

AMBITIOUS DESIGNS

Using insider tricks of the trade, interior designer Lindsey Miller has reconfigured her home to create a family space filled with vintage finds

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LIVING ROOM

To create a sense of unity in the open-plan space, engineered oak herringbone flooring from The Natural Wood Flooring Co was laid throughout. The vintage 1970s leather armchair and footstool came from Pamono



HOME PROFILE

WHO LIVES HERE

Lindsey Miller, 50, an interior designer and founder of Optic Interiors, her husband, Mick, 54, an accountant, their daughter, Josephine, six, and rescue dogs Bob and Mabel

THE PROPERTY

An extended Edwardian end-of-terrace in south-west London

PRICE £1.9M

MONEY SPENT £100,000

WHAT IT'S WORTH NOW £2m

LIVING ROOM

The bespoke retro-styled TV cabinet (above left) is made from reclaimed worktops. Above the fireplace hang artworks made by a friend. 'He painted the pages of a book with abstract designs and I had them framed,' says Lindsey

SNUG

(Opposite) Mick plays the piano, so this space is also used as a music room. The couple discovered the Royal System shelving unit by Poul Cadovius on Ebay, which they have teamed with a vintage Ercol coffee table and a leather Chesterfield sofa

It took a grand vision to transform this Edwardian end of terrace in south-west London into a contemporary family home.

Fortunately, interior designer Lindsey Miller had the vision and necessary skill set to take on the renovation project, seeing beyond the dirty carpets and crumbling walls. As Lindsey explains, 'It had been lived in by an elderly lady for many years and was in a state of total disrepair.'

However, the impressive proportions of the property shone through and most of its original features, such as the grand fireplaces, decorative plasterwork and wooden doors, had been retained. 'I knew we had to start again with the house, and rebuild it from the ground up,' says Lindsey. 'I'd tackled many projects like this for my business, but now it was time to turn my hand to my own home.'

Her plan was to reconfigure the layout to create generous bedrooms, including a roomy loft conversion, and an open-plan living space that would be ideal for family life.

Lindsey and Mick sold their previous home and moved into rented accommodation with their daughter and two dogs while building work began. 'We had the planning permission and an architect in place before we exchanged so that we could push on through with the renovation,' says Lindsey.

The first task for the builders was to take off the roof, so the attic bedroom could be installed. Then the back of the house was removed to make way for the ground-floor extension. 'We live in a conservation area, so there are tight restrictions,' explains Lindsey. 'We could develop the rear of the house in line with our neighbours' homes, but we were not allowed to structurally change the front. This meant we ended up with four rooms standing at the front – the rest of the property was completely rebuilt.'

It was such a massive project that, inevitably, there were some problems. During the extension work, the builders discovered the existing foundations at the rear of the property were so deep that, after days of drilling, they had to give up and call in a specialist, who used explosives to break them up. 'We also uncovered asbestos in the original extension that had to be removed by a specialist, which wasn't factored into the budget. Once you start digging away at an old house, you're never quite sure what you'll find,' Lindsey says.

The main priority for the couple was to reconfigure their home into a modern, functional space, while still being sympathetic to the history of the building, so all of the original features and fittings were salvaged and restored. 'As much as I love modern glass extensions, they wouldn't have worked with this home,' says Lindsey. 'I'm proud that what we have done blends seamlessly into the fabric of the building. It feels like the house has always been this way.' Even ▶

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KITCHEN

Wall tiles from Karak make a statement on the back wall. The units, which are painted black, came from local firm Thomas Davies Kitchens and have been teamed with brass handles from Ged Kennett. The concrete worktops are bespoke by Low Info and the glass pendants are from Rothschild & Bickers

DINING ROOM

The stripped pine table and retro metal chairs, which Lindsey had reupholstered in faux leather, were bought from Ebay. The antique light fittings came from the couple's old home. In one corner sits an antiques shop display cabinet (above right) discovered in a junk shop in Norfolk. 'The grandfather

clock was my husband's 40th birthday present,' says Lindsey. 'I found it in an antiques centre in Lewes in East Sussex'

PLAYROOM

In the bay sits a red Chesterfield bought on Ebay for just £120. A vibrant peacock rug from The Rug Company helps to create a fun space for Josephine ▶



‘I advise my clients to spend money on the “building blocks” of their home, to make sure they stand the test of time’

though the back of the house is open plan, the couple decided to keep the front rooms in their original form so there are quiet areas to retreat to. To give a cohesive feel, a mainly neutral palette was used on walls, with furniture and accessories adding colour. ‘I had great fun picking fabrics and textiles,’ says Lindsey, ‘choosing designs that I had fallen in love with over the years.’

When furnishing her home, Lindsey turned to her black book of contacts. ‘I picked out my favourite people to work with. I’m delighted with the result – the retro finds blend effortlessly with the designer pieces, such as the Hay sofa in the living room.’

She allocated a good proportion of the budget to buying quality flooring and fixtures. ‘I advise my clients to spend money on the ‘building blocks’ of their home, to make sure they stand the test of time. You can easily swap in a new sofa at a later date when you have a bit more money, but it’s not so easy to take up your flooring or retile your bathroom,’ she says.

Now the house is finished, Lindsey and Mick are taking a break from the renovations. ‘After months of building work, we’re catching our breath and learning how to use the property,’ she says. ‘On a build you make hundreds of decisions every day, which can be overwhelming. Now we just want to live in our home and enjoy the space.’

MAIN BEDROOM

This beautiful Italian brass bed frame was originally two separate single beds that were fused together to create a super-king. Above the bed hangs artwork by Rachael Flead from Edgar Modern gallery. The dressing table is by Julian Chichester

BATHROOM

Taking inspiration from Morocco, the room has been decorated from floor to ceiling with tiles from Mosaic Del Sur. To add character, Lindsey bought the taps and showerhead from Allies Antique Market in London. The mirrored cabinet was imported from the US

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