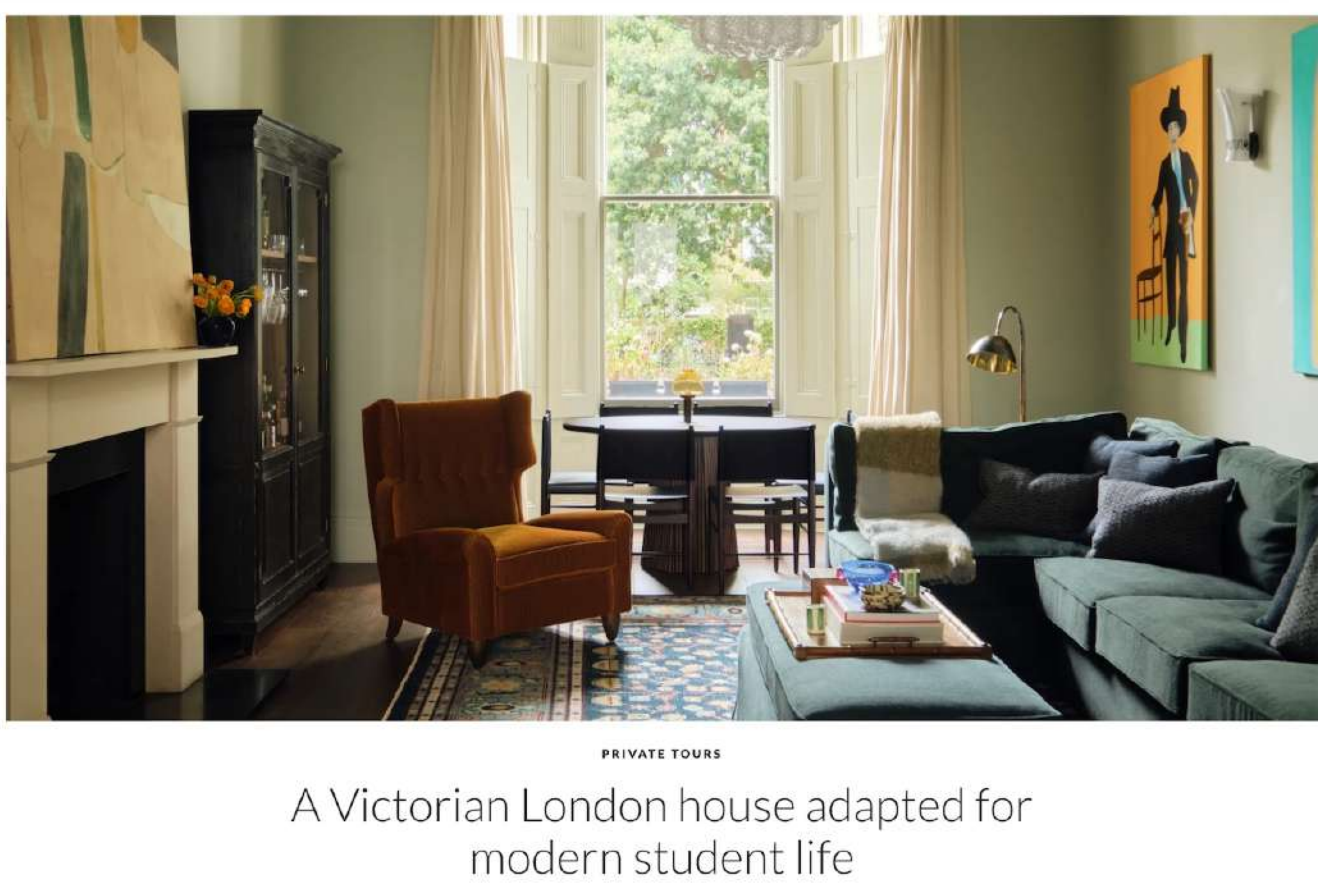




PRIVATE TOURS

A Victorian London house adapted for modern student life

With its modular rooms and furniture, this comfortable pied-à-terre brings a new perspective to the design of small spaces.



By Amy Bradford

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"Our work is split equally between boutique hotels and private residences, and each continually inspires the other," explains Staver Gray, one of the two partners at the New York-based interior design firm Ward + Gray. "We love it when a hotel project feels lived-in and intimate, and when a home offers the seamless functionality of a well-designed hotel suite." This philosophy finds its ideal expression in this three-bedroom Victorian house in South Kensington, whose modest proportions have been given a new refinement and versatility by the studio's talent. Designed for a Jordanian lawyer and his two student daughters, who frequently travel between London and their main residence in Dubai, the property was conceived as a comfortable pied-à-terre, both a private retreat and a welcoming space for guests.

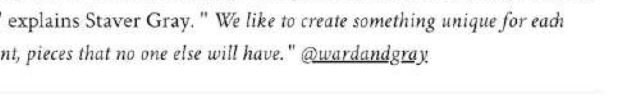
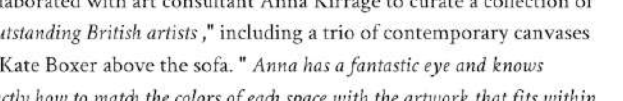
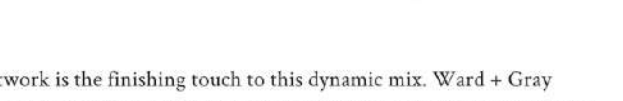
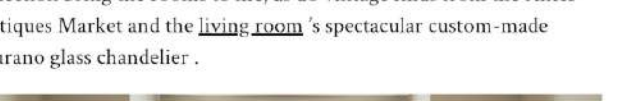
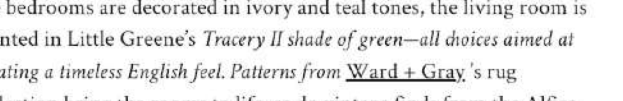
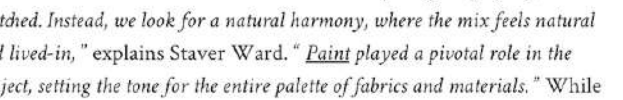
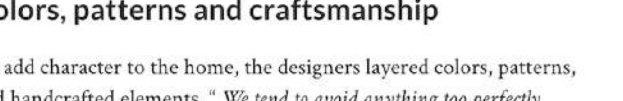
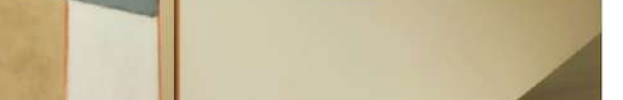
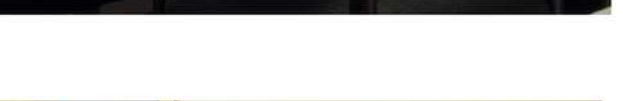
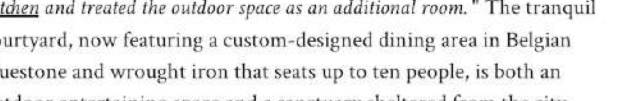
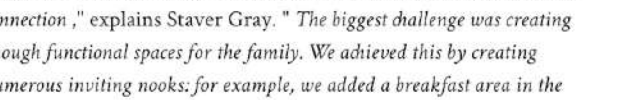
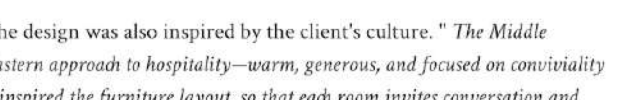
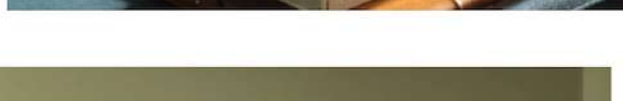


Modularity and flexibility

Although it boasts generous proportions and original plaster moldings, the house in its original state lacked a dedicated dining room, prompting the studio to focus on adaptability. "The size of the living room allowed us to create a spacious, open layout, ideal for entertaining," explains Staver Gray. She and her colleague Christie Ward installed a dining area just in front of the large bay window, with a dark wood table and chairs that, like most of the furniture, were custom-made for maximum functionality. "We designed the dining room furniture to feel somewhat mobile, as if it could also be moved into the living room and used as extra seating," says Ward. "The table was made in a similar color to the dark-stained parquet flooring, so it wouldn't stand out too much in the room."



To create a sense of height in the dining area, the studio commissioned two matching bookshelves to flank the fireplace, one for books and the other to serve as a bar, with an antique mirrored interior that reflects daylight into the room (both were made by Arcadia Antiques). The dark green corner sofa and upholstered pouf are also bespoke pieces, the latter also functioning as a coffee table. The home's warm, dark decor draws inspiration from English design traditions. "The family wanted the furniture to have a distinctly British style, with a color palette suited to London year-round," explains Stayer Gray. "We opted for rich textures and inviting shapes: sumptuous upholstered pieces, such as the wingback chairs reminiscent of 1960s silhouettes, evoke a sensibility that is both relaxed and refined."



Artwork is the finishing touch to this dynamic mix. Ward + Gray collaborated with art consultant Anna Kirrage to curate a collection of "outstanding British artists," including a trio of contemporary canvases by Kate Boxer above the sofa. "Anna has a fantastic eye and knows exactly how to match the colors of each space with the artwork that fits within it," explains Staver Gray. "We like to create something unique for each client, pieces that no one else will have." @wardandgray

