

HOUSE & GARDEN[®]

FEBRUARY
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TIME FOR
A RETHINK?
BATHROOM INSPIRATION
STORAGE
MADE SIMPLE
OFF-THE-PEG
OPTIONS

plus
OUR GARDEN
EDITOR CLARE
FOSTER SHARES
HER SECRETS

CREATIVE ENDEAVOURS

FIVE DESIGNERS, FIVE HOUSES, FIVE SPECTACULAR VISIONS

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LOCATIONS EDITOR NICOLA LAWRENCE

colour codes



A 19th-century former whaler's cottage in North Sydney has been transformed by Australian interior designer Lisa Burdus into a vibrant, comfortable home with a nod to classic English country style

*The main bedroom is
PEACEFUL, with SOFT
GREEN walls and
MONOCHROME fabric*







LOWER GROUND FLOOR SITTING AREA Lisa chose Dulux's 'Morocco' paint for the textured walls. This shade of pink complements the owner's Persian rug, vintage throws from The Cloth Shop and Kathryn Ireland's 'Safi Suzani' linen in autumn on the custom-made ottoman. The 'Banjo Sofas' are from MCM House in Sydney



KITCHEN The pink paint continues on the **panelling** and **wall cupboards** in the kitchen, part of the same open-plan space, while an **island** painted in Dulux's 'Green Gables' offers a striking contrast. Emac and Lawton's 'Chelsea' **table lamp** is paired with a pleated green silk **shade** from Samarkand Design

The Australian interior designer Lisa Burdus is an unabashed Anglophile – at least when it comes to the art of decorating. 'I love colour and I love that very English, layered look,' she says. The houses that she designs are a testament to this. We are chatting over Zoom and she wiggles her fingers as though casting a spell: 'I don't know why, it just comes out of here like that.'

Take this 19th-century whaler's cottage ('very much my kind of architecture', Lisa says) in North Sydney. The budget was not huge but, thrillingly for any designer, the client told her, 'I want you to go to town with it – I want lots of colour and for it to be super comfortable. I'd like people to come here and just want to hang out.'

There was not much structural work to be done apart from the removal of a few walls on the ground floor to allow for the creation of a self-contained storey that can be closed off from the rest of the house. This alteration took the house from three bedrooms to two, but means that the client, who lives on her own, has the option to rent the space through Airbnb. A smart decision, this was among the bold choices that have transformed the cottage into an invitingly joyful-looking home.

A runner made from Sinclair Till's 'Peacock' natural coir was the starting point for a colour story that sees each of the three floors being given its own distinct identity. The dining and sitting areas swapped places on the lower-ground floor, which is painted an appealing muddy shade of pink. Lisa likes these murky tones, which she finds work well both in daylight and at night. 'The client didn't immediately get it when I presented the ideas, but she trusted me,' she recalls.

The existing kitchen units were kept and updated – the shiny white cupboard fronts replaced by Shaker-style ones painted either in the same muted pink or a vibrant shade of green. In the adjacent sitting area, a suzani-covered octagonal footstool stands on top of a Persian rug layered over some sisal. There are also pretty pleated

SITTING ROOM On the ground floor, **walls** papered in Osborne & Little's 'Chroma' in the apple colourway match **woodwork** painted in 'Purslane' from Dulux. Peter Meyer's 'Urban Weave' **blinds** tone with 'Tuscan Casina' sisal **matting** from International Floorcoverings. Two French **armchairs** from Palace Trader Antiques have been re-covered in 'Mini Weave' by Susan Deliss. The two cane chairs by the window were sourced in Morocco and painted red

lampshades, a burnished metal chandelier and woven cane furniture. It is an open-plan space decorated a bit like an English country cottage, on a street lined with jacaranda and palm trees. What's not to like?

Green dominates the floor above – the one that can be cordoned off. Some of the walls are papered in Osborne & Little's green 'Chroma' design, which has a slightly mottled surface. Its matt finish balances the sheen of the woodwork – including plenty of panelling – which is painted in a corresponding shade. Lisa chose a mustard colour to define the top floor, which is where the owner has her bedroom. Accents of red are provided by fabrics by the likes of Robert Kime and Susan Deliss. Lisa, a huge admirer of both, is Australia's exclusive stockist of Susan's textile designs.

Despite business 'going swimmingly' in Australia, Lisa took a decision last year to up sticks and move to England. 'I've raised five kids, I'm single and I had always thought that, when the youngest finishes school, I'm going to go and live somewhere else,' she says. 'It was a personal challenge in a way – to drop myself on the other side of the world where I don't know anyone. To walk into a pub and just start talking to people.'

Although we have not yet had the chance to meet in person, it is clear that Lisa is one of life's true bon vivants. In July, she found a cottage to rent in an Oxfordshire village. She knew no one in the area but, by September, she was posting (very stylish) pictures on Instagram captioned: 'Michaelmas supper with new friends in England.'

While keeping her Sydney office open, she plans to develop a UK arm of her interior-design studio. Considering the timing of this life-changing decision and the challenges she will face, I tell her that I think she is brave – and even slightly bonkers. 'I know,' she says with a laugh. 'We'll see. It's not that I've come here to take on the British decorating scene or anything.' I suspect, however, that word of her arrival will soon get out. It will be interesting to see what happens then □

Lisa Burdus: lisaburdus.com








BATHROOM The **wallpaper** is Soane's 'Scrolling Acanthus' in sorolla red. Moroccan concrete **tiles** from Popham Design, in saffron and cream, are arranged in a chequerboard pattern. The 'Hermitage Console' **vanity unit** from Parisi is curtained with vintage fabric from The Cloth Shop. **SPARE ROOM** Layered textiles in this bedroom include **curtains** in Anaras from Namay Samay, a **headboard** in 'Oldwick' from Sister Parish, **cushions** in 'Perseus' from Classic Cloth and a custom-made **quilt**. **EXTERIOR** Built in the 19th century, the cottage has a quintessentially Australian corrugated metal roof. **ENTRANCE HALL** Walls in Dulux's 'Alluvial Inca' create a warm background for the vintage painting and armchair, and a potted fiddle-leaf fig tree



EACH OF THE THREE FLOORS WAS GIVEN ITS OWN DISTINCT COLOUR IDENTITY. GREEN DOMINATES THE GROUND FLOOR, WHICH CAN BE CLOSED OFF FROM THE REST OF THE HOUSE AS A SELF-CONTAINED UNIT, OFFERING THE OPTION TO RENT IT OUT





LISA CHOSE A MUSTARD COLOUR TO
DEFINE THE TOP FLOOR, WHICH IS WHERE
THE OWNER HAS HER BEDROOM. FABRICS
BY THE LIKES OF ROBERT KIME AND SUSAN
DELISS ADD ACCENTS OF RICH RED

MAIN BEDROOM (*both pages*) A **headboard** covered in a silk fabric from Liberty complements the owner's patchwork quilt and Moroccan rug. The Emac & Lawton **lamps** have **shades** from Samarkand Design. A **blind** made from 'Sintra' embroidered linen by Baker Lifestyle echoes the stripes of the window-seat **cushion** in vintage fabric from The Cloth Shop. The rattan **armchair** is from Lincoln Brooks



DRAWING ROOM

Pale walls stripped back to the bare plaster provide a subtle backdrop for a Flemish tapestry, which Remy bought at auction – ‘I was drawn to its faded colours and the fact it was damaged appealed to me,’ he explains. An armchair found at auction in Yorkshire is covered in a Twenties English chintz; other vintage fabrics collected over the years have been used to create covers for the cushions on the sofa. An elegant Regency table stands on a mid-century carpet brought back from Morocco





ABOVE FROM LEFT The ebonised table in the hall is from Alexander von Westenholz. A Napoleon III chair sits beside a Queen Anne table in the drawing room.
BELOW FROM LEFT A drop-leaf dining table is teamed with 19th-century chairs. Curtained shelves provide storage below the granite kitchen countertop

