Jonathan Adler



Cranes wallpaper in Blue,
£68 a roll, Emily Burningham



Koi velvet cushions, from £85,
Arlette Ess, launching
September 2017



Koi ceramic stool,
£235, Shimu

ORIENTAL ECHOES

Displaying an amalgam of decorative items from across the globe has long been a key style feature of an English home, adding depth and interest. The influence of Japanese iconography on interiors has been gathering pace in recent years, with this year's notable *Great Wave* exhibition at the British Museum celebrating the work of artist Katsushika Hokusai. Deft use of cherry blossom, koi and crane designs welcome in a taste of the Orient.



Yama side plates, £65 for
four; Mizu platter, £55;
Toby cup and saucer, £25;
Yuti teapot, £50, all from the
V&A Inspired Collection at
John Lewis



Spyro porcelain range, from
£4.50 for a rice bowl,
Amaroni Home



Cherry Blossom desk/dressing table,
£11,520, Arthur Brett



Melody porcelain basin,
£760, The London
Basin Company

FEATURE SARAH FEELEY

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THE ENGLISH HOME NOTEBOOK

Our monthly digest of inside information on people, places and pursuits



PURSUIT

Homemade apple juice

Romantically synonymous with English gardens, apple trees actually originated in Asia. Making apple juice at home is a wonderful way to avoid a glut. Timing is crucial – picked too soon, full flavour may not have developed, but too late, flavour and quality may suffer. Check for ripeness and taste before picking.

For sweet juice, choose Gala, Golden Delicious, Fuji, Honeycrisp or Red Delicious. For a tart note, blend with Russet, Bramley and Cox's. Never store

bruised apples in with good quality ones, remembering the old adage. Wash and cut up apples, removing any rotten flesh, and put through a crusher. Then strain the pulp using a traditional press, and refrigerate in a covered jug for up to three days. If storing in sterilised bottles, it is vital to stop the juice fermenting or they could explode. Many farms offer an apple pressing and pasteurising service, the juice lasting for two years. Visit vigopresses.co.uk

Diary – events worth noting

ROYAL PAGEANTRY

Her Majesty The Queen has generously loaned 44 watercolours from the Royal Collection for a touring exhibition. Depicting Queen Victoria's state visit to Paris in 1855, half of them have never been exhibited before. Until 15 October; cheltenhammuseum.org.uk



ARTFUL TREASURES Pentreath & Hall in London will host a pop-up shop by Frances Palmer and Charlie McCormick, selling her handmade ceramics and his pressed-seaweed prints, intriguing found objects and spectacular home-grown dahlias. 11–23 September; pentreath-hall.com

INSPIRING GIFTS Enjoy free valuations from Antiques Roadshow experts and a day's shopping in the grounds of Tedworth Park, Wiltshire, in aid of ABF The Soldiers' Charity. Peruse 90 carefully chosen stalls, all donating 10 per cent of proceeds to the charity. 26–27 September; eecfair.org.uk

A Good Read



Twenty First Century Cotswolds by Pippa Paton (£40, Momentum Books)

Interior designer Pippa Paton has made her name transforming

historic Cotswolds cottages and manor houses with her signature style of rustic luxury and more than a hint of glamour. This coffee-table book is packed with full-page photographs showing some of her successful home transformations. Lovers of chintz may not connect as strongly with her sleek style, but with Pippa's dedication to traditional materials and craftspeople, as well as her clever use of colour and texture, there is much here to admire and inspire. ▶

The English House

Handmade light fittings



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PEOPLE

Rosie Sanders

The work of a truly original artist is instantly recognisable as their own, and this can certainly be said of Rosie Sanders. Her unapologetically vivid and exuberant paintings depict flowers as both towering and sensual, capturing their grace and movement and revelling in the most minute flicker of detail. The dynamism and intensity of her paintings is striking, but she does not seek to idealise flowers, she delights in their flaws and strives to crystallise their character. It is no surprise to discover that she is a keen gardener; her instinctive admiration for botanicals resonates throughout her work. "Something happens when I am painting," she says, "and it's not necessarily conscious".

Secret Letters is an exhibition of her new works at Jonathan Cooper gallery in London from 23 September to 14 October. Each painting will be accompanied by a letter explaining its inspiration and genesis, enclosed in an envelope handmade and illustrated by Rosie.

She also runs botanical painting and printmaking courses at her home in Devon. rosiesanders.com; jonathancooper.co.uk



Jo Bound of Boeme

"Colour adds personality, so don't be afraid of it," says Jo Bound, founder of design house Boeme. In 2011 she set about creating a furnishing brand of beautiful fabrics and interior products from her expressive and joyous paintings inspired by nature. "Our style is a tapestry of bold, expressive art textiles in vibrant and original colour palettes," she says.

With a focus on originality of design and print quality, Boeme proudly uses British basecloths printed in her home town of Lancaster.

"The provenance of any product I use is important to me and I will fight to keep this alive," she says.

Her creations have garnered attention worldwide, and Boeme distributes globally and collaborates with key industry brands. A new collaboration with Multiyork boasts sofas, chairs and footstools in 12 new fabric designs. The two brands have worked closely together to rescale the original fabrics to complement Multiyork's hand-crafted upholstery pieces. They exemplify her stylish playfulness. "Boeme fabrics have so many hues within them, so there is a softness to even the strongest colour palettes which makes them easier to use in a scheme," Jo concludes.

boeme.co.uk; multiyork.co.uk ▶





LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL FOCUS

Inspiration, creation and curation

The London Design Festival, 16–24 September, celebrates and promotes the city as the design capital of the world. Now in its 15th year, it will be held in venues across London, with hundreds of events and opportunities celebrating design in its broadest sense, both national and international. Starting with Decorex International (17–20 September), at Syon Park, near Kew, the London Design Festival also includes Focus/17 (17–22 September) at Design Centre Chelsea Harbour and 100% Design (20–23 September) at Olympia. There will also be special events at the V&A, and at venues in Mayfair, Brompton, Bankside, Brixton, Chelsea, Clerkenwell, Islington, Shoreditch and more, including the Global Design Forum where delegates from around the world will share ideas. London Design Festival Medals will be awarded to four imaginative, original and innovative designers, with categories including Emerging Talent and Lifetime Achievement. londondesignfestival.com ▶



ABOVE LEFT Decorex International is hosted in the grounds of Syon Park, one of London's last great houses, from 17–20 September.

ABOVE RIGHT From The White House to the Titanic, Lincrusta's deeply embossed wallcoverings

have graced some of the world's most iconic interiors and have been manufactured in Britain since 1877. The company is celebrating its 140th anniversary this year and will be exhibiting at Decorex International 2017.



LEFT Focus/17 is an inspiring event for both trade visitors and the general public. With 120 showrooms from Design Centre Chelsea Harbour and many talented Chelsea neighbours taking part, it is an event not to be missed.

ABOVE The famous glass domes of Design Centre Chelsea Harbour set a stylish scene for the fusion of ground-breaking design ideas, craftsmanship and excellence to be found within all year round.



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LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL FOCUS

Decorex International

Celebrating 40 years, Decorex International (17–20 September) is world renowned as the destination where interior design professionals discover the latest, finest and most coveted products from established, new, and emerging talents.

Set in the grounds of historic Syon Park, near Kew, this event has a rich heritage and attracts the industry's elite, keen to feast on luxury design inspiration and motivation. The best of British and international brands, as well as nascent cutting-edge talent, will converge here to unveil their latest collections.

This year, visitors can experience Design Sense – four interactive areas influenced by our senses of touch, sound, sight and smell. A selection of some of the most skilful and innovative names in British craft in Future Heritage will be spotlighted, and there will be a packed programme of talks featuring leading names from the interiors industry.

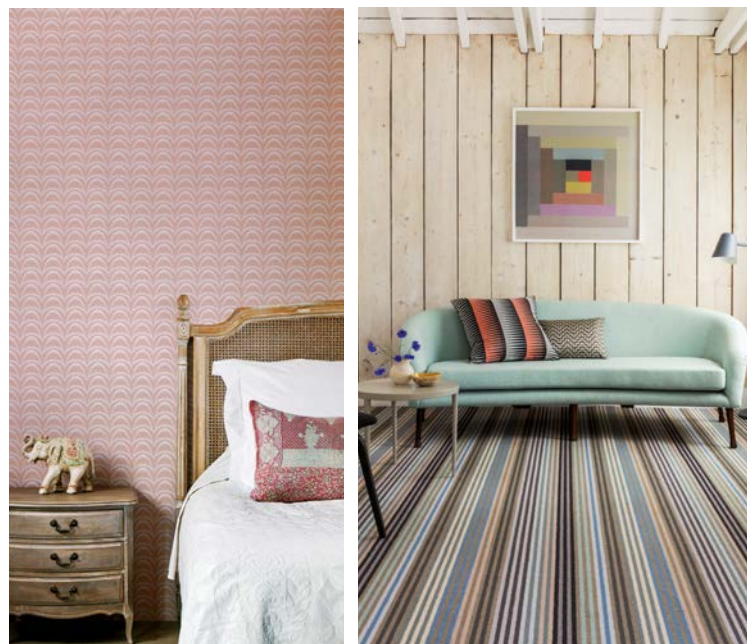
Over 400 exhibitors, more than a third new this year, will encompass the full spectrum of decor from decorative

accessories and textiles to furniture, flooring, lighting and beyond.

Highlights in 2017 will include Annie Sloan unveiling six new colours from the new collection in the brand's Chalk Paint palette, and bespoke rug designer Amy Kent presenting her Art On Rugs collaboration with her artist sister Lucy, featuring 11 designs, each interpreting one of Lucy's abstract paintings, plus a new design, The Kiss.

Studio 198 will showcase its innovative bespoke wall panelling designs, made in its London studio, which create striking and captivating centrepieces, and designer and printmaker Fanny Shorter will present her distinctive and detailed designs inspired by her English upbringing, fusing an appreciation for British craftsmanship with a contemporary edge.

This annual show attracts 14,000 visitors from across the globe, and this year's theme is collaborations. Not just for high-end interior designers and architects, it is also open to the general public, this year on Tuesday 19 September. decorex.com



ABOVE Just some of over 400 brands that will be exhibiting at Decorex. (Clockwise from top left): Devon & Devon, Genevieve

Bennett, Barneby Gates and Alternative Flooring.

LEFT Focus/17 at Design Centre Chelsea Harbour.

Focus/17

Design Centre Chelsea Harbour is right at the heart of the design community. With over 600 of the world's most prestigious luxury brands, this creative hub of design excellence is the largest of its kind in Europe, providing a thriving platform for the best in interiors.

Focus/17, which runs from 17–22 September, offers design influence and vision in one event, inviting trade and retail visitors to take a closer and more detailed look at an impressive breadth of global talent.

With 120 showrooms from Design Centre Chelsea Harbour and external participants from Chelsea taking part – including

industry influencers and rising stars – Focus/17 promises passion, ideas and inspiration. As well as talks, workshops, receptions and discovery tours, masters of their craft will be showcasing techniques and skills up close. A stellar line-up of international speakers will share fascinating insights into the interior design industry amid inventive pop-ups, dynamic floral displays by Tony Marklew and a specially-commissioned, aerial, re-engineered paper installation by Cuture.

A trade-only preview will be held from 17–19 September, and all are welcome from 20–22 September. dcch.co.uk



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Chatsworth

Chatsworth House is one of England's most magnificent stately homes. Constructed between 1687 and 1689 for the first Duke of Devonshire, it was designed by the architect William Talman, a pupil of Sir Christopher Wren. Home today to the 12th Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, it has been passed down through 16 generations of the Cavendish family.

There are many compelling reasons to visit Chatsworth, with over 30 rooms to explore, from the awe-inspiring Painted Hall, regal State Rooms, restored Sketch Galleries and the beautiful Sculpture Gallery. In the guest bedrooms, visitors can meet an Edwardian lady's maid who will reveal the secrets of her mistress's suitcase of clothes. The house contains works of art that span 4,000 years, from ancient Roman and Egyptian sculpture and masterpieces by Rembrandt, Reynolds and Veronese to work by celebrated modern artists including Lucian Freud, Edmund de Waal and David Nash.

Until October 22 this year, the house is hosting the lavish exhibition *House Style: Five Centuries of Fashion at Chatsworth*, a sumptuous celebration of history and heritage, art and aristocracy, fashion and family, craftsmanship and costume. From couture by Dior and coronation robes to wedding dresses, fancy-dress costumes, livery and jewellery, it is a breathtaking treasure trove. And from 22-24 September 2017, The Chatsworth Festival Art Out Loud will feature insightful talks by an array of expert speakers from the worlds of art and fashion. chatsworth.org



FEATURE: SARAH FEELEY PHOTOGRAPHS P27 (APRIL) © JACKY HOBBS, (DIARY) ROYAL COLLECTION
JUST © HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II, 2017, P28 (SON PARK) PAULA FRENCH/SHUTTERSTOCK
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Carefully considered details such as the brushed brass handles together with contemporary touches such as the chic copper light fittings add to the classic design of the cabinetry.

Refined BLEND

Finding the right interior designer helped Polly and Nigel Sargent breathe new life into an eighteenth-century farmhouse in Hampshire

FEATURE JILL SHEARER PHOTOGRAPHS NICK CARTER







ABOVE The extended kitchen is the heart of the home. The cabinetry was designed and built by Squirrels Interiors and painted in three different colours: Squid Ink by Paint & Paper Library, and Harbour Grey and Half Harbour Grey, both by Zoffany. The worktops are a combination of oak and Silestone. The copper lights are from Industville.

Very few design projects come together without a certain amount of stress and heartache, but Polly and Nigel Sargent declare the renovation of their early eighteenth-century six-bedroom Hampshire farmhouse was relatively pain-free.

When the couple decided to move, they were simply looking for a house that would provide some extra room for their family of two teenage boys and two younger girls. "We wanted to stay in this part of Hampshire as the girls were both at school in Winchester," Polly explains, "however, we needed more space when the boys were around at weekends and often wanted friends to stay."

They had barely started looking when a friend mentioned that the owners of a farm in a nearby hamlet had decided to sell up and move to Dorset. "We hadn't really been looking for such a lot of land or so many outbuildings," Polly says, "but the property was in our price range so we thought we would go and take a look. As soon as we stepped through the door, it just felt right," she adds. "We knew we were

looking for our 'forever home' and this seemed to tick all the boxes. Decoratively, it was in very good order, too, so we thought we would be able to just move in and perhaps gradually decorate more to our taste at some point in the future."

However, as with any new project, once contracts were signed and sealed Polly and Nigel started looking at the furniture they already had to see how it would fit in their new house and mulling over how they might use various rooms. Whilst they had a good idea of the sort of look they wanted, they felt daunted by the prospect of redecorating such a large house without having the expertise to manage the job or to source everything they needed.

"We had already started making plans for the house when one afternoon, as we were walking down Stockbridge High Street, we popped into Squirrels Interiors," Polly remembers. There, they met Squirrels' owner, Lisa Sansom, and a cordial rapport was quickly established. "We just fell in love with the warm, classic feel of just about everything in the showroom. And once we got talking to Lisa, and



RIGHT The Grade II listed eighteenth-century farmhouse has been seamlessly extended to provide plenty of room for Polly, Nigel and their four children.

RIGHT, BELOW The antique farmhouse table, the carved oak sideboard – which Polly had stripped and waxed – and the carved oak mirror were all sourced from antiques shops in France.

BELOW The family's miniature dachshund, Max, on the antique bench in the entrance hall. The seat has been upholstered using Clan Chenille by Mulberry Home.





ABOVE The orangery is connected to the original part of the house by a glass atrium, which opens up to the garden in summer. Oak floorboards have been stained chestnut to add richness. The seat cushions on the antique caned bergère chairs are covered in a deep blue velvet by Zoffany.



LEFT A cosy seating area at one end of the dining room provides a relaxed space for after-dinner drinks. Walls are painted in Zoffany's Double Pebble and the armchair is upholstered in Skye in the Sage colourway by Moon.

RIGHT Polly enjoys taking time out to read a book in the orangery.





*“We knew we were looking for our ‘forever home’
and this seemed to tick all the boxes”*

she started to show us some of her work, we knew we didn’t need to look any further. We felt so comfortable with her, we didn’t even consider talking to anyone else,” explains Polly.

“We spent quite a bit of time in the showroom and started with a few mood boards and fabrics, but soon realised that what we really wanted was to get to a place where she understood what we were looking for and could make decisions on our behalf,” she continues. “We were very comfortable with Lisa’s taste, and as her partner Robert runs the architectural and building side of the practice – which has a team of decorators, joiners, plumbers and electricians – we felt they were well equipped to manage everything on our behalf.”

As with any period property, there were inevitably things the Sargents had not anticipated. “The scale of the project grew as we uncovered things we hadn’t realised needed doing, but the more we got to know the house – as well as all the barns and outbuildings that came with it – our wishlist grew. We knew we were definitely going to be here for a long time, so we just decided to do it all at once,” Polly explains.

The house itself is Grade II listed, so any structural changes had to be agreed by the local planning authority. This had to be borne in mind when it came to replacing the 1970s conservatory at the back of the house. “It was leaking and falling down – we had known from the outset that we would need to lose it and put something else there,” says Polly. Initially, ►

ABOVE The wallpaper in the sitting room is Elise by Sanderson. The curtains and pelmets are in Floral Bouquet by Mulberry Home and the sofas are upholstered in a soft blue velvet by Zoffany. Bright accents are provided by pleated lampshades by Besselink & Jones.

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ABOVE The master bedroom has been given a classic, romantic feel with Chinese Toile wallpaper and fabric by Lewis & Wood. The antique French bed was sourced by Lisa, as were the inlaid antique console tables on either side of the bed.

LEFT The Chinese toile theme continues through to the en-suite bathroom. The double vanity unit was made by Squirrels Interiors and painted in Linen by Zoffany.



they had wanted to replace it with a spacious garden room, however, the planners had other ideas. "At the time, we were quite frustrated," remembers Polly, "but the solution the planners favoured – a new orangery, connected to the house by a contemporary glass link – turned out to work brilliantly. The scale and size are completely right," she says. "It's cosy in winter and lovely and fresh in the summer. And the glass link opens up to a patio where we can have barbecues in the summer looking across the garden towards the pond. It catches the afternoon and early evening sun – it's just perfect." They also overhauled the outbuildings, creating a gym and party barn.

The final phase was a kitchen extension, doubling the size of the former kitchen and transforming it into a calm, bright space that could accommodate a generously sized farmhouse table where all the family could congregate comfortably. This gave Polly another opportunity to call on Lisa's skills to help her to blend a few smart, contemporary elements, such as the copper pendant lights and foxed-mirror splashback behind the Aga to the classic scheme. "The previous kitchen was probably what let the house down before," Polly says. "It was really quite small in comparison to the size of the house. It sort of worked when it was ►



“The farmhouse is suffused with an inviting sense of calm, light and space”

ABOVE Both the girls' bedrooms have been decorated in a softly feminine style. The wallpaper in this bedroom is Bugs & Butterflies by Barneby Gates and the bed is upholstered in Isobella by Kate Forman.

RIGHT There is plenty of outdoor space for the children and their friends to play and a sense of privacy afforded by the 28 acres of land that came with the house.

just us and the girls at home, but when we had all four children plus various friends, it would often end up with me in the kitchen and everyone else somewhere else.”

Now the renovations are complete, there is plenty of room for everyone and the farmhouse is suffused with an inviting sense of calm, light and space. The generously proportioned kitchen at the heart of the home looks out across the gentle slope of the garden, and the house's layout is flexible enough to accommodate all four children plus various friends, and for Polly and Nigel to have a calm, comfortable place to relax and entertain.

Outside, the 28 acres that came with the house include not only the extensive garden, but also fields of undulating pasture where their daughters' pony grazes, and the family's own woods where they walk their black Labrador and miniature dachshund. The children love enjoying the freedom of the space around them and having all manner of adventures. “It certainly makes the summer holidays much easier,” Polly says. “I often overhear friends telling the girls ‘you're so lucky to live here’.” ■



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The Purbeck stone flooring in the kitchen is original. Above the dining table hang Upton pendant lights by Fritz Fryer. The dresser came with the house and was sanded down and painted in Dark Eel Grey by Sanderson.



Atmospheric GEM

The chance discovery of a perfectly intact Georgian rectory in Dorset proved propitious for cookery writer Rose Prince and her family, as she explains

WORDS ROSE PRINCE PHOTOGRAPHS TIM BEDDOW





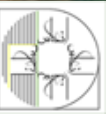
ABOVE The main sitting room is painted in Blue Blood by Paint & Paper Library. The family's spaniel, Billy, and terrier, Doris, look very comfortable on the sofa.

LEFT The Upton wall light in the hall is by Fritz Fryer. Rose chose Great White by Farrow & Ball for the walls. The hall table is an oak low boy, circa eighteenth century.

RIGHT Rose with a bumper crop of rhubarb.



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“Building a rectory high on a hill, aloof, above the village church, is something I have never seen before. It seems as though it was a challenge from the original incumbent rector to his parishioners, daring them to climb the steep path to the front door. That is my theory, but it is probably more likely that the position was chosen for the expansive views along Dorset’s ancient Winterborne valley – and there is no sin in that.

We bought the house at an auction. We had been looking for a house in Dorset and were becoming desperate when, after yet another disastrous viewing, I picked up a local free-sheet, turned immediately to the property section and there saw a small black-and-white photograph. It showed the southern facade of the house: square, Georgian, with three espaliered pear trees across its front and a central arched window. I immediately waved it in front of my husband Dominic, who was driving at the time.

“That’s the house I want to live in,” I said. “If it is up for auction, it’s got a problem,” he replied, nearly swerving into the next lane of the A31. This ‘problem’ turned out to be serious: no driveway – the access was through a farm. But, long story cut short, we took out an insurance policy in the event we could not get planning permission to build our own drive and, in a heart-stopping moment at an auction in a hall in Sherborne, we bought the ‘Rec’.

It was not, in fact, a real wreck, as although the same family had lived in it for 52 years – since 1962 – they had never touched the structure of the house, inside or out. It was a gift. A house with extraordinary atmosphere, built in that sensible rectory style of its day, which is estimated to be 1826. It had two storeys, with a kitchen and utility extension at the back, and two staircases. The original Purbeck stone floors in the kitchen, pantry and – oh, joy – north-facing larder complete with slate shelves, had escaped the 1970s ►

TOP A local cabinetmaker made the kitchen units which are painted in Dark Eel Grey by Sanderson.

The worktops were made using reclaimed marble.

ABOVE Amongst the pieces on the mantelpiece is an antique silver tea urn sourced from Criterion.



“We wanted a look of simplicity in tune with the rectory’s Georgian roots”

ABOVE Rose sourced the material for the curtains in the small sitting room from Peter Greig & Co’s seconds department, a serendipitous discovery made whilst visiting friends in Scotland. The lamp bases are antique sake jars.

trend for lino stuck on with glue. Neither had any of the wooden floors ever been fitted with a carpet, so there was not a nail hole anywhere. Every window shutter was still there, working beautifully, and all the original fireplaces were in place, albeit under a layer of gloss paint. Especially cheering, was the connecting door between the hall and kitchen, covered in crimson wool baize. However, the roof was in a state and there was no central heating. We would also have to replace five of the sash windows, but thankfully not the beautiful arched window on the main staircase.

I would not call ours a restoration project, but we sort of took the house to bits and put it back together again to update the infrastructure. This meant removing the roof, replacing part of it and stuffing it with insulation. We also added bathrooms, as there was just one for seven bedrooms, and installed radiators which we bought from a reclamation yard and had reconditioned, spray-painted and fitted with new but traditional-looking copper fittings. Whilst it was something of a drama, I can recommend this route, having calculated a saving of £10,000 on a quote of £23,000 to install ready-made, reproduction cast-iron radiators.

Structurally, there was one major job to do apart from the roof: to knock down the wall between the kitchen and the scullery to create a large kitchen, necessary not just for entertaining, but also to be the studio for my work as a cookery book author and food columnist. After this was done, I found a local cabinetmaker to make drawer and cupboard units – painting them with Sanderson’s Dark Eel Grey – and a stonemason to cut and polish lengths of reclaimed grey-white marble for the surfaces.

We wanted a look of simplicity in tune with the rectory’s Georgian roots, so mostly white walls with colour in the darker rooms. To avoid glare, I looked for a white that was interjected with some pink and a little black. I chose Farrow & Ball’s Great White, which in more shady places appeared slightly greenish, like an eau-de-Nil, but on the brightly lit staircase managed to be slightly lilac. For the north-facing sitting-room walls and bookcases, I used Blue Blood from Paint & Paper Library – a deep and calm blue that looks pretty with small amounts of yellow and neutral linen upholstery.

A chance find, whilst staying with a friend north of Edinburgh, resolved our search for good, affordable fabric. Peter Greig & Co – the last major linen mill in ►



ABOVE Raspberry and blue accents in the kilim, bedspread, lampshades and cushions in the master bedroom tie the scheme together. The vintage Kantha quilt from India came from Camilla Costello.

LEFT The fabric used on the wardrobe is old French, from a roll that Rose's grandmother gave to her. Rose trimmed the curtain fabric from Peter Greig & Co with rickrack ribbon.

FAR LEFT The antique decoy swan in the hall is carved from wood and came from a collection belonging to Rose's mother.





ABOVE The former rectory has Georgian proportions and its exterior is painted in New White by Farrow & Ball.

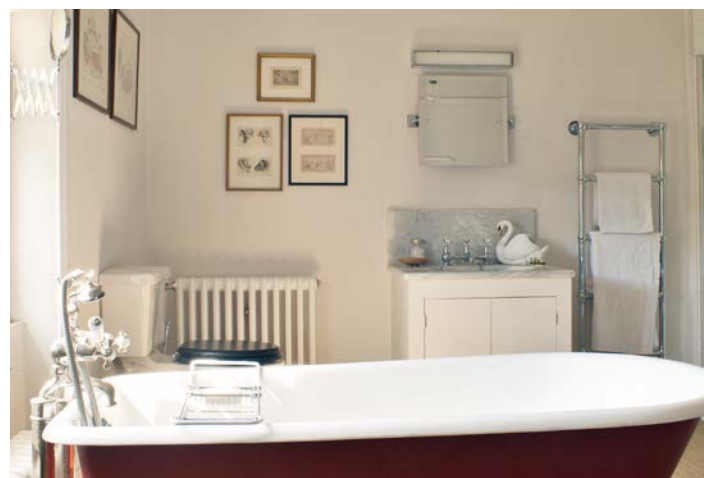
RIGHT This simply decorated guest bedroom has a light and airy feel. The Victorian-era painting belonged to Rose's grandmother.

BELOW RIGHT Rose and Dominic sacrificed a bedroom to create their en-suite bathroom. The bath came from a local reclamation yard and then was refurbished, whilst the marble basin top and splashback were left over kitchen worktop pieces.

Britain – weaves linen for the furnishing industry and has an excellent 'seconds' shop for people like me who do not mind if there is an inconsistency in the colour or weave. I mainly chose their natural linens and plain colours, loving especially the deep 'grape' colour for the smaller sitting room and a faded grey-blue for our bedroom curtains, which I trimmed with rickrack ribbon, dyed scarlet. The only prints I wanted in the house were vintage, from India or in an old-French style, and for cushions and bed covers only.

Yet, in truth, it was the kitchen that I put the most effort into – the place I love and live in the most. I wanted it to feel industrial, but also comfortable. The large table, made from steel by a welder in our village and fitted with scaffolders' planks, is 7ft by 5ft and seats 14 on the matching benches, which I covered with goats' skins from the Steeptonbill Farm shop in Milton Abbas. As I did not want spotlights, I sought out pendant lights with a modern look but made from traditional materials. The four prismatic lights hanging over the working area are from Tinsmiths and the cluster of three pendant lights over the table are from Fritz Fryer in Ross-on-Wye, who blow their own glass. All the wall lights in the house also came from there.

The rectory has been generous in the way our furniture slotted in to it as if built for it and, oddly, our motley assortment of pictures look better in it than they did in our previous house. Three years later, whilst the house feels similar to the old rectory we fell in love with, it is not aloof up on the hill, more a friendly, modernised, but not modern, home. ”



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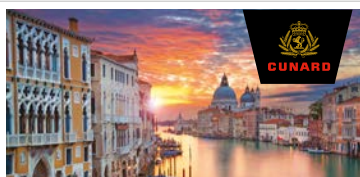


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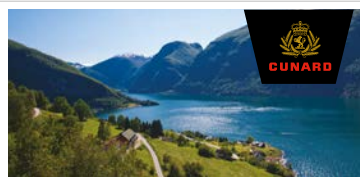
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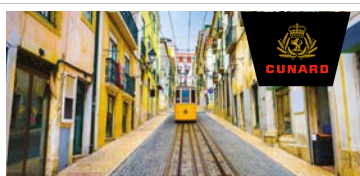
Queen Elizabeth Q817

24 May 2018 – 17 nights

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Queen Victoria V819

1 Jun 2018 – 7 nights

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St Peter Port, Southampton

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Grand Transatlantic, Canada and New England

Queen Mary 2 M823B

24 Jun 2018 – 19 nights

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Boston (overnight in port), New York, Southampton

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Venice and Adriatic

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Queen Elizabeth Q826

14 Sep 2018 – 14 nights

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A blend of English chintz, kilims, stripes and damask creates a charming sitting room. The paint on the walls is Jazz Blue by Dulux. The fabric on the armchair to the left is Roses & Pansies by Colefax and Fowler.



In living COLOUR

Inspired by memories of her grandmother, Louise Townsend has filled a plain Devon farmhouse with joyous colour to create a charming family home

FEATURE CHRISTINE STOVELL PHOTOGRAPHY ALUN CALLENDER STYLING NAOMI JONES



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ABOVE The kitchen cabinetry was made locally by Hugo Breitmeyer and is painted in New White by Farrow & Ball.

RIGHT Mary, the black pug, and Fanny are much adored by everyone. Glazed doors were fitted to further enjoy the far-reaching views. The wallpaper is William Morris's Willow Bough by Sanderson.

The joy of a particular colour or a favourite fabric may rest in the memories it holds as much as its aesthetic appeal. Textile designer Louise Townsend's love of fabrics and colour was inspired by her grandmother and is imbued with happy childhood memories of summer holidays spent with her. "My grandmother was a great maker, and loved textiles and colour," Louise explains. "Her house was filled with colour and floral fabrics, and she dressed that way, too."

Although Louise was born in Devon, her father was a naval officer and whilst growing up she became accustomed to frequent moves, none of which included returning to the place of her birth. It was her husband Hugh's work as a land agent that completed the circle and took her back there. "We moved into a two-bedroom gamekeeper's cottage with no mains electricity or water. But by 1992 we had outgrown it, having just had our second child," she remembers. "Then friends told us about a nearby farmhouse to let, which had double the number of bedrooms, electricity and a spring."

The farmhouse, which was built in the late 1890s, was, Louise recalls, very plain but sat in its own sunny





A beautifully composed display of paintings and mementoes is offset against the soothing backdrop of Farrow & Ball's Pink Ground. The foremost cushions are Louise Townsend's Amelia in Dusty Pink (left) and Squiggle in Radish (right).

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LEFT The once unprepossessing exterior was transformed with fresh paint, new joinery and attractive planting. Dulux Trade Weathershield in Jamaican Bronze was used for the render.

BELOW The pretty farmhouse is located in an idyllic valley and was originally at the heart of a working farm. Louise and Hugh extended a small strip of land to create a garden at the front.

BELOW RIGHT Louise drew on her considerable decorating skills to create a home with happy memories for her family. The partly glazed front door is painted in Skylight by Farrow & Ball.



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valley at the bottom of a long drive through open fields. It was one of two farmsteads belonging to a brother and sister who had owned the farm since the 1920s but had always let one of them separately. "We were looking for somewhere to settle and they were happy to have us here," says Louise, summing up the beginning of what was to be an idyllic time for the young family. Louise and Hugh went on to have a third child, Max, brother to Angus and Amelia, and all three children greatly enjoyed living in the middle of a farm with all the excitement that came with sharing the yard and outbuildings with cattle. "It became a very special home for us, so we felt fortunate when, in 2008, the farm's owners retired and offered us the chance to buy the farmhouse."

The process of gradually shaping the property to suit their family's needs – which had begun, with the owners' consent, when Louise and Hugh were tenants – continued after their purchase of the

farmhouse. The austere rooms which confronted them might have deterred many people, but to Louise they were full of potential. "Having previously run a decorating business, I knew how to wield a paint brush, hang wallpaper and make curtains, and so I knew I could have fun with the inside," she says. A woodburner, the only source of heat when they first moved in, was supplemented by a new Aga, and later on central heating was installed. What was once accommodation for harvest workers above the back kitchen, and previously only accessible by ladder, became an en-suite bathroom to the master bedroom by knocking through a cupboard.

Other changes were made to increase the family's pleasure in their home. "The front of the house faces east and is flooded with morning sunshine, which I love to wake up to," says Louise. "To make the most of this, when the windows needed replacing we created French windows from the two original silled ▶

ABOVE Hollyhock & Swag by Warner Fabrics for the window treatment has a wonderfully romantic, vintage feel. The dining chairs are Swedish and the jug and glasses on the table are Nina Campbell. For a similar, striped tablecloth, try Ian Mankin.





“We enjoy far-reaching views of rolling fields as well as watching the swallows diving across the front lawns in summer”



windows either side of the front door. Then, last year, we added a new south-facing sash window in the blue sitting room. These, together with a new, glazed, double-stable front door, enable us to enjoy the far-reaching views of rolling fields as well as watch the swallows diving across the front lawns and in and out of the barns in summer.”

Moving a doorway downstairs enabled a through view from the kitchen to the sitting room. “I love being able to see past the pale-pink walls in the dining room towards the stronger blue of the sitting room beyond, with a glimpse of the hall wallpaper in between,” says Louise. “I love seeing the roses on the loose [armchair] covers looking like bowls of flowers, added to which I have a rose bed in the garden from which I bring in all the beautiful and varied pinks during the summer.”

Given Louise’s creative flair and her passion for colour and pattern, it is not surprising that she continues to find new outlets for her talent. Together with Hugh, she has raised a family, created a home and a flourishing garden, yet somehow she also managed to squeeze in time, as a mature student, to commute weekly to Chelsea College of Arts ▶

ABOVE A soft wash of delicate colours and cherished chintzes makes a peaceful composition in the master bedroom. The bed linen is by Yves Delorme.

LEFT On the landing, a comfortable sofa offers a place to sit and think. The portrait of Louise is by Emma Foale. The wallpaper is Sanderson’s Finches.



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where she gained a First in textile design. In her final year, she recalls, all three of her children were also taking exams. "One Easter holiday," she says, "we all sat down and revised together."

The small room where Louise studied during that time has now been incorporated to create a bigger, family bathroom, and she subsequently set up a studio in one of the barns. As Louise Townsend Print, she consults on colour, designs her own textiles and sells her products in the UK and across the Atlantic. She also runs screen-printing courses from her studio.

By filling her house with colour, pattern and the floral fabrics that represent everything Louise loved about her grandmother's *joie de vivre*, she not only rekindled her own happy childhood memories, but also created a joyful home for her own family. "Many of the textiles in the house have been with us since before the children were born," she says. "I love the familiarity of these 'old friends' as do the family when they come home." ■

ABOVE The wallpaper in the light and spacious en-suite bathroom is Thibaut's Bamboo Lattice in Aqua from its Enchantment collection. The bath is by Burlington.

LEFT The outlook from one of the en-suite bathroom windows – the house is surrounded by beautiful countryside.

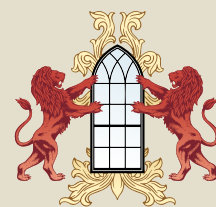


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Beyond the PANORAMA

The surprise discovery of a neglected Victorian property in the Surrey Hills provided an ideal restoration project

FEATURE JANET MCMEEKIN PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL



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The veranda is the perfect place to sit and enjoy the breathtaking views. Painted in Farrow & Ball's Light Gray, it features a wrought iron table and chair set from France. John Lewis sells similar seat pads in Mineral.





ABOVE Grey granite worktops are a practical and stylish choice for the Dews' spacious kitchen with its smart Neptune units. The range cooker is from Britannia. The lamp was sourced from Bone Interiors.

RIGHT Maureen enjoys exploring the delightful garden with the couple's much-loved Jack Russell, Alfie.

Having hunted high and low to find a characterful home, when Maureen Dew stumbled across a handsome Victorian property, nestling deep in the heart of the Surrey Hills, she was instantly enchanted by its captivating, leafy location. "I adored everything about the picturesque setting, from the abundance of mature trees, to the way the property seemed to blend so very comfortably into its surroundings," Maureen says.

Whilst upon first sight, from the outside, the property looked magical, Maureen and her husband Jeremy found the interior was less so. "We quickly realised that although the house had a lovely feel, it was tired and needed work to bring it back to its former grandeur," she explains. However, when they ventured outside again with their Jack Russell, Alfie, to explore the garden further, they ended up being utterly spellbound. "We spotted a little wooden gate at the back of the house and couldn't resist finding out what lay on the other side," she continues. "So we climbed up through beautiful woodland, carpeted in pale pink heather, and

eventually reached a clearing at the top of Holmbury Hill – the site of an Iron Age fort and the fourth highest point in the county of Surrey – and were utterly enthralled by the view."

Indeed, the spectacular panorama, overlooking the Surrey Hills – an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – was the *pièce de résistance* that clinched the deal. "I remember turning gleefully towards Jeremy and exclaiming, 'oh, we just have to buy this house'," Maureen says.

Back in 2014, the couple were living in a Georgian house near Guildford, and although pleased at how they had made their mark on that property, Maureen started feeling restless and in need of a new challenge. "I have an all-consuming passion for renovating property," she says. "Over the years I've restored everything from a French villa located in the hills behind St Tropez to a spectacular chateau in the south west of France. Jeremy and I even built a New England-style house from scratch on the south coast in England," she explains. "However, my heart really lies with older properties and, having viewed ▶



LEFT The island helps define the spaces in the cleverly converted kitchen and has a worktop sourced from The Granite Quartz Store. The island's cabinetry is painted in Mouse's Back by Farrow & Ball.

BELOW The woodwork has been painted using Stony Ground by Farrow & Ball. The Belmont Round dining table in weathered oak is from La Residence Interiors.



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RIGHT New French-inspired pieces of furniture have been teamed with antiques to great effect in the sitting room. The Petit Royale ottoman and grey sofa are from La Residence Interiors, whilst the cream sofa is from Maisons du Monde. The antique mirror and bureau were bought at Ardingly Antiques Fair. For a similar rug, try Crucial Trading.

BELOW The house is set in beautiful grounds overlooking the Surrey Hills.



“When we throw open our bedroom doors, the view that greets us is a wonderful start to the day”



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this dated house, we wholeheartedly agreed with each other that it had the potential to become a wonderful place for us to live, with plenty of room for family to come and stay. It was such a relief to find this house, as we'd been looking for a new home for a year and, until then, absolutely nothing we'd seen had spoken to us."

Fortunately the property was structurally sound, however, the couple felt that the layout was rather disjointed. With her experienced eye, Maureen was able to pinpoint several opportunities to inject the depth of character that she and Jeremy felt was lacking. "The long, thin galley kitchen was poky and dark," says Maureen. "We realised that by moving it to the other side of the house, where the conservatory was positioned, we'd gain a lovely, bright kitchen with beautiful garden views."

Meanwhile, upstairs, there was a games room with a dark brown bar which was also crying out for a radical overhaul. "We swiftly earmarked the games room as our new master bedroom, realising that by installing bi-fold doors out to the terrace and rejigging

walls to create a luxurious bathroom, this could become a fantastic space," Maureen explains.

After buying the house in October 2014 and hiring a trusted team of builders, the remodelling began. "To create our more practical kitchen-diner, we knocked down walls and combined an inconveniently positioned storeroom, outside toilet and bathroom into one open-plan space," Maureen says. "To inject more light at the rear, we also installed a couple of new windows." Where the former kitchen and utility room had once been, walls were moved as a new study, boot room and utility room took shape. "The builders were wonderful and, inside, the project was completed within nine months," she continues.

When it came to choosing colours, Maureen, who runs Smoke & Mirrors Interior Design with her daughter Verity, selected a muted, sophisticated palette of warm-toned, neutral hues that she felt would enhance the period charm of their home. "I wanted to give the whole house a more cohesive feel and realised that shades of grey and taupe would work ►

ABOVE To enhance the period charm and inject a more elegant feel into the dining room, Maureen and Jeremy replaced the dated pine fireplace with one sourced from Symonds Salvage reclamation yard in Kent.

LEFT The tongue-and-groove in the hall is painted in Farrow & Ball's Elephant's Breath. The tumbled limestone floor tiles are from Beswick Stone and the stone urns are from Oka.



ABOVE The master bedroom, with its soft neutral colour scheme, is the perfect spot to unwind. The bed and sofa are from Maisons du Monde. The antique bedside tables have been painted in Annie Sloan's Paris Grey Chalk Paint.

RIGHT, ABOVE In the master bedroom, newly installed bi-fold doors lead out to a large terrace. For similar doors, try Origin.

RIGHT, BELOW The bathroom adjoining the master bedroom has porcelain wall tiles from Eurotiles & Bathrooms and a bathroom television from Bathroom TV.

well," she says. "Every piece of dated orange pine was painted in Farrow & Ball's greys and off-whites."

When it came to choosing furniture for their new home, the Dews knew exactly where to source just the right pieces for the look they yearned for. "My son Dan and his wife Sarah run La Residence Interiors, a company that sells beautiful French-influenced furniture, so this was our natural port of call for a timeless, elegant feel."

Outside, there was much slower progress as a different team of builders struggled to build the sweeping stone staircase that the Dews had designed, mindful of giving their home a greater presence. "Right from the moment we pulled up outside, we knew the house deserved a grander entrance than just the existing steep and narrow steps," says Maureen. "It took six months and was rather challenging but we got there in the end."

Since moving into their thoughtfully designed six-bedroom house in November 2015, the Dews have felt instantly at home. "It's been an absolute joy to lovingly restore this house and create something we feel is very special," says Maureen. "On a warm autumn morning when we throw open our bedroom doors and step outside, the view that greets us is a wonderful start to the day. The sense of peace and tranquility is almost tangible." ■



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AT HOME WITH
Liz Earle

Botanicals, squashy sofas and beautiful views are what make ethical entrepreneur Liz Earle's home such a haven

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Liz Earle MBE has a rich tapestry of successful businesses to her name. In addition to her enormously successful botanical skincare company – which was acquired by Avon in 2010 and Boots in 2015, and for which she stayed on as global brand ambassador until May this year – she is founder and editor-in-chief of the *Liz Earle Wellbeing* website and quarterly magazine, and has written several books. She also has an award-winning Fairtrade fine jewellery collection, *Liz Earle Fair & Fine*. Liz divides her time between a working organic farm in Wiltshire – which she shares with her husband, the film-maker and photographer Patrick Drummond, and three of her five children – and a live/work studio in south London.

Where did you grow up?

Outside of Southsea on the Hampshire Downs. My father was an Admiral in the Navy so we always lived in sight of the sea. My father is very practical but particularly focused on the garden. I developed my love of nature and being outside from him. I moved to London when I was 18 to go to catering college and lived there for 20 years. We moved to the West Country almost 20 years ago, so I'm part city girl and part country bumpkin.

Can you describe your home?

It's a farmhouse with a 360 degree view of fields, grasslands and pasture. The farm was fairly derelict when we bought it and we rebuilt and extended the house using reclaimed materials. Although it's newish, it looks old. We put in York stone floors from a disused chapel, reclaimed oak beams from a French farmhouse, and used recycled roof tiles. Whilst the materials are old, we have the luxury of modern technology, such as underfloor heating which runs off ground-source heating. We have solar panels on all of the roofs of our farm buildings, making us carbon neutral. We produce more energy than we use, and feed it back to the grid.

Who do you share your home with?

I have five children. The two eldest are working in London, and then we have two teenagers and a seven-year-old boy. We also share our home with three dogs: a lurcher, a terrier and a new cross-breed puppy.

In terms of farm animals, we have around 60 head of pedigree Hereford cattle, three different breeds of sheep (around 350 in total), and 120 or so chickens and a dozen quails. We still have Patrick's polo ponies, although he now spends more time breeding and schooling young foals.

How often are you in London for work?

I tend to split my week. I'm usually in London Tuesday to Thursday. I feel really fortunate as I can go to the theatre and try out fun new restaurants but then come back to the sanctuary of the countryside and see the horizon, which is always such a treat – that wide vista.

How would you describe your home's interior style?

It's modern yet relaxed, and with a classic foundation. I like things to be squashy and comfortable. I like tapestries, linens and faded chintz. I don't like things that look too new – the lived-in look is for me. I would like to think people feel instantly relaxed in my home. Because I've always been surrounded by children and animals, I've had to be relaxed, otherwise I'd drive myself crazy. Having said that, I don't like clutter. There is a balance. Having a seven-year-old does mean the sitting room is always full of Lego but I have a great big basket where it all goes at the end of the day. I like things to be tidy and not messy – as long as it looks like it's meant to be there and not just 'left' it's fine.

Where do you shop for lovely things for your home?

Cox & Cox – I buy quite a few things from them online. If I'm feeling extravagant I'll go to The Conran Shop in London for investment pieces. Over the years, I've bought my sofas from George Smith. They're expensive but I've had the same sofas for 30 years and they still look just as good as when I first bought them. Then I like vintage and antique pieces. Not particularly precious things but I've had some lovely things from antique shops in Frome and Bath over the years.

Is there a decorative theme running through your home?

There are quite a lot of botanical fabrics and pictures of flowers. Favourites are two contemporary pieces by an artist called Judy Buxton picked up from The Thackeray Gallery in London. My rooms might be quite plain but they'll be accented by a botanical painting or a tapestry cushion.

If we didn't know what you do for a living, might we guess from your home?

Aside from my collections of botanical books and flowery design details, I wouldn't say so. I keep my various awards (including my MBE), accolades and old school photos in the downstairs loo and not out on display.

Do you have a favourite room?

The kitchen. It's quite a traditional farmhouse kitchen with an Aga, which is the focal point. There's an island unit with a grey granite top and lightly distressed Chalon-style painted wooden cupboards in a grey-green colour. There's a painted wooden plate rack above the sink and two big windows that look out onto the fields. It's a very calm place. Most of my colours are green, grey or smudgy charcoal colours. The one colour you wouldn't find in my farm is blue because I feel it's an urban colour. I've got quite a lot of pale blue in the London studios where it really works – but not in the countryside.

As an ethical food advocate, what do you typically eat and on what do you serve it?

The rhythm of my life is very much divided into the four seasons and what I cook follows that pattern. I get great pleasure from enjoying whatever is in season and have a reasonable kitchen garden. I've learnt over the years to stagger the planting of my seedlings so I don't end up with 300 lettuces or whatever it may be. It's all about rotation. I'm a big fan of eggs, which we have plenty of, but overall I like simple home cooking with a twist.

I've had the same crockery since I was first married. It's a French pattern by Longchamps called Tulip. It's out of production now, but I've never found anything I like more, so I search on eBay when I need to replace an item.

What would we never see in a house belonging to you?

I don't think you'd see very much in the way of straight lines. I like things that are curved and soft. We have curved edges on our walls, for instance – the plasterwork is very soft. Minimalism and hard lines make me feel uncomfortable.

Finally, what should no English home be without?

A fireplace. Even when I've lived in flats and haven't had access to a real fire, I've always had a false fireplace. It's a real focal point, and even in the summer, I'll light a fire and open a window because I love the crackle and flicker of the flames. A fire encourages congregation and conversation. It's a place where people can meet. ■

The latest edition of the *Liz Earle Wellbeing* magazine is available from lizearlewellbeing.com and leading news outlets. The *Liz Earle Wellbeing Yearbook* (£25) is available now, also from lizearlewellbeing.com



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STYLE INSPIRATION

Our special section dedicated to design and decorating inspiration begins here ➤



FLOWER BOWER

The enticement to return to patterned walls grows apace, with florals particularly offering temptation. All-over florals in a large scale are a strong look, there is no doubt. However, framed by coloured wood trim and dado-level panelling, as here, they feel deliberate and neatly calm and contained, like an exuberant flower border surrounded by neatly clipped box hedging. Delft Flower wallpaper in Linen, on a 68.5cm-wide non-woven ground for ease of hanging, available in five shades, £75 per roll, Designers' Guild



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Verdant TABLEAU

Create a sophisticated yet languid setting with large floral prints, blush pinks and lusciously deep greens

Picture Keira Knightley in the film *Atonement*, elegantly clad in a silk emerald-green evening gown, reclining languorously on a bench in an abundant rose garden and you have the essence for the interior mood curated here. Deep emerald hues have been growing in popularity in interiors over the past two years, but more recently they are being used alongside blush pinks for a surprising contrast which looks both fresh and sophisticated. Add black and a creamy white into the mix, alongside hints of golden metals and even touches of teal, and the end results are refined. Just as florists are showing blowsy roses and peonies offset against moody backgrounds such as Dutch Old Masters, this creates a tone of faded opulence for almost any setting. ▶

LEFT Painterly perfection

Capture the romantic abundance of an English garden in full bloom with these delectable painterly florals from Boeme. Captured first in fine art by the company's founder, Jo Bound, then translated onto cottons, linens and velvets, these beautiful fabrics imbue a magical ambience to an interior setting. Learn more about Jo Bound on page 29.

Large parasol and large cushion, Wild Orchid, £82 a metre; small parasol and small cushion, Megan Blossom, £82 a metre, all Boeme





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*“To see a world in a grain of sand
And heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour”*

William Blake (1757–1827), English poet, painter and printmaker

LEFT Emerald embrace

Layers of jewel green create a luxurious look that feels both contemporary and classic in this sitting room. The secret to success is to treat green as a neutral (which indeed it is in the natural world) by blending texture and material, introducing additional interest with accessories. Gilt details and a hand-painted silk wallcovering bring femininity to this bold setting. Wallpaper, hand-painted Silk Tree in custom design colours on emerald-green dyed silk with custom hand-embroidery, Japanese & Korean collection, de Gournay

ABOVE Languid mood

Featuring a large-scale white rose motif on an ink-black background, this striking yet luscious chintz makes an elegantly dramatic choice for upholstery. Whilst the design was originally created by legendary American interior designer Dorothy Draper for fabric company Schumacher in 1944, it still feels completely current. Sofa, Manor Rose (175772); girl's dress, Manor Rose (175770), both £268.20 a metre, from Schumacher at Turnell & Gigon ►





ABOVE Harmony of hues

Rich dark green and blush pink make for a completely unexpected yet heavenly combination in this kitchen by deVol, which is already inspiring a multitude of imitations. Emerald-toned brick-shaped tiles add gloss and glamour to the matt-painted cabinetry, further magnified by the subtle grandeur of a glittering chandelier.

Prices for kitchens from deVol start at £12,000. See this kitchen in the deVol showroom in St John's Square, London

LEFT Soft shimmer

Golden cow parsley shimmers on a ground of deepest green on this wallpaper designed by Clarissa Hulse, who is also known for her captivating transformation of natural forms into screen-printed textiles. Wallpaper, Angeliki (111397), £65 a metre; lampshade, Angeliki (131935) £96 a metre, both Callista collection by Clarissa Hulse for Harlequin

OPPOSITE Masterful mood

Inspired by the dramatically lit and enigmatic works of Vermeer, as well as the 'tulip mania' of the seventeenth century, the new Tulipa Stellata collection from Designers Guild offers a beautiful play upon light and shade, producing prettiness and heady sophistication.

Curtains and chair backs, Delft Flower Graphite Fabric, £79 a metre; chair seats, Varese Viridian (left) and Varese Berry (right), both £69 a metre, Designers Guild ■



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Adorning THE VIEW

Create a beautiful frame for a vista and make a feature of windows with stylish decorative treatments



An exemplary window treatment – with a shapely box pelmet and exquisite detailing – created by Studio Alidad. *Spring* (hand-embroidered), pink, £79 a metre; *Vichy Gingham*, pink, £18.50 a metre, both Barbara Coupe



A swag is affixed to the curtain for a more relaxed take on a grand look in this scheme by Guy Goodfellow. Curtains, Plain Oyster Linen, £75 a metre, Bennison



There are a wealth of options for dressing windows, from luxuriously lined drapes to sleek Roman blinds. Professional, considered treatments ensure the window is a feature in its own right, drawing the eye to not only take in the view beyond, but to admire the curtaining, too. Here are some of our favourite ideas for eye-catching window treatments to elevate curtains and blinds into something rather special.

SHAPELY PELMETS (left)

A box pelmet neatly disguises tracks or poles, offering a smart tailored finish. A contrasting or patterned fabric would enliven plain drapes, or the pelmet can be used to show off the curtain motif to full effect. A shapely pelmet design adds further allure and works particularly well for feminine schemes. Here, prettiness abounds with the addition of a crystal trim on the pelmet, a lovely fringe braid on the curtain edge and the layering of a complementary Roman blind in gingham.

CLASSIC SWAGS (above)

Swags add a decadent swoosh of grandeur to a window. Traditionally, the swag acts like a pelmet, and can be formal and fixed in place, covering a pole, or draped with a more casual flair. The swag seen above is attached to the curtain and moves with it, creating a more relaxed, contemporary look when the curtains are drawn back than if the swag were still hanging across the window top. The overall feel is opulent but not ostentatious, as some swagged curtains can be.

DECORATIVE BLIND (right)

A little imagination can transform a blind into something incredibly beautiful. Here, strings – similar to those on a Roman blind – are used to create a fabulous ruched drape on a custom-made blind, setting a romantic mood in a bathroom and showcasing the glorious floral fabric. A tassel fringe adds the perfect finishing touch. ▶



ABOVE Interior designer Mark Gillette created an elaborate custom blind with a swag-like drape to make a focal point of this bathroom window. Jubilee Rose, £75 a metre, Colefax and Fowler

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FABRIC-COVERED LATHES *(above)*

Whilst curtain tracks offer a smooth opening and closing mechanism, they can be unsightly. Fabric-covered lathes disguise tracks and can be used when there is no space above a window for a pelmet or if a simpler look is desired, and do not block any light by hanging below the top of the window. Note, too, that the curtains return to the wall on the outside edge (see column overleaf for more on this).

CURVACEOUS FEATURE *(right)*

A relatively small window has been transformed into a focal point with clever use of a curved pelmet which protrudes from the wall and houses a straight curtain track. The exquisite and careful box-pleating on the pelmet to showcase the design on the fabric shows true attention to detail. ►

ABOVE Fabric-covered lathes disguise unsightly tracking in a design by Mark Gillette. Merrick & Day can provide advice about lathes. *Matisse, Bright Blue on Oyster, £118 a metre, Bennison*

RIGHT Using an outwardly curved curtain pole and a deep pelmet, makes a smaller window feel more substantial. *Woodland Animals, £96 a metre, Morris & Co*





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT

From pom-pom trims to decorative braids and ornate tie-backs, passementerie adds panache to window treatments. Double tassel tie-back, Palladio, £195; beaded fringe, Palladio, £124 a metre, Houlès Curtain, Cameo Rose, £72 a metre; trim, Pom Pom, £30.50 a metre, both Kate Forman Trims (left to right): Toggle Fringe, £70 a metre; Gridlock, £36 a metre; Velvet Scroll £80 a metre, all Travers at Zimmer + Rohde

EMBELLISHMENT (above)

Perhaps the simplest and, arguably, most effective way to add a flourish to window dressings is the use of gorgeous passementerie. This can range from a statement tie-back to a simple fringe. Adding a trim to the leading edge of a curtain, perhaps in the form of a contrasting fabric, embroidered flat trim or braid, or a tassel, pom-pom or fringe edge, can add huge amounts of character and panache. As we have seen on the preceding pages, a beaded trim or fringe on a pelmet or swag adds a delectable finishing touch. A smart tailored trim can elevate chic curtaining, making it feel bespoke, whilst other types can add highlights of colour, contrast or frivolity to more informal schemes. Embellishments are a way to be imaginative and fun, as well as adding to the sense of completion and the feeling that the window treatment has been fully considered down to the finest detail. ■

CONSIDERED DETAILS

Pippa Glazier and Miguel Muñoz, founders of Pippa Rolls – makers of bespoke curtains and blinds – offer their advice on important considerations for achieving perfect window treatments.

MEASURE WELL

When making a Roman blind to sit on the outside of a window reveal, it is important get the proportions right in relation to the window, as a poorly measured Roman blind can look disproportionate. We use the window sill as a guide for the overall width. If the sill protrudes further into the room than 5cm, we finish the blind so that it sits on the sill itself. If the sill is shallower, we take that length below the sill by 5cm.

CAP IT OFF

Ask your curtain maker to make you a pair of end caps out of the main fabric to cover the headrail of a Roman blind. These give a beautiful finish to the ends of your blind.

RETURN POLICY

Make sure your curtains return to the wall on the outside edge (as in the Mark Gillette scheme on page 85). This blocks out any light 'bleed' at the side and gives a tailor-made finish. It also hides any unsightly window mouldings, pole supports or surface-mounted pipes. This will require precision from your fitter and curtain maker.

RADIATOR DILEMMA

Radiators under windows are a common problem, but as a general rule short curtains are a 'no-no', unless in the sweetest of cottage windows. Consider instead having a Roman blind made and a pair of full-length dress curtains to hang either side of the window, clearing the radiator. This offers a 'long and elegant' impact, whilst allowing heat circulation on cold January nights.

TAKE YOUR TIME

Choosing fabrics and treatments can be daunting, so take your time and enlist the help of a local curtain designer: it is our job to know what is practical and in budget as well as making the process enjoyable for you and ensuring perfect results.



LITTLE BLACK BOOK BRIDIE HALL

The interior designer, decorative artist and co-owner of Pentreath & Hall on her inspirations and must haves

DESIRABLE FABRICS & WALLPAPERS

All of the wallpapers by Adelphi Paper Hangings. Great patterns done so right. They've inspired me to begin working on my own collection.

FAVOURITE PAINT COLOURS

Having a background as a specialist painter, I'm not very faithful when it comes to particular paint colours or brands. I'm drawn to whatever speaks directly to my heart, which at the moment is 90 per cent of Papers and Paints' colour charts.

RECENT PURCHASE

A house. I'm putting everything I've been fantasising about into practice and buying up everything on my wishlist. I'm hoping to buy a four-poster bed from Marianna Kennedy soon. I love her work and try to work with her whenever I can – when she's not off conquering the interiors world. She's a wonderful example of a craftsperson who will never make compromises. I've also bought myself some beautiful Murano glasses from Yali.

RECOMMENDED SHOPS

Pentreath & Hall, of course – Ben Pentreath and I have a rule that we only stock items we would happily live with ourselves, so it's crammed to the rafters with pieces that are covetable to me.

INSPIRING LOCATIONS

I'm lucky to have the British Museum and Sir John Soane's Museum close to work, so I visit these often. I'm definitely getting a lot of decoration inspiration for my house from both.

HOME MUST HAVE

Pets. I can't think of my home without Max the poodle, Albie the cat, and the two tortoises – Sir David Attenborough and Mr Mayhem. ■



1 Bridie Hall's much-loved poodle, Max **2** A selection of wallpapers from Adelphi Paper Hangings, from left to right: Moses Grant Stripe, Persian Volute, Spiral Willow and Ipswich Sprig, £POA, custom colours available, Tissus d'Hélène **3** A Filo Goto Murano glasses, £80 each, Yali **4** Suzani cushions, from a selection, 50cm x 50cm, £175, Pentreath & Hall **5** Peter Hone Honeysuckle plaque, £165, Pentreath & Hall **6** Papers and Paints colour charts **7** The Library-Dining Room, Sir John Soane's Museum, London

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN PORTRAIT SIMON BEVAN PHOTOGRAPHS (MAX THE DOG) © JASON INGRAM; SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM LIBRARY © GARETH GARDNER

Elements of FARMHOUSE STYLE

Whether you live in a farmhouse or dream of capturing accents of rural life, these design ideas can be emulated to great effect in most period homes





Farmhouse is one of those words that conjures an array of appealing associations: fresh eggs and baby lambs, chunky beams and flagged floors, cream teas and harvest suppers, a place of welcome and plenty enfolded by green fields. England is freckled with farmhouses, dating from a time when individual farmers tended tens of acres as opposed to the thousands of today. Some are still run as farms, but many of these comfortable, capacious old houses have taken on new lives as family homes.

Here, bestselling author Ros Byam Shaw explores some of the key ingredients of contemporary farmhouse style in an adaptation from her book *Perfect English Farmhouse* newly reissued by publisher Ryland Peters & Small.

Floral prints

Both traditional and fresher, lighter styles of farmhouse decorating are pretty, relaxed and essentially feminine. Flowers are a key element, whether adorning fabrics, china and wallpaper, or as the subject of paintings and prints. For informal charm, keep colours gentle and faded, and mix a selection of floral designs in the same room. Areas of plain colour ensure that the effect is not too busy.

Wallpaper

Different scales of wallpaper have radically different effects and benefits for a farmhouse aesthetic. In a ▶





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bedroom, for example, a small-sprig floral wallpaper can create a subtle, overarching background for the contents of the room, but in the hall a striking pattern is enough to decorate the space without the addition of pictures on the walls or furniture, as the inviting entrance on page 88 aptly illustrates.

The kitchen table

A kitchen table, its wooden top marked by years of hearty breakfasts and family suppers, is the centre of operations in a farmhouse. Warm in winter, thanks to the regulation Aga, it is a place for doing homework, reading the Sunday papers, paying the bills and writing letters, as well as providing an extra kitchen work surface for rolling out pastry and kneading dough.

Dresser displays

The next essential for the more traditional farmhouse kitchen is a dresser. Good antique kitchen dressers, like good antique kitchen tables, cost a small fortune. But this is a piece of furniture that can be happily married; a 'marriage' being antiques dealer speak for a piece of furniture that is made up from other pieces. Shelves are a reasonably easy DIY task, but the base is more complicated if you want drawers. A junky old sideboard, with shelves sitting on it or fixed to the wall above it, unified with a good old-fashioned kitchen paint colour, such as Farrow & Ball's Mouse's Back, works nicely.

Four-posters & canopies

Along with the table, the dresser and the inescapable Aga, a four-poster bed is another icon of traditional farmhouse style. Again, rigging up your own is not as impossible a task as you might imagine, although basic woodworking skills are essential. Four-posters in some of the grandest interiors are often nothing more than a good pair of posts, joined to a modern framework and covered in fabric. A half-tester, which is the next best thing to a full four-poster, can be made from a section of old panelling to which a canopy has been attached. If you construct a four-poster around a divan box-spring bed base (making sure the divan itself is high enough to look authentic), the framework need not be structural, part ►



of it can be attached to the wall and most of it can be disguised by the bed's hangings, as in the bedroom on page 90. Alternatively, you could make a simple and elegant bed canopy from a length of flower-sprigged, embroidered fabric by suspending it on a rod and wires against the wall behind a bed, and looping it up to a ceiling beam where it is pinned to form a gentle swag. Beams are not essential to achieve this effect, but they do make fixing the fabric to the ceiling much easier.

Old curtains

Antique and vintage fabrics are perfect for a farmhouse setting. You might repurpose second-hand curtains for cushions, make a Roman blind from antique linen with a border of vintage toile or use an old Indian bedspread as a tablecloth in the kitchen. Grand old curtains are often too big for small farmhouse windows, but rather than cutting them up, you could allow them to 'puddle' comfortably on the floor. The only fabric in the pretty bedroom (right) that is not vintage is the curtains, which are a faded floral linen from Cabbages & Roses.

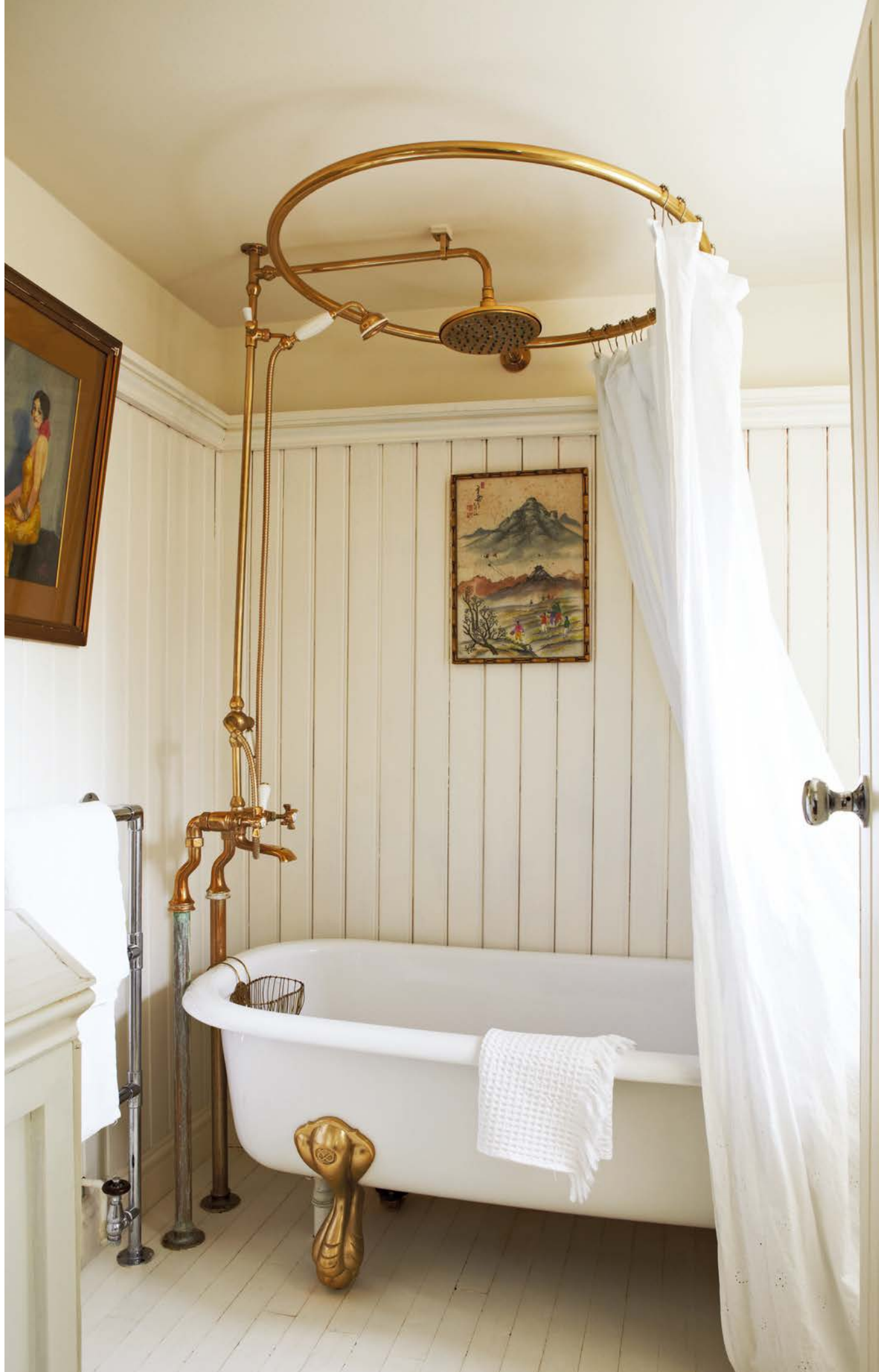
Eiderdowns

Fat feather eiderdowns, their contents held in place by stitched patterns, were both fashionable and provided essential warmth during the first half of the last century, when centrally heated bedrooms were still a rare luxury. Today we appreciate them for their old-fashioned decorative appeal and the nostalgic allure of their typically flowery or paisley fabrics. It is useful to know that they can be safely laundered on a delicate cycle, the trick being to tumble dry them with a couple of tennis balls, which helps to ensure that their feather filling remains evenly distributed and does not clump.

Freestanding baths

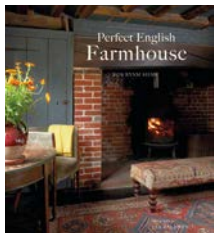
Whether traditional or a more contemporary take on farmhouse design flavours, bathrooms usually work best when they feature charming antique fittings, such as a roll-top bathtub. In the ►







room on the previous page, the tub has been teamed with its giant, fixed shower head from Catchpole & Rye. The room is lined with painted matchboarding, on which have been hung framed Edwardian prints, and to emphasise the old-fashioned, feminine feel, the room is dressed with a broderie anglaise shower curtain. A bathtub in polished copper would also sit comfortably in a farmhouse setting. ■



This feature is adapted from *Perfect English Farmhouse* by Ros Byam Shaw, which is to be reissued by Ryland Peters & Small in September. Photographs by Jan Baldwin. Readers of *The English Home* can order a copy at the special

price of £25 including postage and packaging (rrp £30) by telephoning Macmillan Direct on 01256 302 699 and quoting reference LZ7.





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The Houghton Furniture Company produces faithful replicas of original furniture at Houghton Hall, Norfolk. The Kent Seat was originally built for Sir Robert Walpole, the first Prime Minister of Great Britain, in the early eighteenth century and thought to have been designed by William Kent, a Georgian architect and designer.





This Queen Anne-style walnut sofa is handmade in the workshops of fine furniture makers Titchmarsh & Goodwin.



An eye for PRECISION

We consider how skilled craftspeople employ time-honoured techniques to create smart, even superlative reproductions – from furnishings to architectural details

ABOVE LEFT The Ladbroke dining chair and the three-tier table are both reproduction. The curtain is in William Morris Weave, a faithful reproduction of an original William Morris design. All from Robert Kime.

RIGHT The Robert Adam Locke fire surround by Chesney's has been reproduced from an original archive drawing, *Fire surround*, £14,100, with *Croome fire basket in brass*, £3,900, Chesney's

Is anything ever really new? In design it is only natural to take inspiration from the past. Gothic Revival, for example, was one of the predominant styles of the nineteenth century, Tudorbethan was popular in the early twentieth century and just about everyone – from Inigo Jones and Andrea Palladio to Robert Adam and the twentieth-century Modernists – has been influenced by the classical orders of architecture. Movements seem to come and go on an endless merry-go-round with ever-greater speed, but it is worth pausing for a moment to consider an important question: where does inspiration become imitation or revival become pastiche?

The idea of 'reproduction' furniture and fittings is anathema to many. "The word 'reproduction' does have many negative connotations," says David McKinstry, director of The Georgian Group. "A label of reproduction being somehow immoral has been attached to it ever since the Arts and Crafts movement, whose proponents believed that to recreate something took away an element of the maker's creative control." He continues, "People sometimes think reproduction ▶



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ABOVE A faithful reproduction of a design dating back to 1815, this sofa has a frame made using beech wood with mortice and tenon joints. The hairlock seat cushion sits on a webbed base. The shape of the arms is achieved by using matted, sewn horse hair and the waxed turned-oak legs are on brass-turned cup casters. £6,336 (plus 10 metres of fabric),
Max Rollitt

is generally bad; one of the reasons being that there is so much bad repro around. Also, if it is not acknowledged that a piece is reproduction, it could be passed off in an illegal or immoral way. It's all about context. We prefer to talk about craftsmanship within a living tradition. It can evolve but still have the same principles, materials and proportions."

So, setting the controversial 'repro' label and its perception of being somehow a 'fake' aside, it is clear that the ability to copy a piece of furniture, a light fitting or a fabric or wallpaper with painstaking accuracy using traditional materials and techniques is only to be admired. And whilst heritage skills are undoubtedly at risk in the UK and outsourcing to the Far East is not uncommon, there are still a surprising number of specialist designers and craftspeople conserving and renovating our finest historic buildings and interiors, and creating new work within the context of historical tradition.

Earlier this year The Georgian Group's exhibition *Splendour: Art in Living Craftsmanship*, brought together an eclectic selection of Georgian crafts practised in the 21st century, with objects ranging from silk wallpapers and chandeliers to carved stone sculpture and ceiling designs. "In the course of our day-to-day campaigning for buildings to be restored, a recurring excuse for not restoring them is that you can't do it these days," explains McKinstry. "We wanted to show that there are plenty of people who are trained in these skills and that whether you want to create a replica of something that's been lost or commission a new piece in a traditional style, it is possible to do so."

But why commission or purchase a reproduction when both antiques and modern designs are so widely available, of a high quality and often affordable? McKinstry provides one excellent reason: because a unique original has been destroyed or sold. One famous example of this was the Roman statue of



ABOVE LEFT

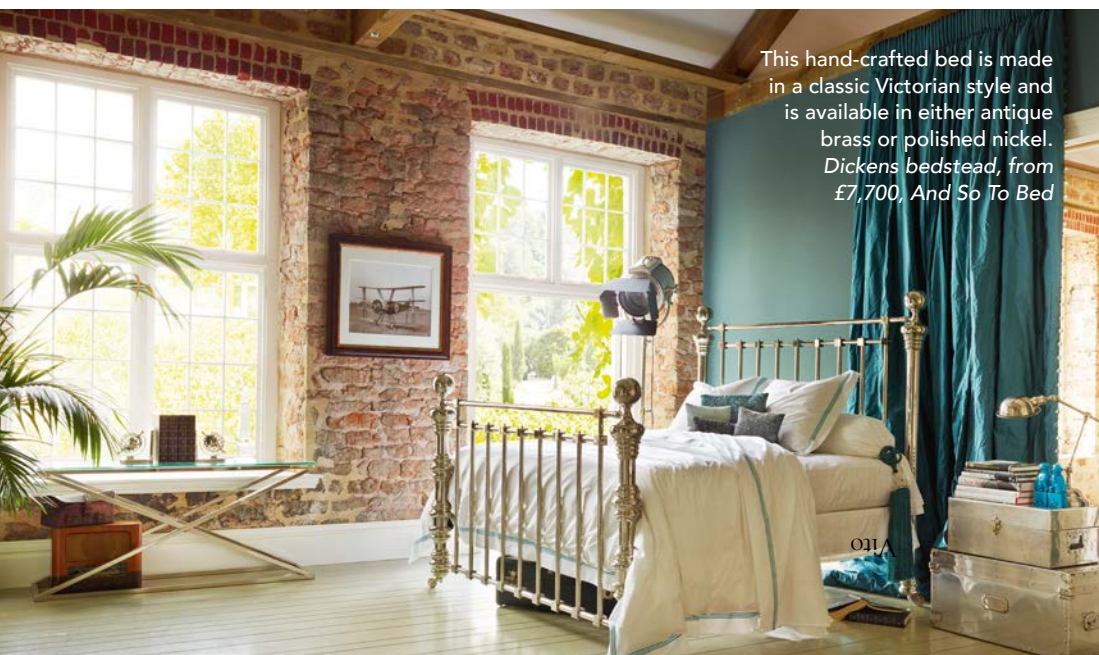
High-end builders Symm created these Ionic capitals for stone pillars in a project designed by architect Robert Franklin.

ABOVE RIGHT Hand-carved by cabinet makers, the Lennox wing chair is modelled on an original Queen Anne design. Price £5,390, plus fabric, *The Odd Chair Company*

LEFT First made for the National Gallery, London, each Irish Pawfoot Bench by Howe is hand-carved and traditionally handmade in quarter-sawn or brown oak. Price £8,712, *Howe*

RIGHT The Charles I dining table by Stuart Interiors was made to a design based on seventeenth-century originals and is hand-carved in solid oak. Price from £2,300, *Stuart Interiors*

BELOW RIGHT The originals of this Gothic revival chair were designed for Horace Walpole by Richard Bentley in 1755. One was acquired by the V&A Museum and Howe London was granted exclusive access to exactly replicate a limited edition of 60, at a rate of about eight per year. *Strawberry Hill chair, £POA, Howe*



This hand-crafted bed is made in a classic Victorian style and is available in either antique brass or polished nickel. *Dickens bedstead, from £7,700, And So To Bed*



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This Knole settee – perhaps one of the earliest known settees – is based on an original design from Knole House in Kent. Price from £2,995, Stuart Interiors

LEFT Jamb's growing collection of reproduction furniture is based on antiques that the company's creator, Will Fisher, has owned. It is handmade in the UK using traditional techniques and sustainable timber. This English country home features reproduction Apsley lights, a Cruxton table and Cobblers stools, all from Jamb.

BELOW LEFT A world authority on wallpaper conservation and hanging of historic papers, Allyson McDermott also recreates wallpapers from her archive of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century designs, such as this Chinese Garden design. Samples available on request from £60.



Aphrodite at Syon House, Middlesex, which was sold for nearly £10 million in 2014, whereupon a replica in plaster was commissioned to retain the integrity of the Robert Adam hall in which the original had stood.

Antiques dealer Jonathan Sainsbury began making historically accurate copies for clients after being asked to find pieces that were impossible to come by. "In the old days it was called making fakes, but they are actually extremely accurate copies – it's an art form," he says. "What people looked at 30 or 40 years ago is monumentally different to what's done today. We use entirely traditional techniques and are aiming to get as close to 100 per cent perfection as we can. It's really important because we work on a lot of houses where the furniture just isn't there any more. It's long gone. But what was designed to go in the house was designed for a reason, so the owner has two options – to buy antiques that aren't quite right, or to ask us to recreate pieces, using historical records. I would like to think that you wouldn't be able to tell the difference."

Christopher Howe explains that he began to make reproductions about 30 years ago because, as an antiques dealer, he often dealt with interior



All work by Arttus Interiors is completely bespoke. The company produces all types of architectural joinery from oak panelling, staircases and furniture to entire rooms focusing on the period detail and proportions. All pieces are handmade in Somerset.



TOP RIGHT
Harewood is a traditionally surface-printed wallpaper taken from 1838 Wallpapers' design archive
Price from £96 a roll

ABOVE RIGHT
Candia Lutyens – granddaughter of Sir Edwin Lutyens and founder of Lutyens Furniture & Lighting – had this Spiderback chair constructed from drawings by Sir Edwin Lutyens made for chairs for one of his buildings, 120 Pall Mall, dated 1931.

decorators who wanted to buy pairs or sets of items, which were either unavailable or prohibitively expensive. Faithful reproductions solved their problem instantly. Howe also made copies because occasionally he would come across a piece so rare that he knew he would never see its like again. "When antiques started to peak in value, decorators became more interested in new pieces, at a time of their choosing and in the condition of their choosing," he says. "New sets of chairs were more in demand than the originals. And then, when the antiques market began to slump, they became more expensive – because to copy something really accurately and really beautifully is not cheap."

As well as purchasing reproductions in order to complete a set, one may require a piece of furniture that will function well in a modern home but also fit in seamlessly with an existing collection. Additionally, if tastes run to big-name historic makers whose work is not readily available, a reproduction is likely to be

the only option. Sainsbury, for example, has been commissioned to create reproductions by a client in the USA who loves the unique Adam interiors of Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire.

When restoring or renovating an old building, reproducing historic plasterwork, panelling or other architectural detailing is often the most appropriate path to follow. Indeed, it may even be required by the local planning department if the building is listed. There is also strong demand for new builds that involve detailed replication – not pastiche – of historic styles, including Adam-style plaster ceilings, carvings with gold leaf and Romanesque stone capitals.

Dominic Benoist, director of high-end builders Symm, believes that this is because customers admire a particular historic style, which also promotes a certain feeling of comfort or security. "I would say that people sometimes choose to replicate the design details of a particular era of their lives, or of places that they know: maybe their old school or a building that they



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Talisman Bespoke's range covers art-deco through to 1970s-influenced upholstered chairs and sofas, to classic lacquered or brass commodes, side tables and cabinets.
The Talisman Swivel Chair, £3,120



FEATURE KATHERINE SORRELL PHOTOGRAPHY P96 © JUSTIN PAGET PHOTOGRAPHY P97 ISORA © FIONA MURRAY (CHESNEYS) © JAKE FITZJONES; P99 (SYMM) © DONALD MACLELLAN; P101 (JAMB) © SIMON UPTON; P105 (LANTERN) © DAVID MALLOW



have been impressed by," he says. "Rather than using the word reproduction, we like to say re-creation. Using the techniques of the past, it's at least as good as the original, and that's where I draw the distinction."

If the difference between 'good' and 'bad' repro is one of quality and context, how is it possible to tell the difference between the two? Howe says: "If something is just copied not-quite-exactly without respect for its intrinsic properties, it can be made for half the price, and for me that's the worst thing" Buying from a trusted source is a good start. If provenance is important to you, do ask where a piece was made, what it is made from and what techniques have been used. If considering commissioning a piece of work, ask to see examples of past work and obtain references. Anyone reputable will be happy to put you in touch with previous satisfied customers.

Modern masters of their craft will use the best materials and employ time-honoured techniques whilst respecting the intelligence and sophistication of past designs. At the same time, they may add something of their own contemporary sensibility, creating a unique example of fine workmanship that successfully blends the old with the new. Inspired by the past, and inspiring for the future. ■

ABOVE Charles Edwards' designs are inspired by nineteenth- and twentieth-century lighting fixtures and are handmade in a variety of finishes. *Regency wall lantern, from £972*

LEFT William Yeoward Crystal is inspired by antique pieces originally made in England and Ireland during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Each piece is made by hand using traditional methods. *Fern small wine glass (right), £165; Gloria large wine glass (left), £150; Fern 12-inch candle lamp, £465; Fern vase, from £105; Inez carafe, from £270*

This dog-bed was custom-made as part of a bespoke kitchen design by Barnes of Ashburton, where kitchens start from £25,000.



A place for EVERYTHING

An organised home ensures a
calming environment with storage
solutions for every need

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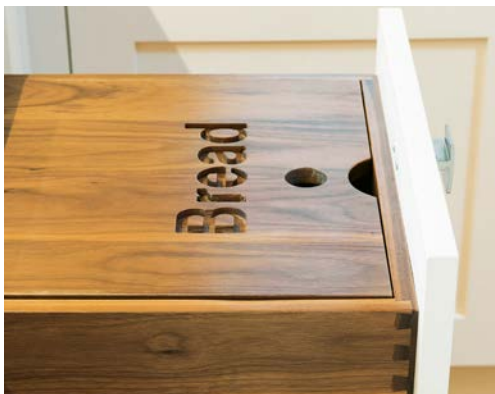


ABOVE A classic Shaker-style kitchen by Harvey Jones incorporating several clever storage solutions, including bookshelves. Kitchens start from £18,000.

LEFT This kitchen by Plain English features Spitalfields cabinetry, including the storage

pantry beyond with a sliding ladder. Kitchens start from £45,000.

LEFT, BELOW A cleverly concealed built-in bread bin in natural walnut, one of many beautiful storage solutions in this bespoke kitchen by Cotteswood. Prices from £20,000.



How to contain the general flotsam and jetsam of daily life? A disorganised home can make the easiest of tasks feel overwhelming, so – whilst it may be lower down the list than other priorities – it really is worthwhile investing in purpose-built storage in order to be able to think clearly and save time hunting high and low for that missing shoe or misplaced dog lead. There are limitless possibilities to choose from, including bespoke designs tailor-made for individual requirements.

FITTED STORAGE

Fully-fitted furniture is perfect for period properties with alcoves, awkward corners or sloping ceilings – from bathroom to boot room. It can include enclosed storage, such as cabinets and drawers, as well as

open shelving, and because it is affixed to walls, fitted furniture can give a neat fit from floor to ceiling or wall to wall, utilising almost every inch of potential storage space. Kick plinths and corning which abutt floors and ceilings can also reduce concerns of dust ingress.

“If a customer is looking to incorporate storage into their home,” says Karen Conn, furniture designer at Neville Johnson, “we would always recommend a fitted furniture concept, primarily because this can be made completely to the client’s taste. It can be created to work with what is already in the home – whether that is to fully utilise the height or length of a wall, design a feature around a doorway or under a staircase.”

Fitted concepts are popular in bedrooms and kitchens, where concealed storage is often needed in order to achieve a calm ▶



ABOVE In this period property, John Lewis of Hungerford designed bespoke understairs cupboards, crafted from Shaker-style lay-on cabinetry and painted in Lysandra Blue with tarnished brass handles. Prices from £17,500.

RIGHT This walk-in pantry was designed by Humphrey Munson to fit beneath the stairs in a Georgian hunting lodge. It has a mix of closed and open storage, and plenty of worktop space. A similar design would cost approximately £10,000.

BELOW Hampshire-based Furniture@No7 designs and makes bespoke boot rooms to any size and specification, and can deliver all around the UK. Designs can include hanging areas and store cupboards for shoes, boots and umbrellas. Price on application.



environment with everything in its place. High-end kitchen, bathroom and bedroom designers and makers are constantly evolving and innovating the look and shape of unit doors and carcasses, as well as the degree of tailored options available within cabinetry to house all manner of items in the most functional way.

“It is very much about having a flexible approach to the bedroom space,” explains Ashleigh Hanwell, lead creative at Kindred. “Take a look at the type of clothing, shoes, handbags and hats that you wish to store. We can then tailor the internals with customised options from stackable drawers and pigeon holes to accent shelves and drawer organisers.”

Hanwell also recommends floor-to-ceiling wardrobes for storing less frequently used

items, incorporating a desk area within the cabinetry or utilising narrow spaces for keeping books to hand or displaying treasured keepsakes.

BESPOKE PIECES

Like haute couture clothing, bespoke storage pieces are those uniquely made for each individual project rather than being adapted from a range of existing cabinet options to fit a space. It is, therefore, a more costly option, but a worthwhile investment for long-term homes and more complex storage needs perhaps in awkward spaces or simply where a one-of-a-kind result is desired. To commission a bespoke piece, Kim Whinnett, managing director at Barnes of Ashburton, has this advice: “Look for ▶

The Imperial wardrobe by The Heritage Wardrobe Company combines functional storage with an elegant breakfront and incorporates a discreet walk-through to an en-suite bathroom. Wardrobes from £8,000 to £9,500 inclusive, subject to internal specification.



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A bespoke study is ideal when working from home. Charlie Kingham can design and create the ultimate reading library, den or study area, with prices from £6,000.



ABOVE This walk-in closet was designed by Tim Wood and takes into account the exact size and shape of the client's shoulders so that each bag hangs on a rail which is the same proportion as its owner's shoulder. A similar design would cost around £24,000.

companies that specialise in furniture design and have their own workshop, complete with a team of joiners and finishers who can demonstrate the build process and work with you to achieve exactly what you want, made to the exact size."

Alternative options include commissioning an experienced joiner, carpenter or cabinetmaker, or working with an interior designer who will have good contacts and can match your needs perfectly with the right craftsman. Using a skilled woodworker means that anything is possible – the only downside could be price, but well-made furniture is often worth the expense and, in the case of freestanding elements, can be handed down through the generations.

Designer Tim Wood, who specialises in designing and creating truly unique furniture, says that one of the benefits of bespoke is that everything is designed and made from scratch. "We start from the client's brief," he explains, "and when space is paramount, either due to a lack of room or a profusion of things needing to be stored neatly with easy accessibility, we will often think outside the box. We have often provided hidden storage, and in some



ABOVE This elegant dressing room design was undertaken by Artichoke for a grand Georgian house in the English countryside. The door panels are padded with scrim and wrapped in fabric, whilst the furniture interiors are lined in faux suede for a luxurious touch. Prices for similar start at £20,000.

LEFT This bespoke cabinetry by Woodstock Furniture created a home bar with useful shelves and drawers, with antiqued mirror back panels adding depth. Similar shelving costs £7,500.



LEFT Spiral Cellars designs, manufactures and installs a range of wine cellar options. Tailored to suit, they will create the optimum climate and environment to keep wine at its best. Prices start from £19,140.

ABOVE This understairs wine-storage cupboard was created as part of a bespoke kitchen by Christopher Peters. Kitchens from £25,000.

BELOW Cue & Co of London can design, manufacture and install suitable storage to complement any interior, making use of every inch of space. £POA.

cases, secure storage solutions such as when we designed something that needed a special credit card to open a hidden door. We are often commissioned when a standard solution is not ideal."

Tailor-made fitted furniture will be unique and personal to you, with myriad possibilities to cater for every need. "The key consideration for us when designing a bespoke kitchen is to maximise storage space," says Darren Taylor, managing director of Searle & Taylor. "As many kitchens are incorporated within larger open-plan lifestyle spaces, the room often has more than one purpose, so we have developed intelligent solutions to conceal workstations, television units and even entire bar areas behind bi-folding pocket doors. These doors fold back and slide into special side pockets to reveal the functional space. When closed, the doors complement the rest of the cabinetry, making it seem completely seamless."

CREATIVE IDEAS

A talented designer will be able to push the boundaries and be creative when it comes to installation issues. For instance, many

homeowners are seeing the benefits of investing in a tailor-made wine cellar. Spiral Cellars is one company that understands the complexities of cellaring wine to create the perfect climate and environment to keep it in optimum condition. It can create spiral cellars beneath any ground-floor room, bespoke wine rooms that are temperature and humidity controlled, as well as wine walls for smaller spaces.

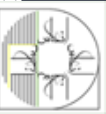
It is surprising what can be achieved by those who specialise in storage for unusual areas. For example, Plain English has created a scullery beneath the eaves of a period property; Rencraft's kitchens can incorporate little touches, such as wine drawers in the base of a cabinet; and Cue & Co of London has made great use of the 'dead' space on a landing by designing open shelving for displaying books, ornaments and framed family photos (see right).

Whichever room of the home requires attention, there will be a storage solution to suit. And when there is not, it provides the perfect opportunity for commissioning something truly unique. ■





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Freestanding ADDITIONS

Accompany well-planned fitted and bespoke storage with smart freestanding pieces for a clutter-free haven



1



2

Quality, well-made modular items can be used as valuable storage throughout the home, be it in the bedroom with dressers, chests and ottomans, elegant cabinetry within the bathroom, or settles and window seats in a living area. The key benefit is that they can be kept when moving house, so it is wise to invest in good craftsmanship to achieve a timeless look that will last for years to come. Multipurpose pieces such as armoires and dressers can also be moved from room to room and appear as attractive in a bedroom as in a kitchen. Consider dual-function items, too, such as storage beds, or shelving units that can be used as a practical room divider. ■



3



4



5



6

1 Dual-purpose furniture saves valuable space. *Everleigh Ottoman in Pigeon cotton*, from £463, *Willow & Hall* 2 To conceal the television from view when not in use, consider this attractive dresser. *Henley 5ft TV Dresser*, available in a variety of colours, £3,190, *Neptune* 3 This armoire is a neat hideaway choice for office paraphernalia. *The New England Home Office Armoire*, from £645 unpainted, £1,042 as shown, *The Dorny House* 4 Grange offers a smart range of customisable, freestanding, modular wall compositions in multiple styles, in wood-stained and colour finishes and with options such as wood panelling and built-in lighting. £POA, *Grange London* 5 Making good use of space, this chest of drawers has a side-door tie rack. *Tuscany four-drawer chest with hidden storage*, £1,269, *Willis & Gambier* 6 A storage bed offers great capacity to hold a variety of linens and throws, making it ideal for a guest room. *Poppy king-size storage bed in Linen*, £1,325, *Button & Sprung*

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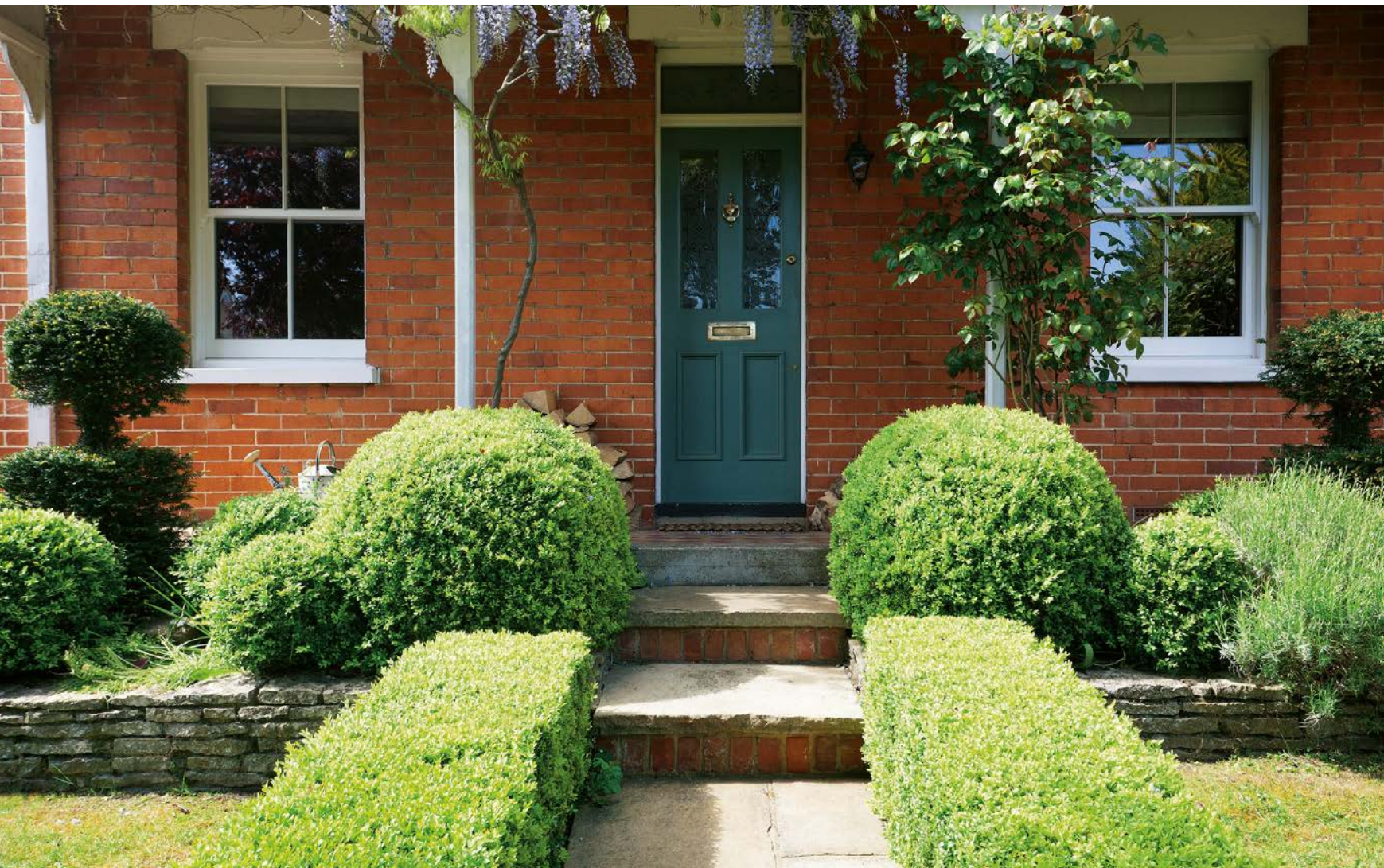
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REVIVING THE PAST

Whilst turning a period building into a dream home is a labour of love, there are plenty of specialist professionals and suppliers to help smooth the way

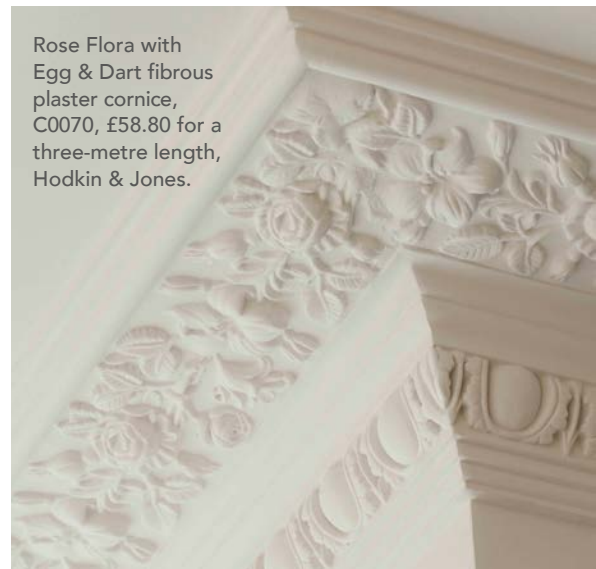
Owniing a period home is a pleasure and a responsibility. The pleasure is in inhabiting well-proportioned rooms that were designed at a time when there was more available space, and in being surrounded by materials, surfaces, fixtures and fittings that were made by the skilled craftsmen of the day. The responsibility lies in preserving the fabric and character of a building for the enjoyment of future generations. Where features have been destroyed through insensitive renovation, damage or simply the passage of time, they can be reinstated. Tradesmen practised in traditional building techniques can help restore a house to its original glory.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

“Architecture needs to look ‘right’ for your interior scheme to succeed,” says architectural historian, interior designer and colour expert Edward Bulmer. “If a feature like a fireplace or cornice is missing, it should be replaced with one that relates to the period of the room’s surviving detailing.”

Plasterwork is integral to many period interiors and a fair indicator of the building’s age, charting the changing fashions in decor. The introduction of fibrous plaster in the mid-nineteenth century enabled decorative elements to be cast in moulds, thus speeding up production, reducing the cost and bringing ▶

Rose Flora with Egg & Dart fibrous plaster cornice, C0070, £58.80 for a three-metre length, Hodkin & Jones.



THIS PAGE Clarence mantelpiece in statuary marble, inspired by a Regency original, £4,080; Grove register grate in blackened finish, £2,880, both by Jamb.

OPPOSITE Victorian Douglas door made in softwood or hardwood, from £3,000 including installation, Jack Brunsdon & Son.





ABOVE LEFT Locker & Riley is internationally renowned for its specialist work in fibrous plaster, from creating new bespoke pieces to restorations.

ABOVE RIGHT Geoffrey Preston, one of Britain's leading architectural sculptors, has led a pioneering revival of eighteenth-century methods of hand-moulded plaster and stucco work. This flower study in plaster is from his private collection.

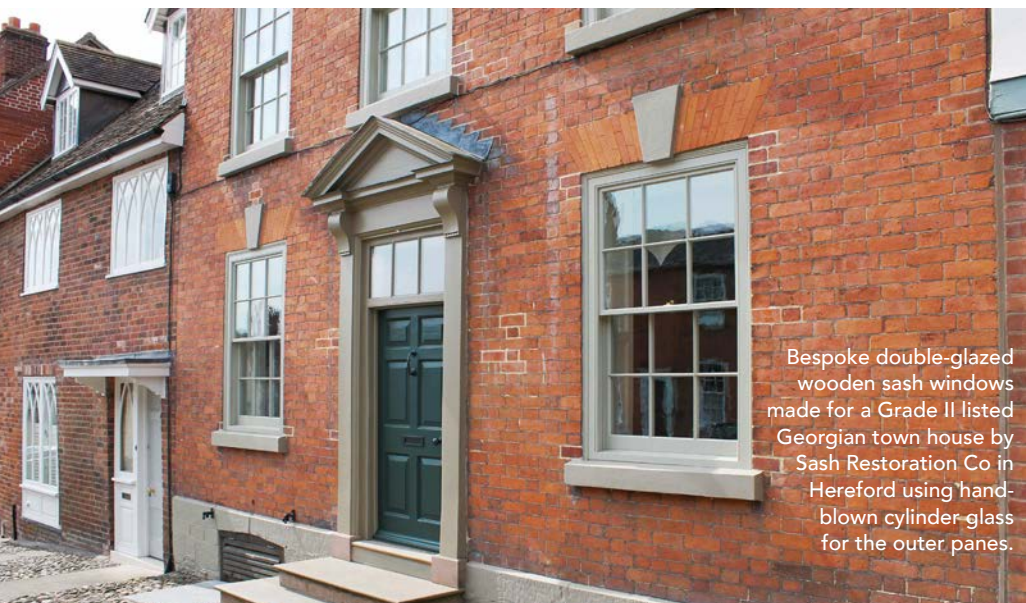
RIGHT Bespoke hardwood sash windows and doors made to order, installed, painted and with integral hardware by The Original Box Sash Windows Company.



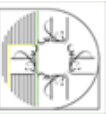
plasterwork into much wider use. "There was a hierarchy of plasterwork," says David Riley of specialist producer Locker & Riley. "It was used primarily in ground-floor and first-floor rooms, and in the entrance hall and first-floor landing." Where original plasterwork is missing, damaged or needs to be extended to integrate a new room layout, replica pieces can be made using traditional methods either by taking an impression from a surviving section or by using historic moulds. "We have 15,000 moulds in our collection," says Riley, "as well as a team of sculptors who can draw up bespoke designs." The plaster elements most often commissioned are ceiling roses and cornices, followed by panel mouldings and decorative brackets.

A fireplace is probably the most conspicuous of interior features as the main focal point of a room. "Physically and psychologically it warms a room and gives you an important focal point for your furniture layout," says Bulmer. This central position has made fireplaces vulnerable to removal or replacement when their style is at odds with current taste. If the aim is to reinstate a fireplace of the same period as the house, or later, the options are to find an antique of the correct material, size and design or to commission a bespoke reproduction. Companies that offer both include Thornhill Galleries, Chesneys and Jamb. Good hunting grounds for originals include Westland and Lassco.

If a design from a more recent time appeals more than one that is more in keeping with the era of the house, do not let the age difference be a deterrent.



Bespoke double-glazed wooden sash windows made for a Grade II listed Georgian town house by Sash Restoration Co in Hereford using hand-blown cylinder-glass for the outer panes.





ABOVE An antique English Regency mantelpiece in white Statuary marble, £21,600, and antique fire basket, from a selection, Westland London.



Colchester pattern tiles with Thackeray design border, £216.05 a square metre, from the Victorian Floor Tile collection by Original Style.

“Many wonderful interiors are the result of accretive growth and remodelling over generations,” Bulmer says. “One does not need to be a slave to a given period.”

WOODWORKS

Windows and doors impact on every aspect of a house – from the aesthetics of its interior appearance and the outside view or kerb appeal, to how warm and comfortable it feels to live in. They are both key to a building’s design and unless they are in a very poor state of repair, rescue is preferable to replacement from the point of view of cost and respect for the building’s character.

Windows are often prime candidates for replacement as concerns about energy

conservation increase. However, original windows that let in draughts, have loose joints and even signs of rot can often be repaired and rehung, reducing heat loss whilst preserving the character of the building. A good local joiner should be able to do this, or else specialist companies such as Ventrolla or The Original Box Sash Window Company.

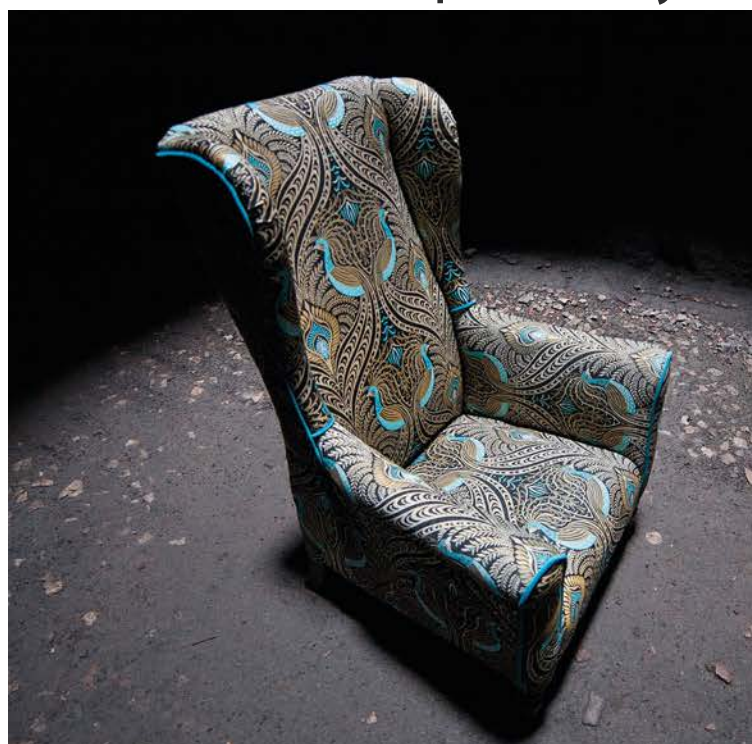
Where modern windows that are unsympathetic to the character of a house have been installed, replacing them with the appropriate wood or metal ones that replicate the originals will improve the appearance of a property immediately. New windows must comply with minimum energy efficiency standards to meet building regulations. This is achieved by

installing double glazing or fitting secondary glazing. Ronnie Salisbury of the Ludlow heritage award-winning Sash Restoration Company believes that practicality and aesthetics are not incompatible. “Thermal efficiency and sound insulation are priorities nowadays, and double-glazed windows can be made in a way that looks authentic,” he says. Additional suppliers and restorers of period and period-style windows include: Clement Windows, Architectural Bronze Casements, The Sash Window Company and Holdsworth Windows.

The question of restoration versus replacement applies to front doors, too, with the proviso that a door that is not original to a property, but is historic, ▶



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ABOVE A Regency-style hanging lantern with faceted, Gothic panels topped with hipped, anthemion decorated, classical antefixes; the whole upheld by a circular, rounded and ribbed clasp, capped with a finial, £4,560, Jamb.

LEFT A carefully restored and rewired antique crystal chandelier, £9,800, from a selection, Fritz Fryer.

should not be discarded in favour of a modern copy of a supposed earlier design. Beautiful additions such as this are milestones in the life of the building and add to its interest. However, replacing an unsuitable modern door with a replica of the original will change the appearance of the house for the better. If unsure of how the original door would have looked, seek out old photographs, architects' drawings or look at doors on neighbouring houses. Take note of the door furniture, too. An antique handle, letter box or knocker can give a feeling of authenticity to a new door.

Those who live in listed properties or in a conservation area should consult with the local planning authority before making any changes to windows or doors, as even if not original, Listed Building Consent or planning permission is likely to be required.

AESTHETIC CHOICES

Choosing flooring, lighting and radiators that perform well but do not impact on the period style of a house is a challenge interior designers meet in creative ways. Interior designer Antonia Stewart's approach is effective. "Don't overcomplicate. Use simple methods and try to be truthful to the building," she suggests. "Remember you've taken on a home with a history and temper your shopping list accordingly." Wherever possible, Stewart preserves what is there, keeping original flagstone and timber floors, where they exist and are in good condition, and sourcing from reclamation centres and eBay for original materials when replacement is necessary. When softer surfaces are needed, opt for fitted natural flooring and rugs.

Aesthetically, open fires and wood-burning stoves are the most appropriate

heat providers in period properties, but standards of comfort demand central heating, too, and whilst they are efficient, the appearance of modern radiators is rarely compatible with a period interior. Designer Mary Barber Fray's solution is to incorporate them into a window seat or the bottom of a bookcase where they can be concealed without loss of heat. If there is no scope for disguise, Barber Fray opts for traditional-style column radiators. "I find the decorative cast-iron kind too fussy and often use Bisque Classic radiators which are perfectly plain," she says.

Increasingly, underfloor heating is specified in period properties as it does not impact on the interior aesthetics and can be fitted in individual rooms. It should be borne in mind, though, that it is usually most practical to install it during a full refurbishment, as it incurs a fair amount of disruption. ▶



ABOVE Fibrous plaster arch, corbel and pillasters from Hodkin & Jones' Simply Elegant range, from £23 for a corbel, £101.50 for a pillaster, and £239 for an arch.

When looking at lighting, bear in mind that rooms should have a combination of different forms. Installing table lamps on a separate lighting circuit provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere at the flick of a switch. Spotlights and downlights are a discreet way to provide general light but fitting them is often not permitted in listed properties with historic plasterwork. "One solution," says designer Joanna Wood, "is to install a false ceiling over the original one so the plasterwork is covered and preserved, and the lights can be let into the new ceiling." If compact downlights are used, the loss of height in the room can be as little as 10cm.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

When moving into an old house it is not always easy to see how it will adapt to your lifestyle. Heritage consultant Dr David Hickie, founder of Heritage Matters, believes that appreciation of an old house is sensory, that is, it should feel right. "If you change the floor plan, respect the flow of the house and retain signs of the original layout so future owners can 'read' the building's history," he says. Matthew Slocombe, director of Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) advises against rushing to complete a restoration project: "Live with the building for a while rather than changing it straight away," he says. "You may find that some things cease to be defects and become assets instead." ■

USEFUL RESOURCES

- **Register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation (AABC)**
A register of architects whose work and skills in building conservation have been established by peer assessment, moderated by a lay assessor representing the client.
Tel 0161 832 0666
aabc-register.co.uk
- **British Institute of Interior Design (BIID)**
Searchable online database of BIID-registered interior designers who have to adhere to specified industry-standard professional criteria to be accepted as members.
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- **The Brooking National Collection of Architectural Detail**
Charts the evolution of Britain's constructional elements over the last 500 years.
Tel 01483 274203
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- **The Georgian Group**
Produces a series of guides about the repair and maintenance of Georgian houses. Viewable online.
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- **The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)**
Professional body for conservation services and advice.
Tel 01747 873133
ihbc.org.uk
- **The Listed Property Owners' Club (LPOC)**
Provides information about listed buildings and a suppliers' directory

of specialist companies and professionals. Members only.
Tel 01795 844939

lpoc.co.uk

- **Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)**
Offers technical advice about repairing and protecting old buildings on its informative website and over the telephone.
Tel 020 7377 1644
spab.org.uk
- **The Victorian Society**
Produces a series of booklets (£3 each) on how to care for elements of a Victorian house as well as a downloadable list of useful addresses.
Tel 020 8994 1019
victoriansociety.org.uk

FURTHER READING

- **The Elements of Style: An Encyclopedia of Domestic Architectural Detail** by Stephen Calloway, published by Mitchell Beazley
A valuable reference guide designed for owners of period houses, restorers, architects, interior designers and all those interested in our architectural heritage.
- **Old House Handbook: A Practical Guide to Care and Repair** by Roger Hunt and Marianne Suhr in association with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, published by Frances Lincoln
An authoritative guide on how to look after an old house – whether a timber-framed medieval cottage or an eighteenth-century property.

BELOW Just a small selection of what is on display at the Brooking National Collection.



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QUINTESSENTIALLY

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



THE LATE SHOW

Dahlias are easy to grow and make wonderful cut flowers. Whilst often thought of as a parade of brightly-hued pompom petals, it is worth noting that there are plenty of softly coloured varieties, too. For neutral and gentle blushes, try 'Blanc y Verde', 'Classic Swanlake', 'Gerrie Hoek' and 'Labyrinth'. To ensure the plants flower from summertime until first frost, choose fertile, well-drained soil and plant in full sun after the frost. Once winter arrives, cut plants back and cover with compost or bark chips. If it is a harsh winter, lift the plants and store them for replanting next spring.

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPHY © JULIETTE WADE/GAP PHOTOS

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Fabricating INTERIOR DETAILS

The start of the school year heralds a renewed sense of purpose, and perhaps a yearning to learn a new skill or even to launch a new career...

Cushions, from top:
Abbeville (223969);
Giselle (223982); and
Amelia Rose (223978),
all £60 a metre,
Fabienne collection,
Sanderson





Phillip Wellesley-Davies tutoring at The Upholstery Workshop

LEARN UPHOLSTERY

Many people think of upholstery as simply re-covering a chair or sofa, but there is far more to this ancient craft than that. The craft of traditional upholstery has a long history in this country, and whilst it involves an understanding of the way in which various items of furniture are constructed, as well as the different types of materials and techniques required, it is still quite possible to learn some useful skills over the course of a few days or a weekend. It may even be possible to complete a simple project such as a small footstool or ottoman over a few days, learning how to build up the

layers to create a comfortable yet durable surface that will last for many years.

A short course will offer an overview of the different techniques involved and introduce students to various elements, including webbing, springs, horsehair stuffing and stitching. More modern techniques can provide useful skills that can be used at home on simple projects, such as a headboard or a padded bench.

The majority of courses require students to bring their own piece of furniture to practise on, however, some may provide the frame and internal components to create a completed piece to take home.

SELECTED COURSES

- **Traditional Upholstery School**, Trowbridge, Wiltshire. Learn traditional techniques in the atmospheric confines of a 200-year-old leather and tanning factory, still producing chamois leather. From one-day courses, where students learn the skills needed to upholster a simple dining chair or footstool, to professional one-year diploma courses. traditionalupholsteryschool.co.uk
- **The Upholstery Workshop**, Reading, Berkshire. Weekend upholstery courses in small groups with upholsterer Philip Wellesley-Davies to learn both traditional and modern methods. Suitable for beginners as well as improvers. craftcourses.com
- **The Good Life Centre**, London. Practical, hands-on introductory workshops, from one to five days, led by professional upholsterers, plus a range of courses for those wanting a more in-depth experience or to learn advanced techniques. thegoodlifecentre.co.uk
- **Upholstery Studio at Something Fine**, Bournemouth, Dorset. Learn how to strip down and reupholster an ottoman or a small chair at a one-day workshop, or tackle a larger item on a six-week course. somethingfine.co.uk

TRY CHAIR-SEAT WEAVING

Delicate cane and rattan furniture has been popular in England since the eighteenth century when abundant quantities of rattan from Asia first became widely available.

There are plenty of examples of pretty antique chairs from the Victorian and Edwardian eras, when a colonial look was particularly favoured, unfortunately, the intricate woven seats are all too often frayed and damaged, and the chairs are frequently thrown out because people assume they will be too difficult or expensive to repair.

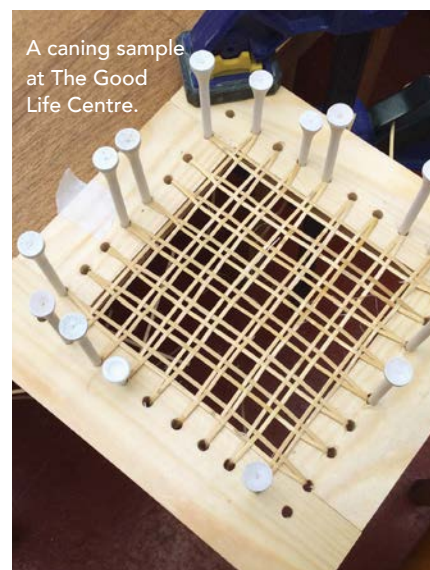
The craft of hand-caning, however, is not as complicated as it might seem – very few tools are required and the basic techniques can be learned within a relatively short space of time. And there are a growing number

of courses and workshops reviving this satisfying and useful traditional craft.

The craft of chair-seat weaving encompasses a variety of different techniques, which originated in various parts of the country according to the types of material available. Rattan cane and rush are two of the most common seat-weaving materials, with seagrass and Danish cord – a fine, smooth cord made from paper fibre – also being popular. Rattan cane is first soaked in a bowl of water to soften it before it is woven into the classic six-strand caning pattern, which follows a precise order. A good course will cover the basics of stripping and cleaning old seat materials as well as preparing the cane in readiness for weaving. ▶



A course in progress at Assington Mill in Suffolk.



A caning sample at The Good Life Centre.

SELECTED COURSES

- **Assington Mill**, Sudbury, Suffolk. A two-day course covers creating a chair seat using cane, rush, seagrass or Danish cord with expert Mary Butcher. assingtonmill.com
- **The Good Life Centre**, London. A one-day course with upholsterer Rachael South, who learned the traditional craft from her grandfather. thegoodlifecentre.co.uk
- **Unicorn Craft School**, Lincolnshire. The two-day chair re-caning workshop includes a chair to cane and take home afterwards. craftcourses.com
- **Damside Mill**, Haworth, West Yorkshire. Weekend courses in small groups that teach both caning and rush weaving for beginners including all the basic skills and techniques that are needed. damsidemill.com



LEFT Professional lampshade maker Joanna Heptinstall, founder of The Lampshade School.

ABOVE Examples of completed lampshades at The Lampshade School.

RIGHT A selection of lampshades made at one of Helen Izzard's courses, held in her Somerset workshop.



SELECTED COURSES

- **Moji Designs**, Hove, East Sussex. Group workshops and one-to-one tuition giving an overview of the construction of different styles of lampshades; the tools and equipment required; fire-safety regulations and trimmings and embellishments. One-to-one tuition includes details of trade suppliers and business advice. mojidesigns.com
- **The Lampshade School**, Holt, Wiltshire. Practical two-day courses taught by professional lampshade maker Joanna Heptinstall. Learn to make pleated or tailored shades, or opt for one-to-one tuition in bespoke lampshade-making. traditionalupholsterschool.co.uk
- **The Lampshade Loft**, Reigate, Surrey. Jane Warren offers one-to-one tuition at her home, or tuition in your own home, and teaches making both modern and traditional designs. She also hosts workshops at ClothKits in Chichester, West Sussex. thelampshadeloft.co.uk
- **Victoria Hammond**, Ramsgate, Kent. A two-day course in traditional lampshade-making, offering tuition in different techniques by lampshade designer Angela Constantinou. No sewing experience is necessary. victoriahammond.com

MAKE A LAMPSHADE

Lampshades that complement an interior scheme can make a disproportionate difference to a room in relation to their size. The right lampshades can provide an additional layer of style and polish. Finding exactly the right style can prove problematic, though; a chosen colour may not be available in the right shape or drum size, or it may perhaps only be offered with a different type of lamp or an unsuitable fitting.

There are a number of different lampshade-making courses on offer. Some teach

the skills required to make a simple drum shade, whilst others offer to teach a few of the more adventurous techniques, such as pleated or tailored shades with scallop edges and handmade trims. Some basic sewing skills are usually required, and skills such as making a template, binding the frame, stretching the fabric and applying embellishments will be on offer together with advice on fire-safety, suitable frames, fabric selection, invisible sewing, lining and reconditioning previously used shades.

SEW CURTAINS

Beautiful handmade curtains and blinds add an undeniable sense of style and luxury, and details such as hand-pleating or contrasting edges can elevate the simplest window treatment to something special. Skilled curtain makers are rapidly becoming scarce. It is hardly surprising that such expertise is difficult to come by; achieving a perfectly even finish and hang takes skill, and even the most exquisite fabric will not redeem a bad hem or an uneven finish.

Learning the techniques of making fine curtains can be enormously useful – not simply because of the money saved,

but in providing an insight into the construction and process which adds an extra layer of appreciation that cannot be easily gleaned from the pages of a book or magazine.

A good course will cover the basics of accurate measuring and calculating the quantity of fabric needed, taking into account the fabric width and pattern repeat. It will also teach details such as how to mitre corners, insert weights, and the uses of buckram to create double, triple and goblet pleats. More in-depth courses offer advanced techniques and advice on setting up your own workroom and small business.



SELECTED COURSES

- **Merrick & Day**, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. An excellent range of practical one-day courses in basic curtain-making, including how to make hand-gathered and smocked headings, pelmets, swags and tails, and Roman blinds, from this large supplier of professional curtain-making materials. merrick-day.com
- **The Makery**, Bath (and John Lewis in London). Offering a broad range of sewing and craft courses including a curtain-making course in which to learn how to make a stylish curtain in a three-hour workshop. themakery.co.uk
- **Helen Izzard**, Somerset and the Cotswolds. Popular soft-furnishing workshops, from basic to professional, for all abilities, held at various dates throughout the year. Bespoke tuition is also available. helenizzard.co.uk
- **Blindly Simple**, Alton, Hampshire. Curtain-making courses from basic to professional, including advice on starting a soft-furnishings business. blindlysimple.co.uk
- **Cranbrook Interiors**, Ascot, Berkshire. Two- and three-day courses in professional curtain-making, as well as making Roman blinds and pelmets, run by a professional interior designer. cranbrookinteriors.co.uk



CREATE A CUSHION

Beautifully tailored cushions provide an effective and inexpensive way to add interest and unify a scheme, and details such as piping or a pleated frill will inject a further level of finesse. Accuracy is all-important for a really professional finish – fillings should be even and perfectly plump; piping or edging must look seamless; and zips or fastenings invisible to the eye.

A good cushion-making or soft-furnishing course should cover filling materials and suitable fabrics, as well as how to work with plain and patterned fabrics; making, inserting and joining piping; inserting a zip; and constructing a simple pleated edge. More advanced courses may tackle techniques such as how to cover

different shapes of cushions, for instance, round cushions and bolsters; making rouleau loops and covered buttons; or making a perfectly fitted and tailored window seat cushion or perhaps a cushion for a box bench. There are several tips and tricks of the trade that can be gleaned from an experienced teacher, as well as inspiring ideas for unusual trims or details that many people may not even have considered. ▶



SELECTED COURSES

- **Wendy Shorter Interiors**, St Albans, Hertfordshire. A two-day course designed for students with little or no sewing skills who wish to learn to make professional-looking cushions. The course covers specific techniques, such as how to make piping for bolster and scatter cushions. wendyshorterinteriors.co.uk
- **Ardington School of Crafts**, Oxfordshire. This one-day course taught by Victoria Squires, a textile and home-accessory designer, offers tuition in planning, cutting and constructing cushions with both piped and pleated edging, along with rouleau loops and buttonholes. ardingtonschoolofcrafts.com
- **Ginny Peace Interiors**, Cranbrook, Kent. Offers two one-day courses including how to make piped, zipped cushions and an envelope-style cushion with covered buttons; or all the techniques needed for a piped and zipped box cushion for a window or bench seat. ginnypeace.co.uk

PRINTING ON FABRIC

Creating a design and transferring it onto a length of fabric that can be used to make a simple creation, such as a cushion cover or a table runner, can be an incredibly satisfying experience. Many established fabric designers – including Vanessa Arbuthnott and Louise Townsend – started out this way. There are several ways of creating a printed design with very little required in the way of equipment or machinery. Silk-screen printing and hand-block printing are two of the most popular. A fabric-printing course should explore the elements of successful design, including issues of theme, scale and repeat, suggesting a variety of ways to gain inspiration and develop ideas into a workable pattern format, along with an overview of the best types of fabric and dyes to use. Techniques such as cutting a stencil or lino block will be thoroughly explained and demonstrated, and there will be an opportunity to print at least one design onto a piece of fabric, which can be used to make a cushion cover, bag or lampshade. Many courses will also offer contacts for purchasing specialist materials, dyes and emulsions, and the best will be in small groups with plenty of one-to-one attention.

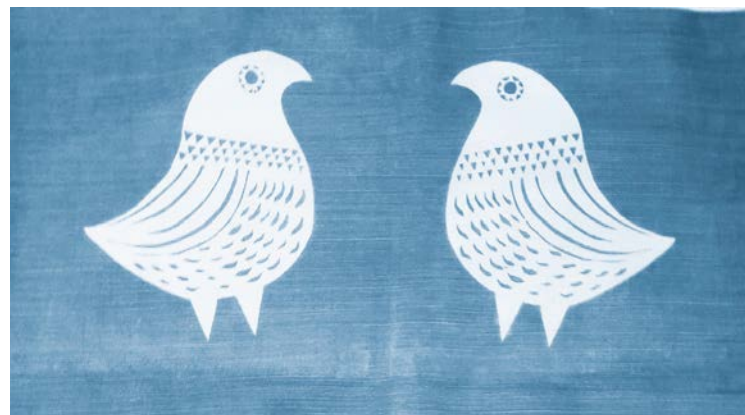


ABOVE & BELOW

Learn a range of techniques from an introduction to simple printmaking course at Vanessa Arbuthnott's creative workshops in Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

SELECTED COURSES

- **Vanessa Arbuthnott**, Cirencester and Calmsden, Gloucestershire. Introduction to Printmaking on Fabric is a friendly, inspirational one-day workshop with Vanessa Arbuthnott's artist daughter Flora. Students explore a range of simple printing techniques, including screen-printing in multiple colourways and creating repeat patterns to make a hand-printed fabric sample for a cushion cover. vanessaarbuthnott.co.uk
- **Louise Townsend**, Devon. On a one-day exposure course in silk-screen printing. Students are encouraged to experiment and develop ideas in a warm, collaborative setting deep in the heart of the inspirational Devonshire countryside. louisetownsendprint.com
- **Rapture & Wright**, Evenlode, Gloucestershire. This one-day screen-printing course includes demonstrations of different types of printing methods with an opportunity to create stencils and print a design on fabric. raptureandwright.co.uk
- **East London Printmakers** Three-day courses on which students learn the techniques to screen-print original designs onto a length of fabric. eastlondonprintmakers.co.uk
- **Slamseys**, Essex. A range of printmaking courses covering screen-printing, Indian woodblock printing, thermofax and relief-printing with lino stamps, with an emphasis on experimentation and learning techniques for printing fabrics at home. slamseys.co.uk





LEFT Students attending a workshop at the studio of Hugh Dunford Wood, a respected creator of handmade wallpaper.

BELOW RIGHT A screen printing masterclass with Daniel Heath.

BELOW RIGHT & LEFT Mixing printing inks at Rapture & Wright in Gloucestershire.



DESIGNING WALLPAPER

Hand-printed wallpaper, with its unevenness and imperfections, has its own embedded beauty and there are only a limited number of courses offering instruction in this rapidly vanishing artisan craft. So scarce, in fact, are the skills required that traditionally hand-printed wallpaper is currently on The Radcliffe Trust's Red List of Endangered Crafts, that is, those most at risk of disappearing.

Despite the undoubted level of expertise and specialist equipment required, it is entirely possible to create sufficient paper to decorate a single wall or a small room over the course of a few days, as Hugh Dunford Wood's ever-popular weekend workshop confirms. On this course, garden plants are used as inspiration for the initial design.

Whilst many of the techniques learned on a silk-screen printing or block-printing course are also transferable to the medium of wallpaper, a wallpaper printing course is likely to outline the principles of repeat designs and the technicalities of the widely used half-drop repeat technique. It will also demonstrate and instruct on how to create a stencil or intaglio (engraved design) block using lino, wood – or even a potato – to create a reverse design. Printing inks, techniques and types of press are explored so a small sample of work can be created. ▶



SELECTED COURSES

- **Hugh Dunford Wood**, Lyme Regis, Dorset. Discover the elements of creating a simple pattern, inspired by garden plants, and turn it into a design in this practical and inspiring weekend workshop run by artist and wallpaper designer Hugh Dunford Wood. dunfordwood.co.uk
- **Bonfield Block Printers**, Thorncombe, Dorset. One-day wood-block printing course taught by husband-and-wife-team Cameron Short and Janet Tristram,

whose aim is to share the fundamental principles of this technique. They also run one of the few hand-block-printed wallpaper businesses in the country. bonfieldblockprinters.com

- **Daniel Heath**, Walthamstow, London. Award-winning wallpaper, textile and surface designer Daniel Heath offers a four-hour masterclass in wallpaper design, along with a variety of longer courses for designing and screen-printing wallpaper. danielheath.co.uk

WEAVE ON A LOOM

Weaving is such a gentle, ancient craft and the process of setting up a loom and designing and weaving a piece of fabric can be incredibly therapeutic. Although few will progress to a fully fledged career in textile production, many students of weaving find the art of creating a length of hand-woven fabric both soothing and addictive, and it is perfectly possible to weave a useful length of fabric once the techniques have been learned. A short weaving course offers an overview of the various types of yarn used in weaving, and their properties and tactile effects, along with different types of loom and their individual possibilities. From selecting the most suitable yarn to setting up a warp (the longitudinal foundation) and creating different patterns and textures, over the course of a weekend or several days, participants will learn how to weave items such as a beautiful sampler, table runner, cushion cover or scarf.

SELECTED COURSES

- **Susie Gillespie**, near Totnes, Devon. Inspirational two-day weaving course held on a cider farm dating back to the fifteenth century. Students learn basic weaving techniques as well as some more unusual ideas and make their own piece of artwork, cushion cover or needle-case. susiegillespie.com
- **Katherine Fraser**, Bath. Introductory courses, from a half-day to two full days, focussing on the basic skills involved in setting up a loom and weaving a piece of fabric. Suitable for complete novices or those looking to refresh or develop existing weaving skills. katherinefraser.co.uk



ABOVE This piece is an example of silk shading and ribbon embroidery, skills that can be learned at The Royal School of Needlework.

ABOVE RIGHT Working with bobbins during the traditional art of weaving on a loom is a therapeutically rhythmic and creative hobby.

EMBROIDERY

The process of embroidering fabrics with colourful threads is akin to painting a picture with stitches, and just like a well-observed painting, it can create incredibly impressive results. Nowadays, embroidery can be done in no time by sewing machines, but this takes away the enjoyment and achievement of the hand-stitching process. Embroidery courses will teach a wide range of basic hand-stitches, such as chain stitch and blanket stitch. Mastering these stitches provides sufficient skills to create simple embroidery pieces. This knowledge can then be built upon by taking further courses incorporating more complex techniques to glean the skills needed to sew more detailed embroidery designs.

There is a tendency for this historic craft to conjure an image of old-fashioned-style embroidery, and although there are plenty of courses to help capture a quaint vintage theme, many tutorials will demonstrate how embroidery skills can be used to great effect on modern accessories by applying classic themes. More advanced and comprehensive courses may also include painting on linen backgrounds and shading to create different effects. Advanced courses also develop the skills necessary to experiment with embroidery and create unique personal designs. ■

SELECTED COURSES

- **Caroline Zoob**, Surrey, Cotswolds and East Sussex. Beginner and intermediate day courses to create decorative pieces or contemporary designs inspired by Victorian embroidery. carolinezoob.co.uk
- **The Royal School of Needlework**, Glasgow, Exeter, Rugby, Bristol and Hampton Court Palace. One- and two-day courses for beginners and experts. From an introduction to embroidery – learning a variety of stitches – to courses on luxurious techniques, such as silk shading or goldwork, and classes on historic stitches including geometric blackwork. royal-needlework.org.uk
- **London Embroidery School**. The London Embroidery School has day and weekend courses on unusual embroidery techniques, along with a focus on learning to be creative with designs. Suitable for beginners as well as those looking to improve and learn new skills. londonembroideryschool.com



Learning the skills of upholstery, lampshade and curtain making gives endless opportunities to style a home in a very personal way.

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FAR LEFT The planting either side of the path leads the eye to the front door, as well as providing a colourful, scented welcome for guests.

LEFT A beautifully curved lawn creates interest and more space to plant trees and a variety of plants to keep year-round.

BELOW Award-winning garden designer and television presenter Andy Sturgeon.

Create a garden FROM SCRATCH

It can be daunting to look at a new plot and wonder what on earth to do with it. Here, award-winning garden designer Andy Sturgeon reveals his foolproof plan with simple steps for success

Have you recently moved house, or inherited a garden that makes your toes curl? Or perhaps you are just tired of staring at the existing plot and it is time for a revamp. There are probably plenty of things worth hanging on to, but simple changes – like dramatically reshaping a lawn or editing and adding to the planting – can have a big impact. Take a step back and look at what you have to work with.

So where best to start? Well, you can't beat a 'tear sheet' or 'moodboard'. Plunder magazines for ideas, tearing out and collecting pictures you like the look of. It really helps to have a 'big idea'. Decide between modern and traditional, formal or informal, and try to pick a theme or style. Perhaps you yearn for a white garden, an English country garden, a prairie ▶





ABOVE A brick-paved path leading to steps through a country garden with box hedging creating distinct planting areas.

TOP LEFT This garden by landscape architect Catherine Clemens of Clemens Associates has an interesting mix of architectural plants and wildflowers along a meandering path.

MIDDLE LEFT Topiary along the edge of a gravel path produces a formal, structured effect, softened by the rose bowers.

BOTTOM LEFT A carefully planned quiet corner to sit in and relax, whether during the day or in the evening with flush-fitted uplighters switched on for added atmosphere.

or something tropical? Gather the pictures together and analyse what it is you like about them. Discard as many as possible to give your design a focus or it will likely fail. Editing things out at this early stage is key.

Now decide what you actually want. These are the big things, the broad brushstrokes. Choosing particular plants or ornaments comes much later. Is the garden for dining in? Entertaining? Relaxing? Do you have room for a separate dining table and chairs and outdoor sofas, or do you need to combine them? Maybe you want a vegetable patch, a children's play area, a large lawn for football, or perhaps privacy is paramount. Make a list, but remember: you can't have everything. It's a bit like packing to go on holiday – you want to take everything, but actually you only need a few T-shirts, some sunglasses and a pair of shorts.

MEASURING UP

Next, measure the garden and draw the shape onto a piece of graph paper, to scale. You don't need to be able to draw. Try 1cm to 1m (1:100) for a large garden and 2cm to 1m (1:50) for a small one. Mark the house on it, too, including doors and windows, so you can think about views and access to the garden. Also add any 'to be retained' features such as mature trees.

Get a compass (you may be able to download an app for this) or look to see where the sun is at certain times of the day. Then decide how much space you need for each area and roughly where you want key features like patios and lawns to be. Draw them on as circles at first

PHOTOGRAPHS P136 (CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT) ANTONINA POTAPENKO/SHUTTERSTOCK; ANNA STOWE/ALAMY; CHARLES MANN/ALAMY; ANNA STOWE/ALAMY; P137 NICOLA STOCKEN/GAP PHOTOS



A small wooden summerhouse, painted in a shade to suit the garden, and a patio with mixed borders and large terracotta containers creates a focal point as well as somewhere to retreat to.



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ABOVE It is best to create a vegetable patch close to the house, and to have somewhere tranquil to sit whilst sowing seeds.

LEFT A rill with a waterfall provides the soothing sound of water as well as a sculptural element in this show garden designed by Andy Sturgeon.



PHOTOGRAPHS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) ANNA STOWIE/ALAMY, AJUTAN/SHUTTERSTOCK, PHOTOCONIX/SHUTTERSTOCK, ANDREA JONES/ALAMY

or cut out the shapes, to scale, from pieces of card and move them about on the paper until you are happy. A dining terrace probably wants to go near the kitchen and outdoor seating in sun. If there isn't any blank space left for plants, you will need to start combining things, reducing areas or leaving things out. Don't be afraid to leave plenty of 'empty' space such as lawns, patios and ponds. Less is more.

CRAFTING YOUR SPACE

It is time to move into the 3D part of the design and add the plants and trees. Cut up a sponge or pot scourer for hedges, steal the children's plasticine for shrubs or use actual bits of plants and seedheads from the garden. Again, make them roughly to scale.

As you place them, think about enclosing spaces and making places within the garden that will give it heart and soul and create atmosphere – the Holy Grail of good garden design. Throughout the process, get your eye down low to the paper and check it out from all angles so you can imagine yourself in this new garden. ►

ABOVE Create interest in a shady corner or in a small garden with some colourful plants in decorative pots.

LEFT The M&G Garden at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2012 by Andy Sturgeon for which he won a Gold Medal.



Consider the composition of the garden as a piece of music with rhythm

ABOVE This riverside garden, designed by Andy Sturgeon for Nicola Stocken, includes two key elements: the oak cube sculptural path and several planting combinations that create an English country garden feel.

GOOD LOOKS

Now think about screening ugly views and creating vistas. Plants on either side will lead the eye to the end of the garden, and this could be a good spot for a large pot or other focal point. Consider the composition of the garden as a piece of music with rhythm – the eye should dance through the garden, pause on a group of birch trees and drift across to a water feature. Some areas can be quiet and others loud and dramatic – for instance, unassuming perennials leading to a refrain of birch trees, a crescendo of red hot pokers and finally the cymbal crash of a Grecian urn at the end.

THE DETAILS

Choose a palette of materials. A good rule of thumb is to restrict this to only two or three different materials, no matter how large the garden, or it can become incoherent and unsettling. Start with the hard materials – stone, brick, decking and gravel – remembering the boundaries, especially in small gardens where they can contribute enormously.

Finally, accessorise, although pots, furniture and sculpture are so much more than just finishing touches. They can make or break a garden, so design them in from the outset, but avoid clutter.

andysturgeon.com ■

ANDY STURGEON'S TOP TIPS ON STARTING FROM SCRATCH

- Choose your battles carefully. A bed choked with weeds is a relentless and thankless task, and a war you will probably never win. Consider removing the plants and either weedkilling the bed and starting again, or turfing it over and making a new bed elsewhere.
- A tree or shrub must work hard, producing spring flowers, summer berries and autumn colour.
- Structural planting is the framework on which to hang all the smaller, softer, prettier plants and flowers. Think of it as the bulky shrubs, hedges and trees that give the garden shape and volume. Include lots of evergreens and imagine what the garden will look like in winter with this structure and nothing else. If it will still be interesting, then it will be a success.
- If you are removing mature planting, do it in stages, as you can't put things back. Think very carefully before felling a tree, and have a good look at what's behind it, as you don't want to open up an ugly view or expose yourself to neighbouring windows.
- When planning a new patio or seating area, put a chair in the proposed spot, sit in it and picture how the garden will look from this angle.
- In small gardens, make everything multifunctional. A low retaining wall can double up as a bench and a pair of trees as goal posts.

PHOTOGRAPH NICOLA STOCKEN/GAP PHOTOS







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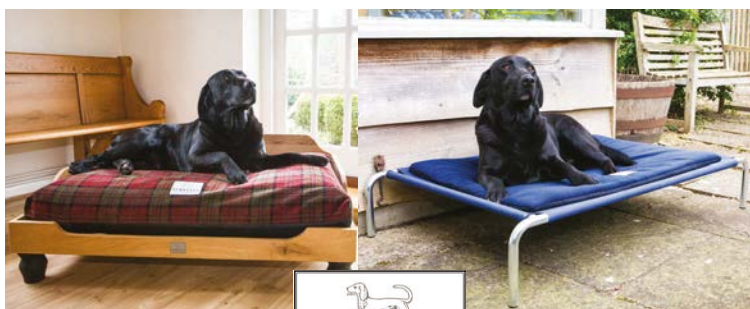
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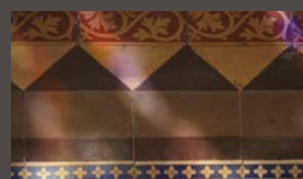
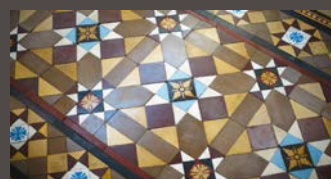
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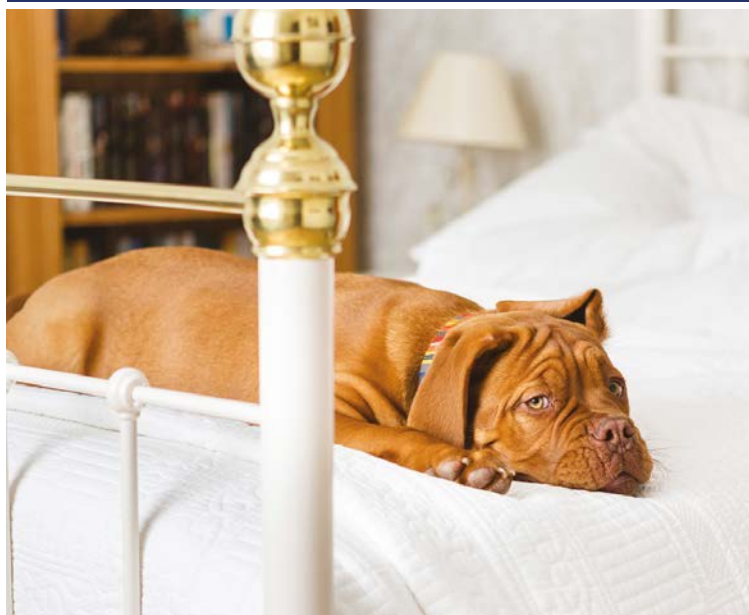
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Victorian ladies are reputed to have fainted at the opening of the world's first bathroom showroom – complete with plumbed toilets so as to prove their efficacy – by Thomas Crapper on the King's Road, London in 1870. Never before had this most intimate of household facilities been available for such public scrutiny.

Yet plumber and sanitary engineer Thomas Crapper was by no means the first to design a water-aided toilet. That distinction belongs to Sir John Harington (1560-1612), who devised the first flushing lavatory in 1596. "Crapper's first patent was actually for ventilating household drainage," explains Paul Dwyer, managing director of Thomas Crapper & Co, which has been registered at Companies House in London since 1861. "But after the Great Stink of 1858, he capitalised on the increased demand for better drainage and sanitaryware," says Dwyer. Over time, the Yorkshireman gained such renown for the quality of his plumbing and products that in 1886 the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII) requested 30 lavatories be installed at Sandringham House, Norfolk, earning Crapper his first Royal Warrant.

With no apparent heir to continue the business, the company was bought by a competitor in 1966, who subsequently went into liquidation in 1969, and it fell to architectural antiques dealer Simon Kirby to resuscitate it in 1998. Now very much revived, Thomas Crapper & Co is part of a larger bathroom manufacturing group, Hartford Holdings, which bought the brand in 2016. "We'd like to bring Thomas Crapper to the attention of more people," says Dwyer. "Simon has given us a fantastic foundation to build on and we still have this absolute in-built belief in the legacy and heritage of the brand," he adds. At the company's offices in Stratford-upon-Avon, a small archive exists of Crapper's original designs and catalogues.

Today, the company's focus is firmly on ensuring the brand suits modern lifestyles without sacrificing a tradition of quality. "People have rung to say they've saved for 10 years to buy a Thomas Crapper bathroom. We can personalise a cast cistern. Our oak seats with brass cabinet hinges are still handmade in north Yorkshire," says Dwyer.

And did Thomas Crapper's surname lead to the well-known vulgar slang word? Not at all. That word predates the producer of sanitaryware as we know it by several centuries. ■

TOP The Leighton bath, from £2,599. **SECOND ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT** High-level WC set with Venerable ceramic cistern and D-shape seat, from £2,209; an advertisement from the Thomas Crapper & Co archive. **THIRD ROW** A Comtesse pan being made at the Potteries in Staffordshire. **RIGHT** The new Regent bathroom furniture range in Charcoal.



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