

The

ENGLISH HOME



Celebrating the essence of English style

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JENNIFER MANNERS

Rug designer Jennifer Manners has always found inspiration for her creations from the far-flung corners of the world she visited during her previous career in international news. After retraining as an interior designer at Central Saint Martins in London, she founded her company in 2012, designing rugs that would tell a story and immediately setting herself apart through her use of innovation, colour and a passion for the technical side of handmade rugs. She and her team work with the world's most influential interior designers and architects, creating truly individual pieces for each project.

So, when she joined forces with award-winning interior design studio Zulufish we knew we were in for something special. Designed to celebrate both form and function, the rugs are produced in a palette of rich, earthy tones that imbue a natural, architectural feel to modern spaces. The four-piece collection explores a myriad of shapes from circles to ovals, and all designs are handcrafted from the finest bamboo silk and Himalayan wools. jennifermanners.co.uk



BRIDGMAN

Pioneered by three generations of expert furniture-makers since 1977, Bridgman has created the kind of award-winning furniture and accessories that have redefined how we spend time relaxing and entertaining in our homes. For example, the brand's waterproof outdoor cushions were developed over six years to ensure resistance to stains, spillages and the erratic English weather. Its outdoor furniture is made with fade-resistant fabric, so it does not lose its colour over the years in the sunshine.

This year, to celebrate its 45th anniversary, it Bridgman has designed

the Ascot Modular Collection, each piece upholstered in beautiful fade-resistant, fully waterproof and highly stain-resistant fabric for the ultimate al fresco lounging experience in the comfort of your own garden.

Also keep an eye out for the Monaco Collection, drawing inspiration from luxury yachting, each dining and lounge chair is crafted using premium polyethylene rope, expertly handwoven, intertwined and knotted around an aluminium frame to create a minimalist look perfect for modern outdoor living. bridgman.co.uk



BESSELINK & JONES

Lighting brand Besselink & Jones has come a long way since its humble beginnings more than 60 years ago. Today it is better known for creating specialist projects for luxury hotels like the Ritz in Paris and the Astoria in St Petersburg, as well as numerous private residences.

The company expertly converts ceramics and decorative treasures into unique lamps, as well as restoring everything from delicate antiques to heavy chandeliers. Based at its workshops in London, its team comprises engineers, woodturners, designers, craftsmen and artists, and some of the finest millers, spinners, platers and polishers in the world.

For spring, look out for the brand's elegant Sirius Star Lantern (*above right*), which beautifully diffuses light around a room, or the Byron Carved Chandelier in Antique White, for pared-back country-style glamour. besselink.com ■





THE *Victorian* TERRACE

The most familiar styles of English housing offer a wealth of history, architectural flair and decorative inspiration. In this new series, we celebrate the unique characteristics of period homes and how to decorate them

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE

LEFT The ubiquitous brick faced, often-painted Victorian terrace typically features a two-up, two-down arrangement, although many have been reconfigured and extended over the years.

From stuccoed townhouses to flat-fronted former workers' cottages, Victorian terraces are among the most ubiquitous of British housing stock. Nearly a quarter of today's population live in mid-to-late 19th-century homes, many of which were built during the boom of the Industrial Revolution across the country.

These terraces vary in size, scope and detailing from town to town and even street to street – a reflection of the speed at which they were constructed during a fast-changing economic landscape. As a rule of thumb, early examples tend to feature plainer, Georgian-inspired facades, with later builds becoming increasingly ornate.

Prized for their decorative features, including sash windows, slate roofs, ornate mouldings, encaustic flooring and tiled fireplaces, Victorian terraces are also configured in a way that can be challenging to modern living, which has since evolved to embrace open-plan, multi-functional spaces and enhanced eco-credentials. Despite this, a creative architectural and decorative approach can easily unlock the magic of these properties, making them timeless in their appeal.

LAYOUT: *A balancing act*

Although it can be tempting to strip out a space when modernising, it is often more beneficial to play to its existing strengths. "Victorian homes have so much to offer," says architect Rodrigo Moreno Masey. "Though there will be times when significant remodelling is unavoidable, it's frequently in smaller, more surgical solutions that the biggest impact can be made."

Focus first on a gentle reappraisal of the building's layout, bearing in mind that integral elements such as cornicing, fireplaces, open stringer staircases, skirting details and architraves can all be preserved, even if they are removed, rejigged or repositioned elsewhere during renovation.

Many terraces feature a two-up, two-down configuration, with a back addition over two floors. Though proportions tend to be generous, hallways are nearly always narrow and middle living spaces often suffer from a lack of light. "These homes are largely limited to a width of four to six metres, so the footprint feels narrow and long," says Nick Horvath, architect at Momo & Co. "Look for opportunities where you can visually enjoy the full scope of the house. One option is to form a larger opening between the entrance hall and front living room. You could use a pair of glazed French doors and two additional fixed glass panels which the doors can fold back onto. It's a solution that draws in light and makes the space feel more generous."

Try thinking counter-intuitively, too: a middle sitting room can be enhanced just as it is. "Preserving a division between the more formal sitting room and the 'middle' room of a Victorian home will ensure each space has a clear definition," adds Zulufish's Caroline Milns. "Adding glass doors instead of traditional brick walls can introduce a sense of modernity and a softer definition. A skylight in the centre of the roofline will also allow much-needed natural light to pour through the core of the building, permeating every floor."

If a reconfiguration is being crafted to suit family life, bear in mind that the traditionally darker middle room can alternatively be a good place to house utilities, especially if the building is being extended. "Making room for 'back of house' zones, such as a cloakroom, pantry or boot room is essential for daily life, and these don't need much natural light," says Horvath.

Reorganising a Victorian terrace in this way enhances our connection to it from a contemporary perspective – and if its key characteristics are respected, all the better. "The layering of these details makes all the difference," says Horvath. "Buildings like these have a story to tell." ▶



ABOVE In this hallway, renovated by Momo & Co, traditional encaustic flooring sets the tone. Its graphic, monochrome pattern is echoed in the interior paintwork and edged stair runner.



RIGHT This middle room, designed by Sarah Peake, has been uplifted by contemporary Miro prints. A sideboard by Fiona McDonald provides a focal point in the absence of a chimney breast.



LEFT In this room designed by Alice Leigh, simple shuttered window treatments allow the architecture of the building to shine. A classic furniture arrangement makes the most of the room's proportions.

SPACE: *Room to grow*

Preserving the existing footprint of a Victorian terrace or deciding to expand it is an important consideration, as is whether to echo the building's vernacular or opt for a contemporary addition. "The biggest challenges we see are width, light and storage," says Moreno Masey. "Most renovations include the brief to open up the space and connect the front door to the garden via an uninterrupted sight line."

For roomier living spaces, a side return is a classic solution. "It's cost-effective and creates valuable communal space for families where it's needed the most," Moreno Masey advises. "And garden rooms are often undervalued as an affordable and easy way to add living space. Many don't need planning and can be quite big, so there is an opportunity to do something striking."

When planning a rear extension, it is natural to stay within reasonable depths. A three-metre addition tends to look most proportional to the original building. "However, often we don't extend to the back at all as rear gardens are small," says architect Michael Schienke of Vorbild Architecture. "Instead, we might remove an existing old outhouse from the rear, channeling more light into the deepest part of the home, locating a redesigned kitchen-diner in the space created by the original side return."

Adding bedrooms in the roof can be a good step, too. It is worth remembering that all mid-terrace properties have the possibility for a full-width rear dormer. Successful conversions usually involve continuing the staircase up into the loft from the first floor and adding a bathroom or shower room where the ceiling is highest. Expect the remaining space to be as big as the rear first-floor bedroom plus about a third of the front bedroom, combined.

Even without adding an extension, it is possible to reorganise the interior of a house to provide cleaner circulation and improve function. "We achieve this in multiple ways, increasing the heights of internal doors, repositioning the staircase, opening up between rooms and providing a clear vista from front to back," says Chris Pring, senior architect at Hoxlkinson Design. ▶





OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE In this bathroom scheme by Laura Stephens, a freestanding double basin and a marble chequerboard floor lend a classic feel.
OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW loft conversion by Momo & Co features a shower room with a generous skylight.
ABOVE LEFT Soft pink textured wallpaper adds a contemporary note to a bedroom by Zulufish.

LEFT A contemporary kitchen extension by Zulufish allows for space-saving banquette seating.
ABOVE In this kitchen extension designed by Laura Stephens features boxed-in steelwork (top left) to suggest beam-like breaks in what would otherwise be a large, blank ceiling. Glazed tiles and a Shaker kitchen add character.