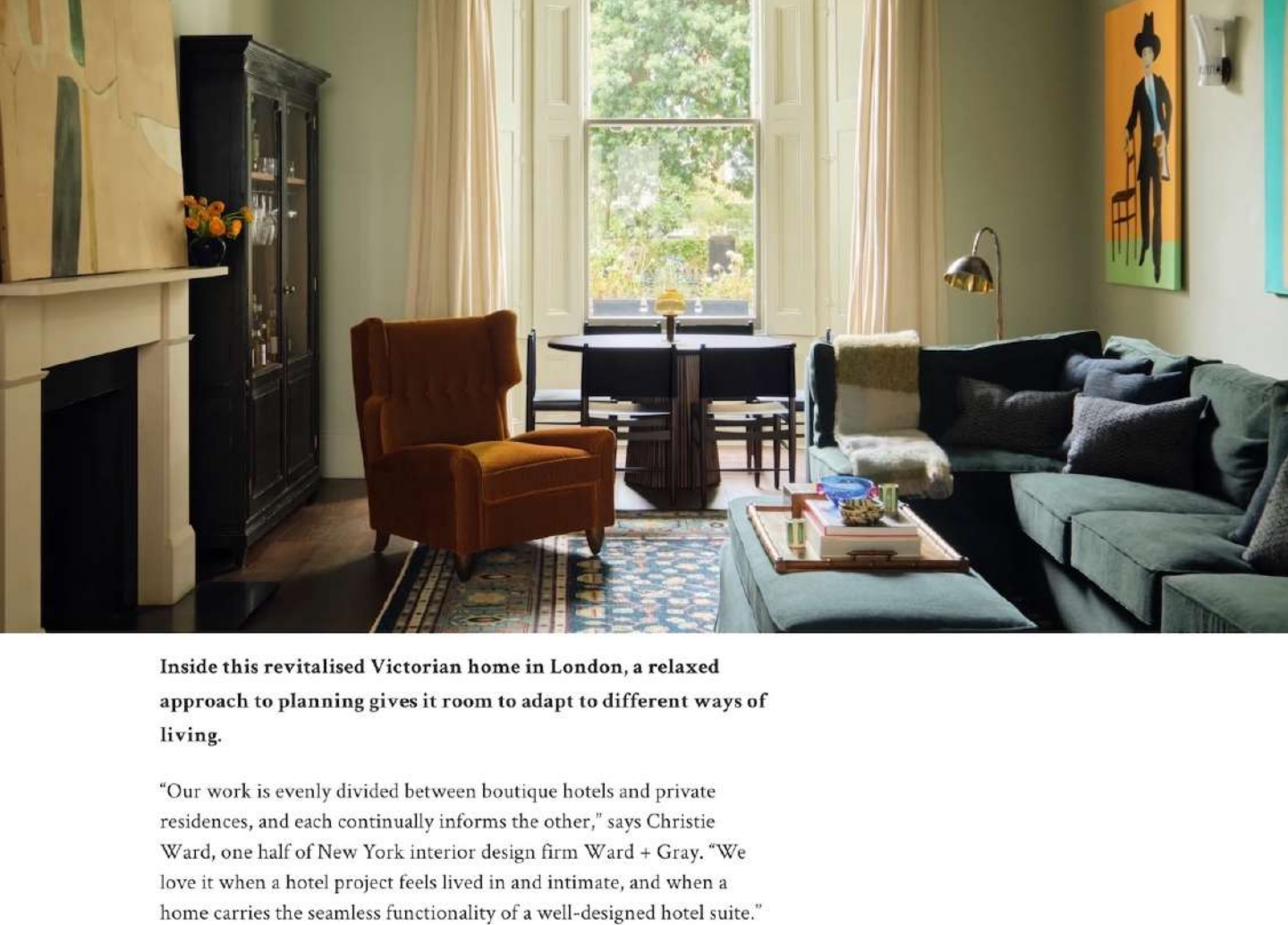


HOME TOURS

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 Bradford
Photography by Ollie Tomlinson
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Inside this revitalised Victorian home in London, a relaxed approach to planning gives it room to adapt to different ways of living.

"Our work is evenly divided between boutique hotels and private residences, and each continually informs the other," says Christie Ward, one half of New York interior design firm Ward + Gray. "We love it when a hotel project feels lived in and intimate, and when a home carries the seamless functionality of a well-designed hotel suite." This philosophy found its ideal expression in this three-bedroom Victorian home in South Kensington, whose modest proportions have acquired a new polish and versatility in the studio's hands. Designed for a Jordanian lawyer and his two student daughters, who travel frequently between London and their main home in Dubai, the property was imagined as a cosy pied-à-terre, both a private retreat and a space to welcome guests.



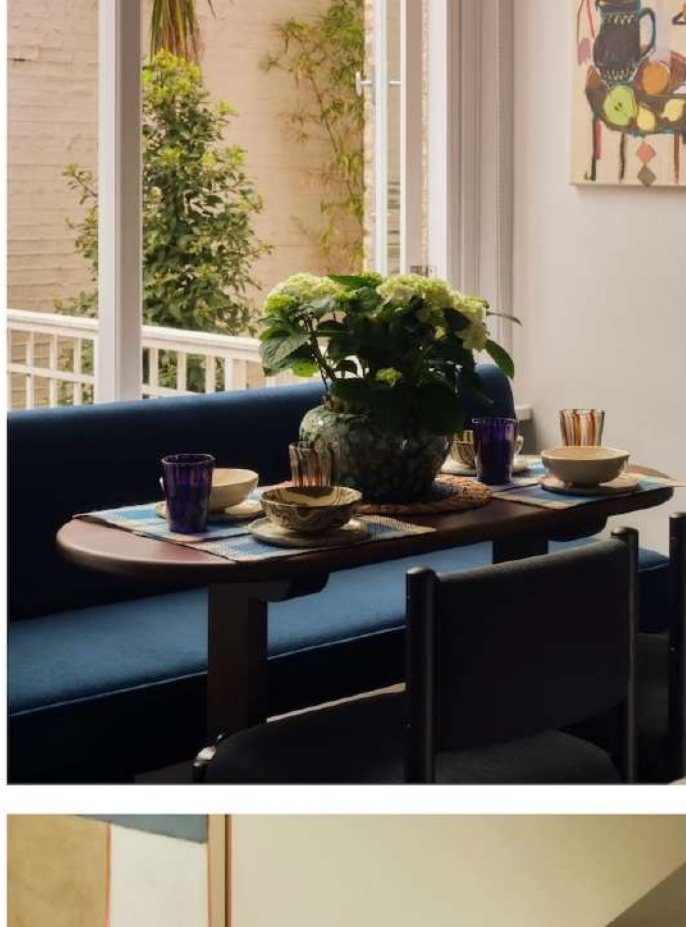
Though it boasted lofty proportions and original plaster mouldings, the Victorian [home](#) in its original state lacked a dedicated dining room, prompting the studio to focus on adaptability. "The scale of the living room allowed us to create a generous, open layout that's ideal for entertaining," Ward explains. She and her fellow designer Staver Gray installed a dining area directly in front of the expansive [bay window](#), with a dark timber table and chairs that, like much of the furniture, were custom made for maximum functionality. "We designed the dining pieces to feel a bit loose, as if they can also be pulled up to the living area and used as occasional chairs," says Ward. "The table was made a similar colour to the dark-stained wooden floor, so it doesn't stand out too much in the room."



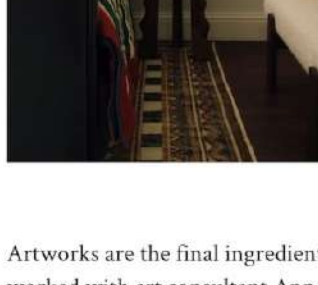
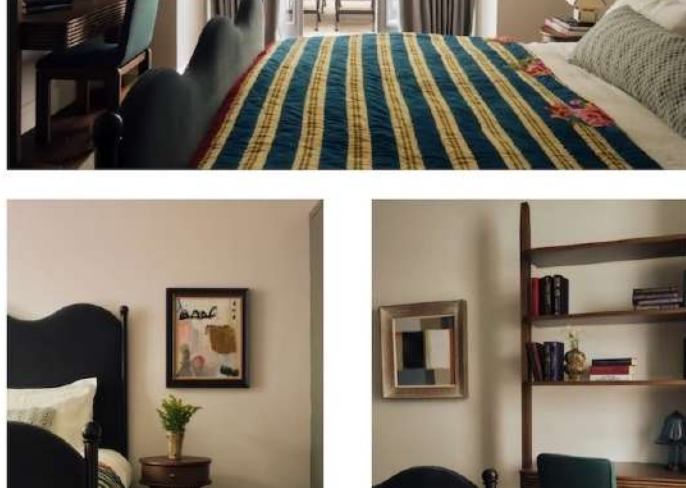
To make the dining area feel more elevated, the studio commissioned two matching shelving units to flank the [fireplace](#), one for books and the other to serve as a drinks bar, with an antique mirror interior that bounces daylight into the room (both were produced by Arcadia Antiques). The dark green corner sofa and upholstered ottoman are also custom pieces, the latter doing double duty as a coffee table. The home's warm yet moody decor draws on English design traditions. "The family wanted the furnishings to feel distinctly British, with a colour palette that's appropriate to [London](#) all year round," says Gray. "We leaned into rich textures and inviting forms: plush upholstered pieces, like the wingback chairs that echo 1960s silhouettes, evoke a relaxed yet tailored sensibility."



The design also took inspiration from the client's heritage. "The Middle Eastern approach to hosting – warm, generous and centred around togetherness – inspired the way we planned the furniture layouts, ensuring each room invites conversation and connection," Ward reflects. "The biggest challenge was to ensure we were creating enough functional spaces for the family. We achieved this by creating many nooks to enjoy: we added a breakfast nook in the kitchen, for example, and treated the outdoor area as an additional room." The tranquil [courtyard](#), which now features a bespoke dining suite in Belgian bluestone and wrought iron that seats up to ten people, is both an al fresco entertaining space and a sanctuary from the city, with high walls and lush planting.



To add character to the home, the designers layered colours, patterns, and hand-crafted elements. "We tend to shy away from anything too perfectly matched. Instead, we aim for an effortless harmony, where the mix feels natural and lived in," says Ward. "Paint played a defining role in the project, setting the tone for the entire fabric and material palette." While the bedrooms feature ivory and duck-egg blue tones, the living room is painted in Little Greene's Tracery II green hue – all choices that are intended to feel timelessly English. Designs from [Ward + Gray's](#) own rug collection bring life to the rooms, alongside vintage finds from Alfies Antique Market, and a dramatic glass chandelier in the living room, custom-made in Murano.



Artworks are the final ingredient in this dynamic mix. Ward + Gray worked with art consultant Anna Kirrage to curate a collection by "exceptional English artists," including a trio of contemporary canvases by Kate Boxer above the sofa. "Anna has a wonderful eye and is great at connecting the colours of each space with the art that should go into it," says Gray. "We love crafting something entirely unique for each client – pieces that nobody else will have." [@wardandgray](#)