

Picture Perfect

Interior designer Rebecca Hayes takes the *Residents' Journal* through her portfolio

A swathe of floral fabric, a neon, synthetic flower and three grass-green plastic beads: three conceptual cornerstones that kick-start Rebecca Hayes' vision of what her latest project could become. In the years since she graduated from the KLC School of Design, the St Margarets-based designer has made fresh, clean designs with a nod to vintage elements her signature look. It's a nod that's minus the fuss and fuddy-duddy that risks accompanying rooms of a vintage sway, instead conjoining those two attributes that naysayers have often robotically dismissed as self-contradictory: vintage and contemporary.

For Rebecca, who used to work in the City, interior design doesn't have to mean taking on an entire house, nor even a whole room. She explains that her involvement can stretch from a personal shopping trip or a colour consultancy to a full-scale renovation or even home staging assistance, where houses are prepared for the demands of the precarious London property market.

From the budget (agreed at an initial early-stage meeting, saving any nasty shocks later on) to the lemon-hued end table lampshade, the personality of the occupant is always teased out. This isn't the interiors equivalent of a bad haircut – Rebecca's rooms may be populated by items she's personally sourced, but the character of the occupant is what distinguishes the end look.

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Photography by Colin Poole (photoword.co.uk)

LOUNGE, EDWARDIAN FLAT IN CROUCH END

'The client, a young professional, wanted a stylish lounge that she would feel comfortable entertaining and relaxing in. We wanted to make use of the vast amount of natural light in the room due to its south-facing aspect, so we emphasised the bay window space and reflected the cheerful aspect of the room by using bright colours. The sofa came from Sofas & Stuff, which is a brand I use a lot because it produces reasonably priced, good quality sofas and chairs. We had a fairly tight budget to stick to, so I chose items to invest in and others to source inexpensively. The chairs were bought cheaply from John Lewis, but the curtains were an investment piece. I'm a big advocate of getting curtains made bespoke, because good curtains that are well looked after can last 30 years or more. The coffee table was a copy of a design by Isamu Noguchi. I like to support designers in the industry whenever possible, but sometimes a client's budget means it's not possible and you have to source replicas instead.'



KITCHEN, TERRACED HOUSE ST MARGARETS

'The layout had been devised by Howdens Kitchens, so my role was to create a colour scheme and to add the finishing touches. There was a step down to the dining area, so we thought that having a patterned feature tile in this area would define that as separate from the kitchen. I decided on cement encaustic tiles, because they incorporate beautiful colours. As it turned out, this was right on the mark as the client had spent quite a lot of time in Spain and loved these tiles, which are very popular there. For the walls, we chose a pale aqua colour, Porcelain from Marston & Langinger.'



Photography by Clive Bozzard-Hill (bozza-uk.com)



Photography by Colin Poole (photoword.co.uk)

BEDROOM (MY OWN)

'My bedroom contains a lot of vintage items (many of them sourced from the Sunbury Antiques Market at Kempton Park), and vintage sourcing is something I'm happy to do for clients as well. I painted the floorboards in Downpipe by Farrow & Ball and continued with this colour on the skirting board and alcove wardrobes to create a cosy feel. The dressing table was something I had coveted for a long time from The Conran Shop; it doubles up as a portable trunk and it's great if you have limited space. I sourced the wardrobe handles from eBay – I knew I wanted something that looked vintage so these were perfect. I had a fireplace put in and fixed a mirror from Graham & Green above it. And lastly, I had blinds made bespoke using Designers Guild fabric.'