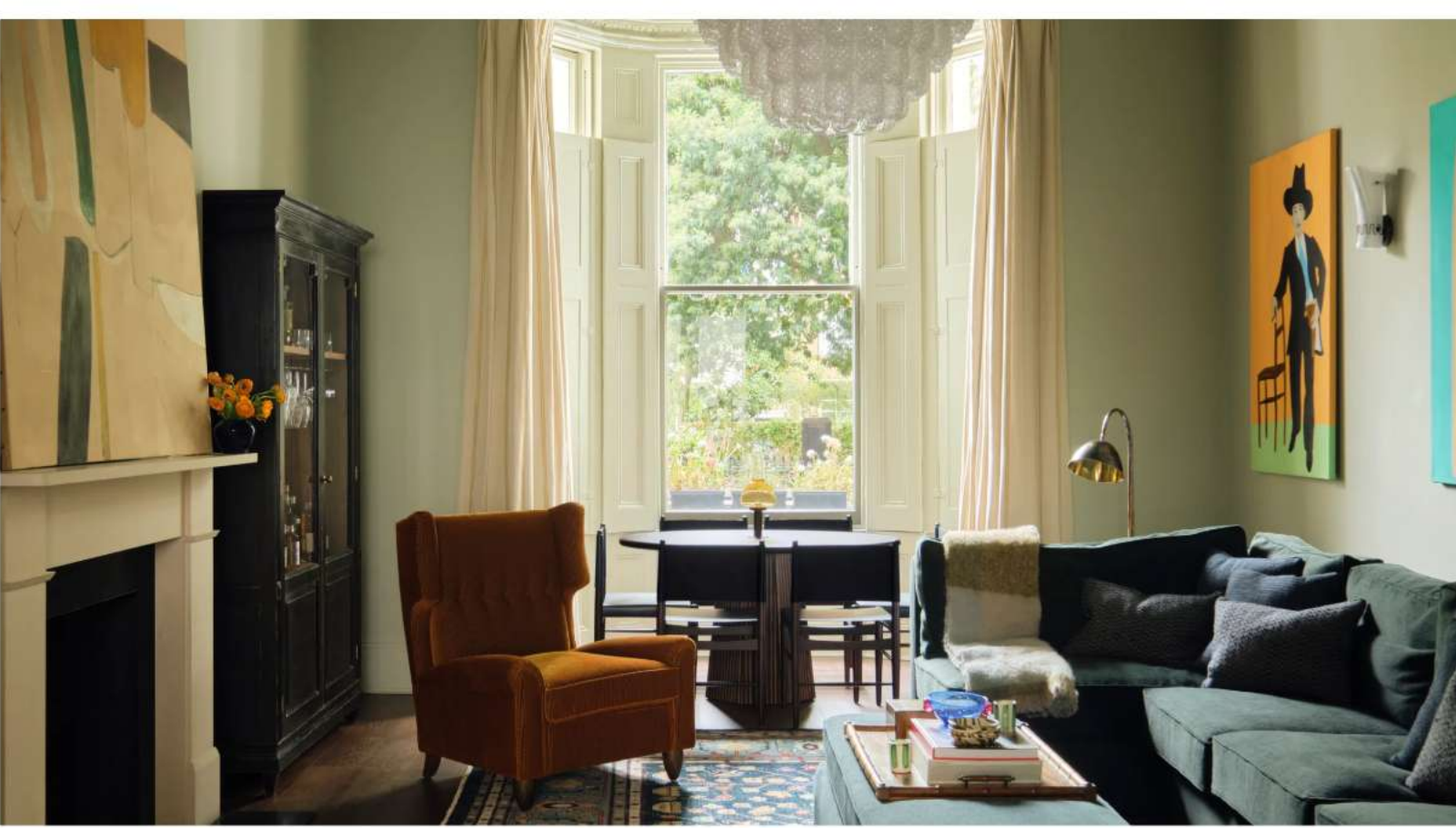




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INTERIOR DESIGN

A vintage house is restored with handcrafted furniture and warm tones.

With adaptable rooms and furnishings, this cozy vintage house brings a fresh perspective to the design of modest spaces.

By Amy Bratford
Translated and adapted by Alejandra Rodriguez
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This vintage house stands out for its warm tones, handcrafted furniture, and refined English-style decor, creating a welcoming atmosphere full of character.

Every detail—from the natural textures to the carefully selected pieces—contributes to an elegant aesthetic that invites you to enjoy each space with calm and elegance.

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The restoration of a vintage house

"Our work is divided equally between *boutique* hotels and private residences, and each continually feeds off the other," says Stavros Gray, a member of the New York-based interior design firm Ward + Gray. "We love it when a hotel project feels cozy and intimate, and when a house offers the seamless functionality of a well-designed hotel suite." *This philosophy found its ideal expression in this vintage three-bedroom house* in South Kensington, whose modest proportions took on a new vibrancy and versatility in the studio's hands. Designed for a Jordanian lawyer and his two student daughters who frequently travel between London and their primary residence in Dubai, the property was conceived as **a welcoming pied-à-terre, both a private retreat and a space for entertaining.**



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Although it boasted high proportions and original plaster moldings, the **vintage house** in its original state lacked a dining room, which led the studio to focus on adaptability.

"The scale of the living room allowed us to create a generous, open layout that's ideal for entertaining," Gray explains. She and her design colleague Christie Ward installed a dining area directly in front of the **expansive bay window**, with a dark wood table and chairs that, like much of the furniture, were custom-made for maximum functionality. "We designed the dining furniture to feel somewhat loose, as if it could also be brought into the living room and used as occasional chairs," Ward explains. "The table was made in a similar color to the dark wood floor so that it doesn't stand out too much in the room."

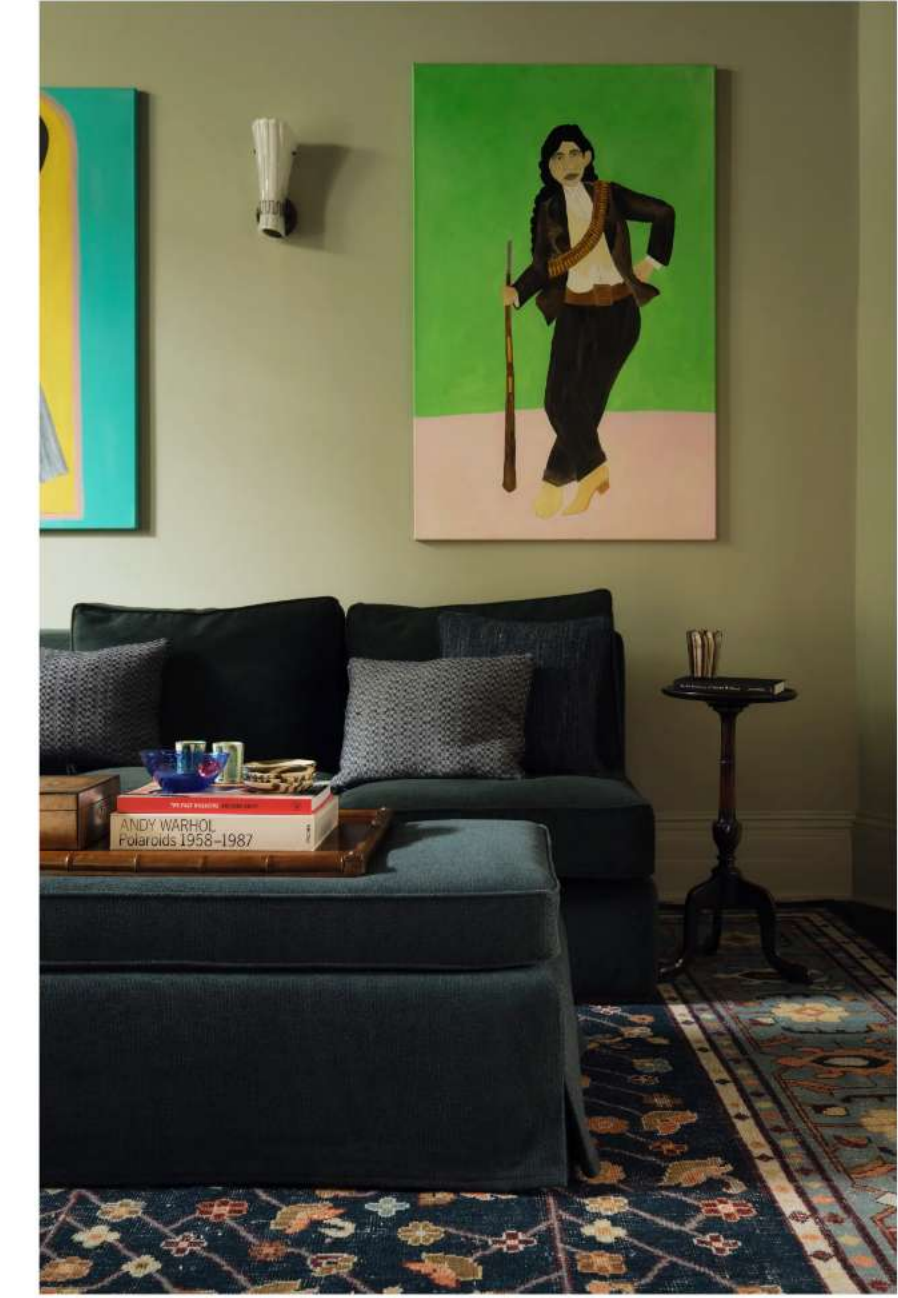


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To make the dining room feel more elevated, the studio commissioned two matching shelves to flank the fireplace, one for books and the other to serve as a bar with an unique mirrored interior that reflects daylight into the room (both were produced by Arcadia Antiques). The dark green corner sofa and upholstered ottoman are also custom pieces, the latter doubling as a coffee table. The warm yet wistful decor of the vintage home draws inspiration from English design traditions: "The family wanted the furniture to feel distinctly British, with a color palette appropriate for year-round London," says Gray. "We leaned towards rich textures and inviting shapes: plush upholstered pieces, such as the wingback chairs that recall 1960s silhouettes, evoke a relaxed yet personalized sensibility."



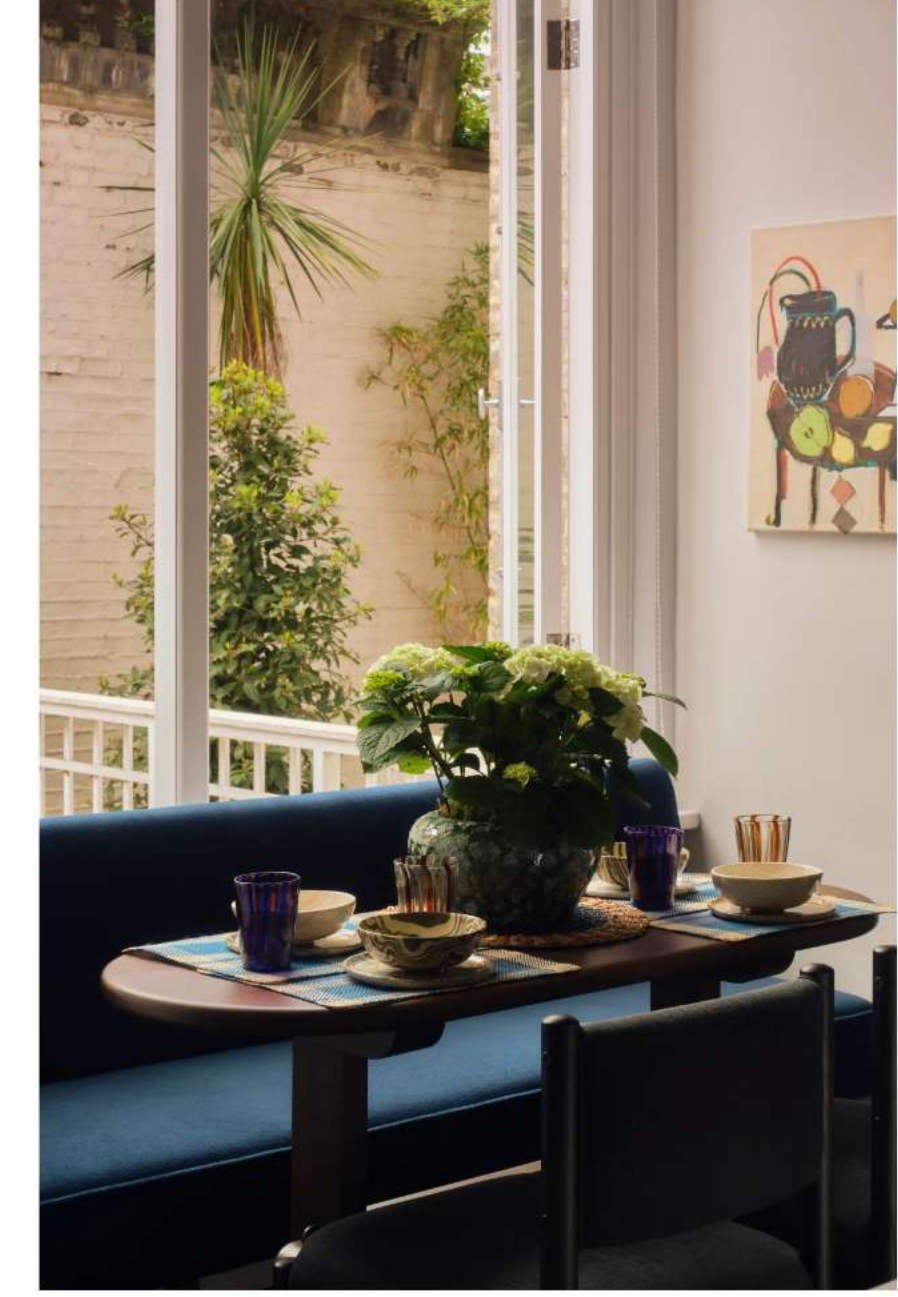
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The design was also inspired by the client's heritage. "The Middle Eastern style of reception—warm, generous, and focused on conviviality—motivated the way we planned the **furniture layout**, ensuring that each space invited conversation and connection," Gray reflects.

"The biggest challenge was ensuring we created enough functional spaces for the family. We achieved this by creating many cozy nooks to enjoy: we added a breakfast bar in the kitchen, for example, and treated the outdoor area as an additional room." The tranquil patio, which now features a custom-built Belgian blue stone and wrought iron dining table seating ten, is both an outdoor entertaining space and a refuge from the city, with high walls and lush plants.



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To give the vintage house character, the designers combined colors, patterns, and handcrafted elements. "We avoided overly perfect combinations. Instead, we aimed for a natural harmony, where the mix feels natural and inviting," says Ward. "Tina played a pivotal role in the project, setting the tone for the entire palette of fabrics and materials." While the bedrooms feature ivory and blue tones, the living room is painted in Little Greene's Tracery II green; all these choices aim for a timeless, English feel. Designs from Ward + Gray's **age collection** bring the rooms to life, along with vintage finds from Alfies Antiques Market and a spectacular custom-made Murano glass chandelier in the living room.



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Artwork is the finishing touch in vintage home decor. Ward + Gray collaborated with art consultant Anna Kirrage to create a collection of "exceptional English artists," including a trio of contemporary canvases by Kate Bevan above the sofa. "Anna has a wonderful eye and is adept at connecting the colors of each space with the art that should be integrated," says Gray. "We love creating something completely unique for each client—pieces that no one else will have." [@wardandgray](#)

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