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MODERN HOMIES

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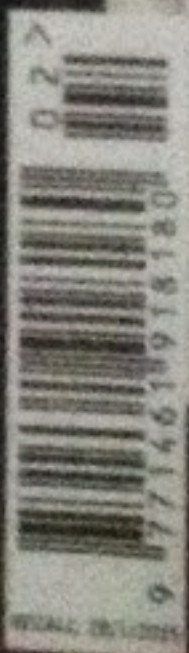
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Next stop Palm Springs

Sun-drenched shades bring more than a touch of southern California to Rebekah and Nick's London townhouse

Photography – Paul Raeside
Styling – Mary Weaver
Words – Jo Leavers



LIVING ROOM

'This Fifties chair is such a great shape and colour – it makes me happy whenever I catch sight of it,' says Rebekah. The Vermeer *Young Woman Standing at a Virginal* reproduction adds classical poise to the space.

GET THE LOOK The vintage chair is from Wren Home. The console is from Graham and Green. Find a credenza like this at Roche Bobois. The Diagonal Bead Blue rug is by Neisha Crosland for The Rug Company. For a similar candelabra, try Alison at Home. The cushion is from Heal's.



Home profile

THE OWNERS Rebekah Caudwell, an interior designer, and her husband Nick Dupart, a photographer and property developer. Together they run Rebekah Caudwell Design.

THE PROPERTY A six-bedroom Grade II-listed Georgian house in central London. On the ground floor there is a drawing room and study. The lower-ground floor includes an open-plan living room, kitchen and dining room. The master suite is on the first floor, with further guest suites on the floors above.

DRAWING ROOM

'I love how the blues and greens sing against the sunshine yellow. It's like a blast of Palm Springs, right here in WC1,' says Rebekah. The red cabinet acts as another décor wake-up call. 'I fell for its dynamic shade when I was visiting Los Angeles, so had this vintage piece shipped over,' Rebekah adds.

GET THE LOOK The Lampert sofas and X-benches are by Jonathan Adler. The artwork is by Yves Krief – find his work at byart.co.uk. The red cabinet is from Miami-based Sabina Danenberg Atelier. For similar modern lacquered furniture, try Julian Chichester. The side tables are by Nicola Falcone. This is the Sellarsbrook Yellow rug by Suzanne Sharp for The Rug Company. The curtains are made in Pierre Frey's Mauritius linen.

'Rules?'

I like to break a few,' says Rebekah Caudwell. 'Because sometimes that's how you have the most fun.' Her vision for this Grade II-listed townhouse kicks off in the flagstoned entrance hall, where a wall crosshatched with vivid bolts of magenta, turquoise and yellow offsets peachy chairs. 'I wanted an element of surprise as you walk in,' she says, smiling. And beyond the austere façade, the mood of this Georgian home is joyous and energetic – more Palm Springs than Bloomsbury.

But there's nothing impetuous about this look – it's a thoughtful, informed rewrite of a classicism that Rebekah is well versed in. An English degree, teaching history of art in Italy and early interior design jobs that were 'steeped in antiques' gave her a solid grounding in doing things by the book. 'After all,' she says, 'you have to know the rules before you can break them.'

And then there's the American influence. Rebekah and her US-born husband Nick Dupart have been together since they met in a Clerkenwell bar seven years ago. 'It was a mutual friend's birthday do,' says Nick. 'We were totally set up, but blissfully unaware of it.' They now divide their time between New York and London and Nick, a successful ad man turned property developer and photographer, works alongside his wife as co-president of Rebekah Caudwell Design.

But while Rebekah grew up with antiques and formal aesthetics, Nick was raised on modernism in the white light of LA. 'Nick helped drag me out of centuries past and got me into mid-century design,' says Rebekah. 'In return, I converted him to colour. That said, Nick's comfort zone is still navy blue, so he's had to take a leap of faith with this house.'

Rebekah's skill lies in taking risks – mixing old with new, brights with neutrals – and creating something that's both classic and fresh. So in a favourite corner of their living room, the poise of a Vermeer print is balanced by an Italian Fifties chair in citrus yellow, while their impossibly tall windows are swathed in a Pierre Frey tropical fabric that could be straight out of a Slim Aarons print.

And this Georgian house provides the proportions and space to let Rebekah's style shine through. 'It had been used as accountants' offices during the Sixties and Seventies,' says Nick, 'but it survived the mania for ripping out original features. So we both got that "wow" moment when we walked into the drawing room – and then again when we saw the master bedroom.'

It had been turned back into a single home by a developer, but Rebekah and Nick could see even more potential. It came with rooms decked out in nondescript beiges and the wooden floors were stained an alarmingly bright shade. 'It was ripe for us to start over,' says Rebekah.

First off, they threw out the polite greys and taupes, sanded back the floorboards and dipped into a palette of sun-soaked turquoise, teal and greens. 'Clearly, I don't subscribe to the old adage "Blue and green should never be seen",' says Rebekah. She's not averse to a mix of high-low budgets either. 'I head to Graham and Green, West Elm and CB2 for basic pieces,' she continues. 'Then I'll put them with vintage. It's like wearing a Topshop dress with a Chanel belt.'

And if her combos throw up some surprises, all the better. 'I like colours and configurations that jangle just enough to wake you up and make you think,' she says.

So a wife and husband who work side by side to create dynamic, colourful interiors – could Rebekah and Nick be the next Novogratz duo? 'Ha!' says Rebekah, laughing. 'Wouldn't that be great? Just need to drum up a brood of seven kids. Hmm, maybe we'll start with a dog and see how we go...' Visit rebekahcaudwelldesign.com for more info. Rebekah and Nick are ambassadors for the charity Caudwell Children (caudwellchildren.com)



ENTRANCE HALL

'I instantly loved the dynamic harlequin blocks of colour in this wallpaper,' says Rebekah. 'It sets the tone for the house. **GET THE LOOK** The wallcovering is Circus by Cole & Son. The chairs were one-offs from Julian Chichester, bought at a sample sale. The round side table is vintage Fornasetti. Try Holly Johnson Antiques for similar.

'Colours are my thing and I like to put them together so they sing'



LIVING ROOM

'Colour can be tricky to work into a scheme without it feeling shouty – that's why some people shy away from it,' says Rebekah. 'But the easiest ways to ease into it are with throws, cushions or rugs.' **GET THE LOOK** The glass coffee table is by Julian Chichester. The artwork is by Silvia Calmejane. Find her work at Galerie d'Art Brigitte Capy. This is Antonio Citterio's Groundpiece sofa for Flexform. The table lamp, far right, is by Jonathan Adler, with a shade covered in Designers Guild's Leopold in Chartreuse wallpaper.



Home truths

DREAM PET? *Rebekah:* I'd love a Boston Terrier. Just the right mix of ugly and pretty.

FLATS OR HEELS? *Rebekah:* Flats for everyday. I love Tory Burch's glam designs. Though nothing makes you feel quite as sexy as a precipitous pair of heels.

FAVOURITE SCENT? *Rebekah:* Balenciaga's Florobotanica. Feminine and floral, but with a naughty undertone of spice.

Nick: Tom Ford's Tuscan Leather.

DEFINING CHILDHOOD MEMORY? *Rebekah:* Arriving at boarding school and carefully arranging my books, pictures and ornaments around me until I felt okay. I learned young that the space you create for yourself affects how good you feel.

FAVOURITE DESIGNER AT THE MOMENT? *Rebekah:* Mary Katrantzou. Cool, clever, colourful. Love her!

YOU HATE IT WHEN... *Nick:* People take design too seriously. There are enough serious things going on in the world. When it comes to décor, do it with a wink and a smile.



KITCHEN ↑

The lower-ground floor is awash with light, thanks to a large light well over the seating area and a sunken terrace next to the kitchen. 'This is where we end up hanging out most evenings,' says Nick. 'A steady flow of friends drop by and there's plenty of space for staying over. Last summer, we nicknamed our house The Youth Hostel, but we love the buzz of having people around really.'

GET THE LOOK *The kitchen was built bespoke. Try Bulthaup for something similar. Find the Roberts Revival DAB radio at John Lewis.*

DINING AREA →

'My family is from Staffordshire and my grandmother used to paint the pottery,' says Rebekah. 'So my antique Staffordshire ceramics are a tribute to her and my roots.'

GET THE LOOK *Find Staffordshire pottery at 1stdibs.com. The artwork is by Silvia Calmejane. The faux-flowers are from Atelier Abigail Ahern.*



DINING AREA

Rebekah and Nick enjoy entertaining and it's easy to see why guests linger long with those comfy chairs and plenty of decorative eye candy.

GET THE LOOK *The Dakota table is from Julian Chichester. The blue lacquered shelving is bespoke. Find a carpenter to make something similar via ratedpeople.com. The chairs are from Talisman.*

'I don't want a look that's too perfect'



MASTER EN SUITE

'We love having so much space in here – it's a bathroom, dressing room and sitting room all in one,' says Nick.
GET THE LOOK For similar tiles, try Mandarin Stone. For a double shower like this, head to CP Hart. The armchair is by Jonathan Adler. The Terence Donovan photograph of Julie Christie is from the Chris Beetles Gallery. The dress is by Alexander McQueen and the shoes are by Jimmy Choo.

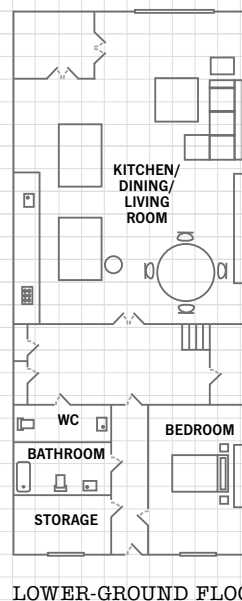


GUEST BEDROOM

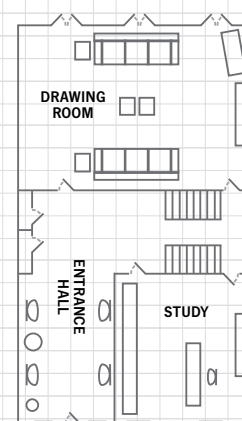
Rebekah bought the twin beds on eBay and joined them together to make a generous double. 'They could have easily fitted into a girly shabby chic room, but here, they get a bit of a shake up from their surroundings,' she says. The wallpaper is from one of her favourite sources: 'Cole & Son is endlessly inventive.'
GET THE LOOK The bedside light and cabinet are from Talisman. The lacquered shelving was made bespoke. Find a carpenter to make something similar via ratedpeople.com. The wallpaper is Cole & Son's Cow Parsley.



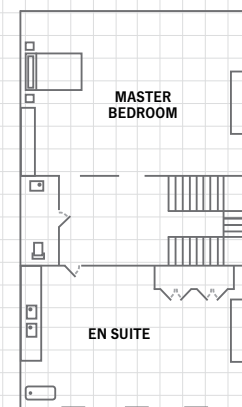
The blueprint



LOWER-GROUND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



MASTER BEDROOM ↑

'In here, I used a softer palette to create a more peaceful space,' says Rebekah. The ceiling and mouldings were a real draw for the couple. 'It's like waking up in a ballroom,' she adds. The Tudor Rose wall plaques are a nod to the house's classical plasterwork.

GET THE LOOK The lamp and bed (which was custom upholstered) are by Jonathan Adler. The wallpaper is by Cole & Son. The Tudor Rose plaque is by Peter Hone at Pentreath & Hall.

MASTER BEDROOM →

'When the shafts of morning sunlight come through the tall windows, this room looks exquisite,' says Rebekah. The rug adds an Oriental note, woven with silk for a luxurious sheen.

GET THE LOOK The Mamounia Sky rug is by Martyn Lawrence Bullard for The Rug Company. The walnut side table was an eBay find. The curtains are made in Antoinette satin in Aquamarine by Donghia. The chair is from Talisman.



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