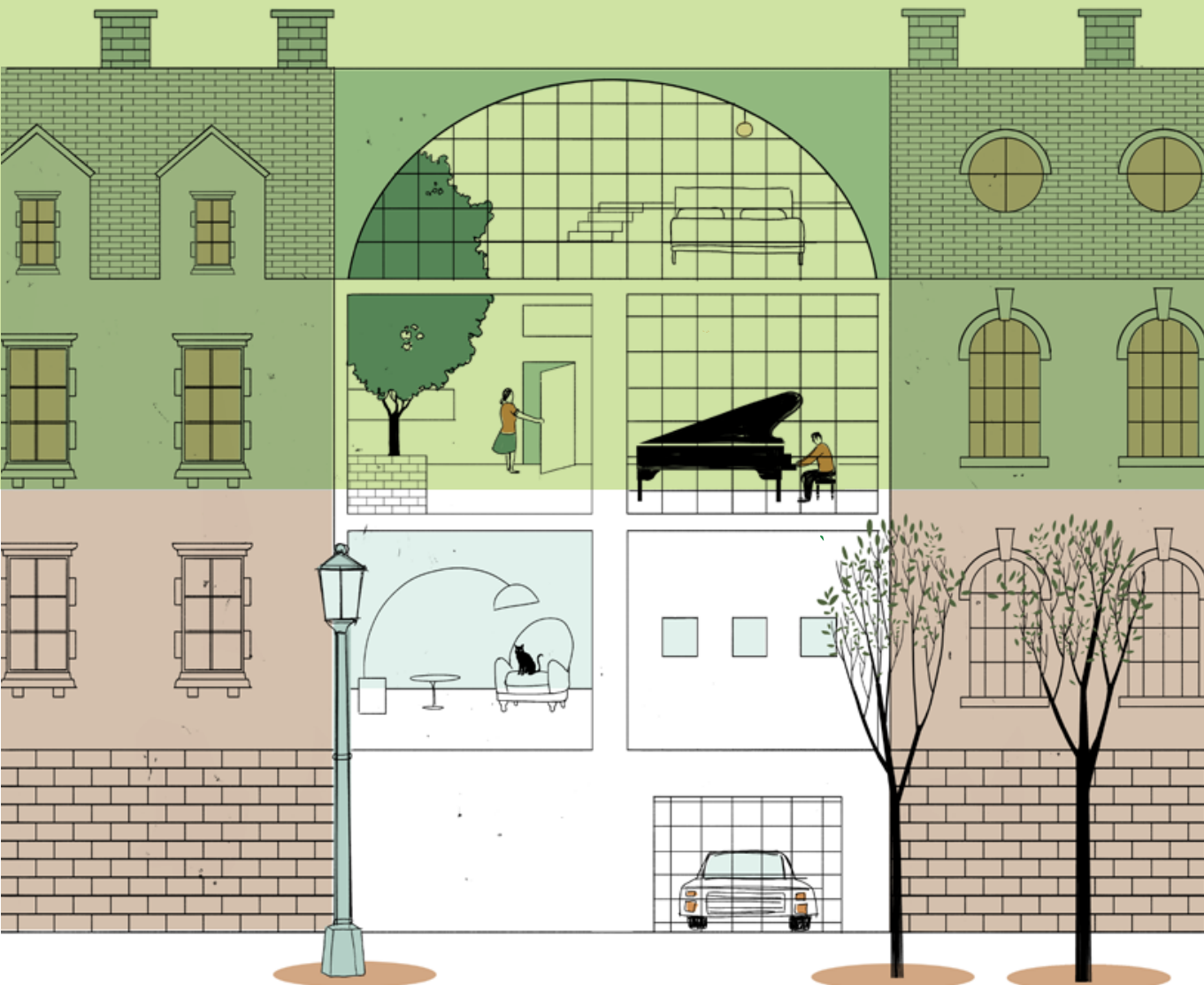


# GUESTBOOK

A JOURNAL ABOUT LIVING BEAUTIFULLY – AND SHARING IT

3



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A JOURNAL ABOUT LIVING BEAUTIFULLY – AND SHARING IT

3



onefinestay

## Welcome

onefinestay has been redefining city travel since 2010. Our guests live like locals by staying in distinctive homes while their owners are out of town, enjoying a service which offers all the convenience and comfort of a hotel. Our hosts benefit financially from their house or apartment which would otherwise stand empty, without having to lift a finger. We look after an exclusive, multi-billion pound portfolio of over a thousand remarkable homes across major cities including London and New York.

Guestbook issue 03

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The question I put to our contributors this month is, what makes you feel you're home? My own answer would immediately be, knowing where everything is. Not that everything has to be perfectly tidied away and there's no room for change – but there's that feeling when you find the perfect spot to hang a painting, or finalise the place where the scissors live in the kitchen. That to me is when you're home.

By issue 3 of *Guestbook*, I feel comfortably moved in. The limelight is still very much on our hosts and their beautiful lives. This issue sees us soak up the rays on a vast, vibrant terrace in Chelsea, NYC with a renowned film-maker; talk family life in Sunset Park, Brooklyn; and discuss the merits of open-plan living with an architect in Ladbroke Grove, London. The conversation continues with an afternoon at the magical Geffrye Museum, East London, where Guestbook hosted its own real-life Salon, with four leading interiors experts discussing what makes a home, and is it something you can take with you?

Back by popular demand are the Local Heroes, this time as nominated by our New York hosts, and Pantry Time, where food writer Tom Moggach spends a leisurely afternoon dinner-party plotting in Marylebone. The Neighbourhood Battle, part of the furniture since Issue 1, welcomes the curious and opinionated city-guide publisher Herb Lester as guest editor.

That said, too comfortable isn't always a good thing... and there's nothing like children to shatter a tranquil, well-ordered environment. This issue sees our first-ever supplement aimed at onefinestay's smaller guests. The Playroom features a kids' explorer's quiz, a bedtime story, a dot-to-dot and welcomes back Issue 1's much-loved Onslow the cat. 

ALEX BAGNER  
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New York-based photographer **ANNABEL MEHRAN** is the editor-at-large of *Purple* magazine. Her work has been featured in a variety of magazines including *The New York Times Magazine*, *Vice*, *Harpers Bazaar* and *ArtReview*.

*‘All the artwork that my friends have made, my shelf that holds every hand-written note I’ve gotten, and enough cutlery to have an intimate but bustling dinner party.’*

**STEVEN BRAHMS** is a photographer, artist and director originally from Madison, Wisconsin. Having started his career at *Bloomberg News*, Steven now produces work for clients including *M&C Saatchi*, *ArtReview*, *Wallpaper\**, *TIME*, *Spin*, and *S Magazine*.

*‘I know I’m home when our little dog Monster is staring right back at me wanting to play... all day. It’s the game that never ends.’*

**SHOUT** (aka Italian-born illustrator Alessandro Gottardo) has received worldwide recognition for his work, winning gold medals from both the Society of Illustrators and The Society of Publication Designers. His clients include the *New Yorker*, *TIME*, *Le Monde* and the *Financial Times*.

*‘My living room, the moment I sit on the sofa and just a second before I switch on the TV or the radio. I really like those seconds of silence and relaxation before my daily dose of “noise”.’*

Entertaining, craft and decorating specialist, **LAURA FENTON** is a contributing editor at *Kinfolk* magazine and has written for publications and sites such as *Country Living* and *ElleDecor.com*. Her commercial clients include: Kiehl’s, Ralph Lauren and New York Road Runners.

*‘When it has a place to share a meal with loved ones. My husband and I just bought a house, and a table and chairs were the very first pieces of furniture we moved into the space – we were cooking dinner*

*for friends before we even had a bed!’*  
**DR LUCY WORSLEY** is the chief curator of Historic Royal Palaces, a charity that looks after the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace, Kensington Palace, the Banqueting House in Whitehall and Kew Palace in Kew Gardens. She is best known for her BBC Four series *If Walls Could Talk: The History of the Home*. *‘Where I can drink limitless tea (I am a tea drain) made exactly how I like it in my own weird way: decaf Earl Grey and guava nectar.’*

**MARIANNE LEVY** is the author of three children’s books about a little film star called *Ellie May*. She’s written for *How To Spend It*, the *British Film Institute* and the *Independent on Sunday*. *‘My husband.’*

**TOM MOGGACH** is a food writer and the author of *The Urban Kitchen Gardener*. Formerly the food editor of *The London Paper*, his credits include *The Guardian*, *The Food Programme* (Radio 4), *The Daily Telegraph* and the *Financial Times*. *‘My cookbooks, vast bed and the sound of chickens scratching away in the back garden’.*

**HERB LESTER ASSOCIATES** make beautiful maps – guides to the usual and the unusual. Brilliantly illustrated and beautifully printed, the maps are selective, showing us new ways to look at our great cities, and the best places to find there. *‘The knowledge that I can stop worrying and taking notes – something every Herb Lester trip involves a great deal of.’*

**RIYA PATEL** splits her time between London and Amsterdam where she edits *Frame* magazine. Riya has written on design and architecture for *Icon* magazine, the *Architects’ Journal* and the *Architectural Review*. *‘The smell of something delicious coming from the kitchen.’*

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*The Salon*

# KATE HIRSON

## WEST 18TH STREET 2, CHELSEA, NEW YORK



words CARRIE BUCKLE  
photography ANNABEL MEHRAN

Tucked away in the bathroom of Kate Hirson's Chelsea apartment is an old portrait of a cowboy, puffing on a cigarette with his pistol drawn. Every time Kate catches sight of the artwork, which used to hang in her father's office, it transports her back to her childhood. Her father was best-selling Western author Luke Short (real name Frederick Glidden), who penned 51 novels. 'The painting was the cover of one of his books,' says willowy redhead Kate, who grew up in Pojoaque Pueblo, New Mexico, and moved to Aspen, Colorado when she was six. 'He started writing the books to make money during the Depression and they sold, so he kept doing it.'

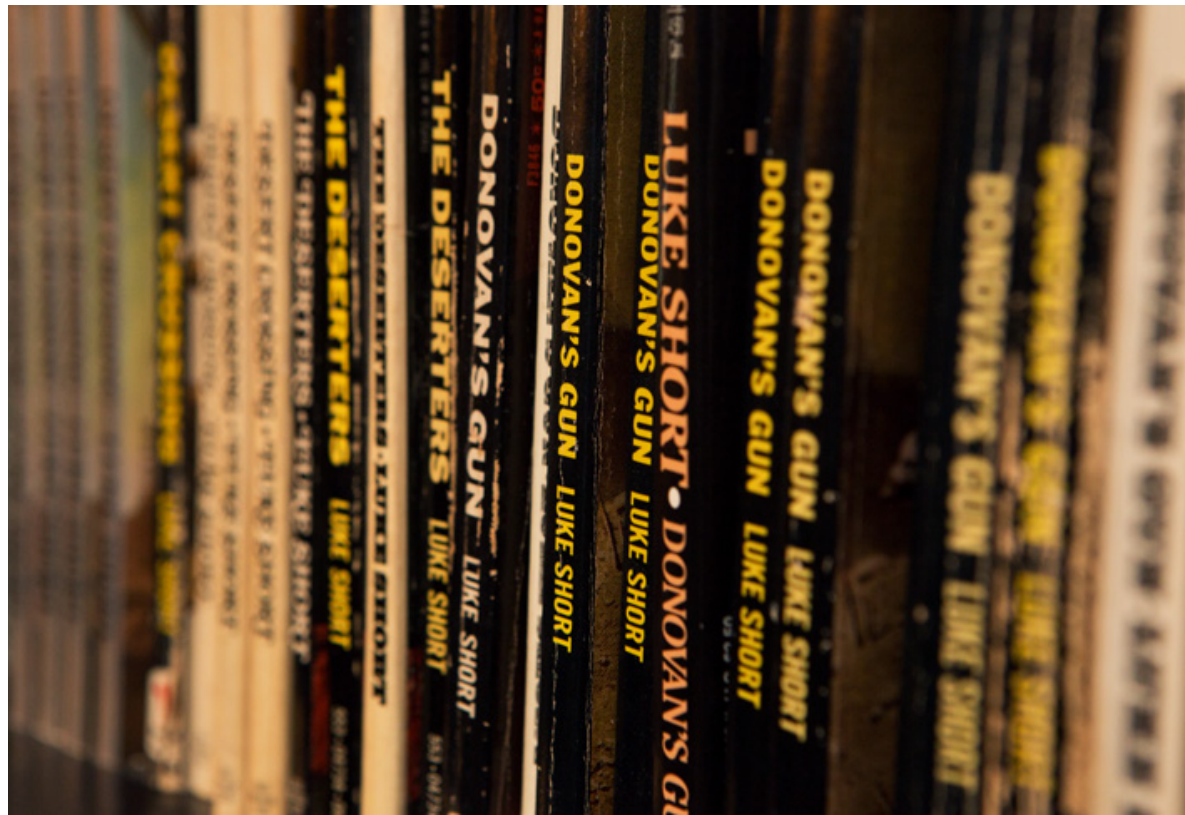
After climbing the stairs to Kate's two-bedroom hideaway, you find a tranquil space of Old West meets contemporary New York, with wood aplenty and white exposed brick walls. It's a scorching day outside and Kate hands me a chilled rhubarb juice with mint, ginger and a dash of lime. 'I just got back from a week in Vermont,' smiles the Emmy award-winning film editor and recently turned chef, dressed in a monochrome hand-dyed shirt, black jeans and neon-green trainers. 'I brought the rhubarb back with me.'

Perched on a stool in the slate counter-topped kitchen overlooking a never-ending lush terrace, it's hard to believe that when Kate bought the building in 1974, it was abandoned. 'Nobody wanted to live in Chelsea,' shrugs 72-year-old Kate. 'We bought it for \$60,000 but it was falling down.' She and her husband, who have a son Michael, now 36 and an economist, were renting a Wall Street loft but wanted more space. 'We didn't have much money, so we sort of lived here like squatters in our own home for the first couple of years,' she says, describing how they made it livable by installing water and power. Once rental income from the ground floor came in during the 1980s, their first priority was to 'put a door on the bathroom', she laughs. 'And stop the leaks.'

The apartment has been a journey of ingenuity for Kate, from a coffee table salvaged from the street to a sofa upholstered with vibrant rugs. Yet the core of her aesthetic is formed by the treasures from her parents' New Mexico days in the 1930s – after a two-week romance, they married and settled in Pojoaque. Keepsakes from their Spanish home include two carved wooden chests in Kate's living room and a blue glass mirror. 'I remember that as a child,' she







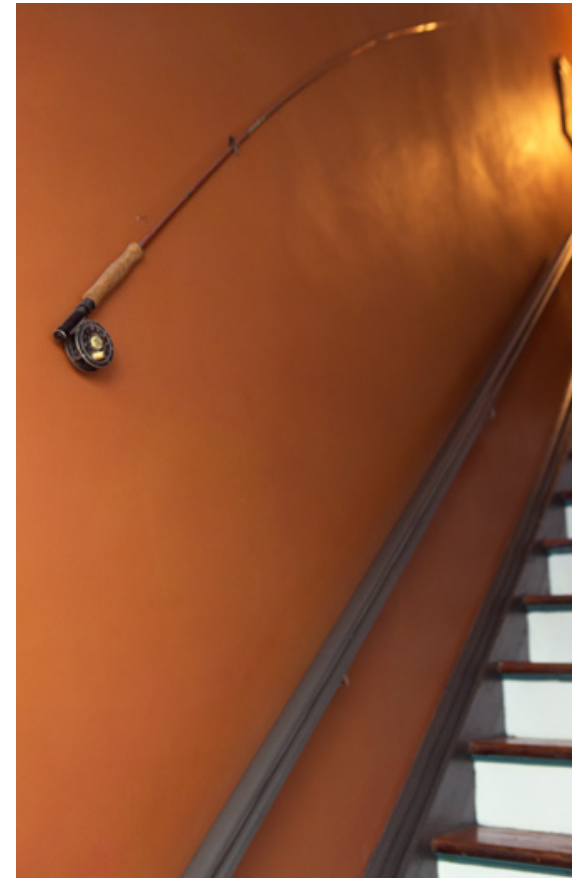
says fondly. There is also Mexican folk art dotted around, such as miniature paintings. ‘They are common in Mexico, but it’s increasingly hard to find these old ones.’

When the family moved to a Victorian house in Aspen in the late 1940s (Kate’s mother Florence was from Colorado), it offered a new reference. ‘It was a really small town, full of ranchers, old miners and skiers,’ says Kate, who was influenced by her mother’s culinary zeal during this time. ‘She was a wonderful cook and used to make a great steak and kidney pie, which was unusual for an American. It was her dinner party dish.’ Kate also loves entertaining, a highlight being her annual Thanksgiving cook-off with classic, barbecued and deep-fried turkeys. ‘We cook on the terrace, which is fun,’ she says. As well as inheriting her mother’s cooking flair, there is a mutual penchant for pottery, which is evident in Kate’s kitchen. She grabs a Quimper plate, made in Brittany. ‘This is what my mother collected. As I get older, I’m getting more and

more like my mother,’ smiles Kate, who collects pieces by Japanese-trained Mexican designer Gorky Gonzalez.

Sitting alongside the Old West romanticism is the New York world that Kate discovered when she arrived in the city after university, aged 22. ‘For being a not very sophisticated country girl, I was very lucky’, she laughs. ‘But I knew the lifestyle I wanted.’ As a film editor, she worked on documentaries about many artists, from Chuck Close to Laurie Anderson, and there are nods to this in the apartment. In the living room, a Christo artwork of Times Square hangs on the wall (‘I worked for the Maysles brothers and did a documentary about him’) and there is a rare photo of a nude Lee Miller. But the artworks that have the biggest resonance for Kate are in her bedroom. ‘This is my favourite art. I like to keep it here,’ she says, pointing to two paintings of cherries given by artist Alfred Leslie.

Kate is modest about her own achievements, her films featuring the likes of Clint Eastwood ➤











(her personal highlight), Oprah Winfrey and Judy Garland, for the latter she won an Emmy in 2004. 'I'm most proud of the way it respects her extraordinary talent rather than seeing her as a tragic victim,' she says, of the documentary about Garland. One of her more recent projects is *Garbage Dreams* about the lives of rubbish collectors in Egypt 'You spend a long time looking at footage, but to go through 500 hours and find 75 minutes which make the story, that feels great,' she reflects on her career.

The only place we have yet to explore is the sun-drenched terrace, so we venture out into the heat. 'I'm lucky to have this space, so my house has always been a venue for all my friends' celebrations,' she says, weaving her way through the hydrangeas. 'I know how to cook, I have 80 wine glasses in my basement; I'm ready for it!'. The scent of mint wafts from the herb garden and Kate confirms that one or two mojitos have been sipped under the stars. There is also rosemary, lavender, basil and rose geranium. 'I like to make an olive oil cake and I line the pan with the rose geranium leaves, so the cake is subtly scented,' she explains.

We pause under a parasol decorated with fairy lights. 'It's magical at night', says Kate,

gazing at the Walker Tower opposite, which is considered the city's first Art Deco skyscraper and has been renovated into luxury condos. 'Everything else disappears and it looks like Superman is going to climb up the building,' she smiles. 'Tom Brady and Gisele Bündchen are moving in there. If we went back in time and I was told that, I would have said, "No way"', she chuckles.

What is her next chapter? 'I might have an underground restaurant where people dine at your house every couple of weeks,' says Kate. 'It's a way of challenging your cooking skills.' In the meantime, it's back to Kate's roots in Aspen for the summer. 'I'm very imprinted by the landscape of my childhood and I think it stays with you,' she says, running her fingers along yellow birch leaves, made from paper, which are from Colorado. 'I go back every year to remember the landscape.' How would she describe it to someone who has never visited? 'Aspen is about the mountains that surround you,' she muses. 'There is a very high, hard-to-hike mountain passage that I love and it's just beautiful.' ☞



# DWELLING ON THE PAST

From walkable communities to composting loos, Dr Lucy Worsley argues that the best way to create the home of the future is to look back in time



words LUCY WORSLEY

I have spent my career as a curator working in some of Britain's grandest historic homes, including Hampton Court and Kensington Palace. So people are often surprised to learn that I live in a straightforward modern flat, built in 1998, with just one bedroom and a kitchen in the corner of my sitting room. I've grown to prefer a low-maintenance and low-key living space, having had my fill at work of crumbling historic fabric and fragile precious art in great country houses like the Jacobean Audley End, or the Elizabethan Hardwick Hall.

A few years ago, I began to wonder about the history that lies behind even the most ordinary home, like my own. It turned into a research project for me, and, as it unfolded, I discovered that the history of everyman's house is just as fascinating as that of the magnificent mansions of the great.

The history of ordinary people's homes presents a difficulty to historians used to dealing with documents. Who bothers to write down the detail of their everyday routine in their diary or correspondence? Very few people, because describing how you do the washing up or what kind of underwear you prefer, are things hardly worth mentioning. And the further you go back, the harder it gets: once you set aside aristocrats and scholars, most of the people, for most of history, couldn't even write. So we need to turn to real objects from the past, like kitchen utensils or furniture, to understand the history of everyday life.

Even seemingly trivial things like spoons or the positioning of a door knob matter to historians. If you record, and then add up, all the little changes in how people think about and look after their homes and their bodies, then you can chart great, over-arching revolutionary changes in society, culture, hygiene, and the definition of gender.

*'Today's homes are warmer, more comfortable and easier to clean than ever before. But I believe that the next step in their evolutionary journey will be a strangely backward-seeming one'*

As I dug deeper into the history of the home, I discovered some surprising differences from today. Bedrooms in the past were rather crowded, semi-public places, also used for dining, leisure and work, and only in the 19th century did they become reserved purely for sleep and sex. The bathroom didn't even exist as a separate room until late into the Victorian age, and it astonished me that it was people's attitudes towards personal hygiene, rather than technological innovation, that determined the pace of its development. The Elizabethans had flushing toilets, but they didn't catch on: it was cheap to use human labour to empty your chamber pot, and the link between dirty water and disease was not yet fully understood. The living room only emerged once people had the leisure time and spare money to spend in and on it (most medieval people had neither) – I've learned to think of it as a sort of stage set where homeowners acted out an idealised version of their lives for the benefit of guests.

But what struck me most strongly from my research was the way in which I myself – even living in a central London flat – have a lifestyle with some similarities to the distant past. The medieval peasant lived in a one-room cottage, with a hearthstone (its Latin name is *focus*) right at its heart. He and his family used that single space for eating, sleeping and leisure, gathered round their open fire. In my open-plan flat, the cooking hob takes a central position. I'm often to be found at it cooking vegetables from which I have scrubbed the mud. Like a medieval peasant, I like to cook from scratch and to walk home my food fresh from the farmer's market. Occasionally a visiting friend is to be found bedded down on my sofa, as I don't have a guest bedroom, and so too the medieval cottage would have been full of bodies sleeping wherever they could find space. Meanwhile, I make my bed by tossing the duvet back onto the mattress, just as a medieval person would have thrown a cloak onto a sack stuffed with straw or hay (literally 'hitting the hay') as his or her way of preparing for bed.

Not for us the complicated Victorian ritual of sheets and blankets and innumerable bolsters. My way of life (albeit made possible by a huge amount of labour-saving technology) is far distant from the 19th-century middle-class ideal of a large house with numerous rooms of specialised function, with teams of servants to look after possessions and to service elaborate social ceremonies.

These echoes of medieval life that I experience in my own lifestyle also seem to be relevant to the design of the homes of the future, and I'm often asked what the houses of the past have to tell us about the lives we will live in years to come. Today's homes are warmer, more comfortable and easier to clean than ever before. But I believe that the next step in their evolutionary journey will be a strangely backward-seeming one. In a world where oil supplies are running out, we have a lot to re-learn from the low-tech, pre-industrial past.

In Britain today, the Lifetime Homes legislation governing the design of new houses is curiously medieval in tone. It insists, as was once universally the case, that rooms should be able to multi-task. The living room must have space for a bed in case its owner becomes incapacitated in later life and can't climb upstairs. Many rooms of the house today – even the bathroom – double as an office. Adaptability is returning to prominence.



When the oil runs out, I think we'll also see a return of the chimney. The only truly sustainable sources of energy are the wind (hard to harness in urban areas), the sun and wood. Forests, if carefully cherished, could provide us with fuel forever. Bio-mass, or wood-burning, stoves are already making a return, and will grow increasingly popular as sources of domestic heat. The sun is also becoming more important in house design. Once upon a time, people selected sites with good 'air'; now well thought-out houses are situated to minimise solar gain in summer, and to maximise it in winter. Most houses will need to face south, to accommodate heat-buffering conservatories and solar panels on sloping roofs, a change that will destroy our now-conventional street arrangements.

Upon the medieval model, walls in well-designed new houses are getting thicker, for insulation, to keep warmth in, and, increasingly importantly, to keep out the heat in a warming world. Windows will grow smaller once again, and houses will contain much less glass: not only because of the intrinsically high energy cost of the glass itself, but because it's such a thermally inefficient material. Living as I do in a tall glass tower, I've learned to agree with Francis Bacon, who condemned the great glass-filled palaces of his own Jacobean age, when the rich showed off their wealth by building enormous windows. In a house 'full of Glass', he wrote, 'one cannot tell where to become to be out of the Sun or Cold'.

Along with a hotter climate, we'll also experience water shortages. Many homes have been put on meters already, but the daily water consumption per person still runs in Britain today at an average of 160 litres. The government expects us to get down to 80 litres – the contents of just one deep bath – by the end of this decade, that amount to include toilet flushing, cooking and cleaning as well as washing the body. The simple earth or midden toilet has already been revived in the form of the ecologically sound composting loo. The re-use of 'grey-water' (slightly dirty water) for jobs like flushing toilets will become standard, and water will become a much more valuable resource – we'll be growing as water-thrifty as the Victorians were with their average use of 20 litres a day.

There has already been a revival in the natural building materials of the past, breathable substances with low environmental footprints, like wood, wool insulation and lime mortar. In the last ten years, timber-framed houses have once again started to sprout up across Britain. We'll likewise become more medieval in re-using, adapting, and making additions to our houses. In an island short of space, it's been calculated that we need to build 200,000 new homes each year to cope with population increase and family breakdown, and that's not even taking possible net immigration into account. According to charity the Empty Homes Agency, there are currently 700,000 homes standing unused. One obvious course of action is to bring them up-to-date and get them back into occupation, just as people did when resources were scarcer. Buildings today are seen as almost disposable and are not built to last. In the future much more importance will rightly be attached to the materials and embodied energy invested in them.


*'Every generation has believed that its children will witness the end of the world. It's comforting to think that the world has not yet ended, and that the pleasures of home life are perennial'*

Inside these new – or old – homes, more time and effort will be spent on getting and keeping clean. When antibiotics finally become ineffective, as seems likely in the next few decades, minor and indeed major illnesses could once again become things to be tolerated rather than avoided, and we won't be able to rely upon detergents to destroy dirt. Elbow grease will be more highly valued, the skills of growing and preparing food will have to be re-learned, and old-fashioned housewifery will return to prominence. The Victorian cook was a terrific recycler and wasted nothing.

Today's builders and town-planners are also interested in the notion that people don't just inhabit houses, they live in 'places'. Tudor towns were pretty perfect examples of what planners seek: densely populated, walkable communities, in which rich and poor live in close proximity.

Many argue that the 20th century's council estates have had disastrous social consequences. People in poverty feel even poorer if forced to live in a sink estate, while the middle classes flee to their own leafy ghettos outside city centres. A successful 'place' mixes up the different groups in society, forcing them to mingle and to look out for each other. In this sense, a great mansion like Hardwick Hall of the 1590s was successful social housing: in it, its chatelaine Bess of Hardwick, Countess of Shrewsbury, lived within metres of the dozens of people under her care. It was a life of huge inequality, but people were part of a common endeavour.

Today we live lives of vastly varying levels of luxury without really being aware of the alternative experiences of those above and below us in terms of wealth. We've spent too long inside our own snug homes, looking smugly out through the window at the world. There's a sense in which children are now prisoners of the home, kept indoors by distrustful parents. We don't know enough about our neighbours, and the dwindling of the natural resources which have fuelled our way of life since the 18th century will force us to change and to share more fairly both the work and the reward.

But change need not be a frightening thing. Throughout the whole of history, let me remind you, people have thought their own age to be wildly novel, deeply violent, and fast sinking into the utmost depravity. Every generation has believed that its children will witness the end of the world. It's comforting to think that the world has not yet ended, and that the pleasures of home life are perennial. 'To be happy at home', as Dr Johnson said 300 years ago, 'is the ultimate result of all ambition.' 

*Lucy Worsley is a historian and chief curator at Historic Royal Palaces. She has also presented several TV programmes on BBC4 and BBC2, and published several books, including her most recent If Walls Could Talk, an Intimate History of the Home published by Faber & Faber (UK) and Walker Books (US).*

IN CONVERSATION WITH



# MICHAEL WORTHINGTON

DROOP STREET, LADBROKE GROVE, LONDON



words NICK COMPTON  
photography ATLANTA RASCHER







It should come as no surprise that architects often do some of their best work for themselves or their families. It is with these personal projects that they are free of a client's counter-vision or a developer's commerce-driven rules that stifle innovation.

Michael Worthington, a Ladbroke Grove-based architect, got to commission himself when he bought a house on Droop Street six years ago. And given that he had been renting an almost identical house round the corner, he sprang into action instantly. 'I didn't need to live in it, to see what it is like and how it worked,' he says. 'I knew what I wanted to do. I moved in on a Monday and ripped out the top floor on the Tuesday.'

As Michael says, many would have decided to open up the first floor of the two-storey house. But he took the walls and ceiling off two upstairs bedrooms, and to dramatic effect. The room, now a light-filled kitchen and the clear central hub of the house, has 16ft high ceilings and a branching chimney structure which leaves an arrow-shaped central alcove.

A skylight has been carefully placed to echo a window and Michael has pulled the apertures together with a single block of paint, a device he has used around the room. 'Normally, you paint a room one colour or a wall one colour but I just wanted to play with the rules. You don't have to stop at the edges when you paint a window. The sky light is the same size and shape as the windows so when you tie them together with that big stripe it feels like one big window frame.'

But this is not some pristine, minimalist exploration of light, colour and space. Michael has had fun here. While we talk, his two-and-¾-year-old daughter Constance knocks out 'Incy Wincy Spider' on the room's Roland electric piano and dangles on a swing hanging from the ceiling, which I presume was added for her sake. 'Oh no, the room was finished before Constance was born. I just couldn't resist. When you have a ceiling that's 16ft high in the middle, it just seems a missed opportunity not to put it in.'

This is a room of varied distractions. In one corner stands a large and extravagant looking grandfather clock. 'It came from the house of







my grand parents,' Michael explains. 'It has phases of the moon on it and it took me ages to figure out if it was working or not, whether the moon phases were just decorative. Obviously it takes months to go round and so every time I looked at it, I couldn't remember what it had been like before.'

Next to the clock is a large oil painting of two vividly colourful women dancing, both naked from the waist up. 'It's copy of a painting by a German artist called Emil Nolde,' Michael explains. 'I always liked his work and when I was in my twenties, my grandmother gave me £300 as a present and told me to go and do something nice with it. So I made a frame with a canvas and gave it to an artist friend of mine to do the painting. It's an astonishingly accurate copy.' Michael doesn't say what his grandmother thought of it.

On the opposite wall is a map of Sri Lanka and a quote from *Moby Dick*, a reminder of a whale watching trip. And this sort of playful appropriation and story-telling is everywhere in the house. The wall of the entrance hall has the Thames meandering along it. 'It's just an

Ordinance Survey map of the river. I tore it out so you get this feathered edge and then I just put it on like wallpaper.' Constance's walls meanwhile are decorated with a set of Matisse prints. 'It was just an attempt to make it really jolly without making it saccharine.'

This 'wrong things in the right place' idea runs to more structural elements of the house too. The handrail on the stairs is a sturdy builders' ladder while the kitchen surfaces are from old school science labs (secured from local architectural salvage supplier Retrouvius). Everywhere there are tales of the unexpected. The bookshelves in one of the bedrooms ignore standard procedure. 'You have a fire place so you put book shelves either side. That's what you normally do. And I thought, well what happens if you put them straight across the front? What you get is this nice variety of depths – shallow ones for display and deeper ones for storage.'

From the snug TV room to the public-spirited bathroom, this is a houseful of ideas; what you get when a architect can do fun and clever things because there's no one there to tell him not to. 6



# ROOM TO ROAM

Riya Patel, Editor of *Frame* magazine, recently moved from London to Amsterdam. On a recent visit back to the UK, she gathered together three leading creatives who make homes for a living – an architect, an interior designer and a furniture retailer – and asked them what makes a home, and is it something you can take with you?



interview RIYA PATEL  
photography JASON EVANS

On a hot afternoon in July, I notice a fly has followed me into the Geffrye Museum. It hovers over the Arts and Crafts fireplace, darts past a 1960s settee and settles briefly in the loft-style apartment from 1998. The museum presents the history of the English home as a series of stage sets that capture an era's style and attitude. But as the fly takes off from its spot, I wonder what its next destination should be – what is the next chapter for us and our homes? With more people living between two or more places, for reasons of work, family or pleasure, has the notion of one fixed home become outdated? And what do we stand to lose by leaving it behind? Assembled at the museum are architect JOE MORRIS, interior designer VINCENT CULLANE and founder of furniture retailer SCP SHERIDAN COAKLEY.

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| RP | As much as the Geffrye Museum tells us about home life through the ages, the rooms also make excellent reflections of the societies outside them. What do you think our homes say about our lives now? Do we have a more temporary attitude to living than perhaps we did before? |
| VC | I think we have started to change. Where we consider home to be is where we are a lot of the time, it's not so much where you came from. I've been in London for 15 years but I was born in Ireland and I consider both as home.  |
| JM | The difference is the term house and home isn't it? A house is an object and a home is a sense of something. Something familiar, an essence.  |
| VC | I think it's two things. You call home something you love and you've got adoration for. Coming back to somewhere you like is a lot easier than somewhere you're just staying.   |
| SC | But you can now take it with you. When you used to go away, making a phonecall was difficult, costly. Now it's not an issue. To be honest,  |





VC I feel quite at home in a hotel by just having my electronic stuff with me, my communication stuff.

VC That's absolutely true. I went to New Zealand and spent two months driving around in a camper van on my own. Having technology that allowed me to be connected with my friends and family made it much easier. Even though I'm in the middle of nowhere I might still feel quite at home.

RP A lot of people feel their homes express something about themselves. The location, the architecture, the objects we fill them with...

JM Well we have built our own house in Peckham and I would say we have a specific outlook on life that is very much evident in our house. I wouldn't say it's a stage set but certainly everything's crafted in a way that makes it a home. And there's a smell. Effectively it's a brick box, a concrete floor and timber, but the whole thing has this beautiful smell of architecture, rather than say, wallpaper.

RP And what about creating the feeling of home for other people?

VC To create a home for somebody I need to know who they are, what they think and what they do. I've sat with someone for maybe 25 sessions, an hour and a half each time. That's a long time. Then from that you can really create something for them.

RP What's your technique?

VC Asking the right questions and doing it in their space. Over enough time you drop any barriers you might have and the communication starts to really relax.

JM I think the opposite can work. If you're building something from scratch, it can be better to discuss things in a neutral space. A client already knows how their own space works, and that it's always worked for them. We make visits to local architecture or furniture outlets, try to spend time creating experiences that become shared references.

SC But I don't think you should listen to the client that much either. Some people don't know what they want at all. Sometimes your job is just to create a space that works and is good to live in.



above from top:  
Joe Morris' own home in Peckham. 'I wouldn't say it's a stage set but certainly everything's crafted in a way that makes it a home.'  
Made almost entirely with brick, concrete and timber, Joe believes these are all materials that intrinsically create a feeling of home.

right:  
Vincent Cullane insists that to create a home for somebody he needs to get to know them. This library, in a family home in Islington, stretches over two floors and is finished with a red silk inlay on the shelves to 'bring it to life'.

*'Home is a sense of something familiar, an essence'*  
JOE MORRIS

RP So are there certain materials and elements that create a feeling of home? And will we ever move on from them? Lots of architects design very modern things but still like to come back to a house with say, an iron fireplace or sash windows.

VC In a recent house in Leyton we did quite a contemporary interior with a lacquered kitchen but the island was a lump of oak. Solid, with all the cracks in it. And the splashback was old copper. More people are trying to return to that, compared to the last 10 years when it's all been about having shiny, perfect finishes.

JM We've started using spun brass and cast metals because to me they recall those Victorian horse brasses that would go on the fireplace. That's a distant memory of mine. I wonder if you can think of materials as personalities. Metal and oak, slate and concrete are kind of friends, you can always return to them but you just re-appropriate them in different ways.

SC But things become familiar if they're good. Surely this all comes down to good and bad. If something is done well, people either have an instinctive or an educated understanding about it.

JM But people would intuitively want to play with stone over plastic because it has a certain personality and a patina. We've got a concrete floor that started out perfect but then cracks and stains appear and suddenly it has its own personality.





- RP We respect materials that accept some trace of us and our behaviour in the space.
- JM Yes. Carpet doesn't do that like a natural material can.
- SC But attitudes change. Carpets were popular because they were seen as luxurious compared to a wooden floor.
- JM But avocado bathroom suites were also popular once. Who came up with those?
- RP Perhaps we need to accept that culture will play its part in shaping the style of a certain period. Although the digital age lets us live more globally, I'm not sure it means the concept of home has become diluted – the opposite perhaps. As we move around, the need for a place that feels secure and comfortable is more important than ever, whether that's a laptop or a completely bespoke piece of design. Home, it seems, has always meant more to us than just a fixed place, it's a unique set of qualities that we all carry around with us. §

below:  
Vincent was tasked with creating a 'dream kitchen' by a client in Clerkenwell. It involved several sessions with the client in her own space before settling on this tranquil, open-plan design using clean white lacquer and grey concrete worktops.



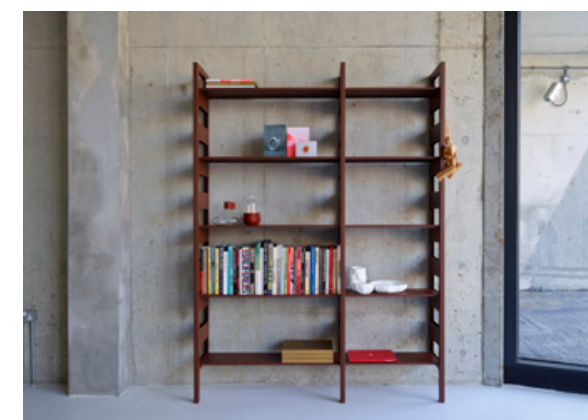
#### SHERIDAN COAKLEY

Sheridan set up SCP in 1985 with a commitment to creating lasting designs that are both functional and beautiful. SCP is a manufacturer and retailer of furniture inspired by the Modern movement and has two London locations, in Shoreditch and Notting Hill.  
[www.scp.co.uk](http://www.scp.co.uk)



#### VINCENT CULLANE

Vincent was a cabinetmaker and furniture designer before scaling up his vision and starting Increation – an interior design company that offers the expertise and service to create whole rooms and living spaces. Vincent's most recent project is a mill conversion in Old Street.  
[www.increation.co.uk](http://www.increation.co.uk)



#### JOE MORRIS

Duggan Morris Architects was established in 2004 by Joe and his partner Mary. The pair have a mixed portfolio that includes commercial, education and public projects as well as private homes. The design of their own home, King's Grove, won a RIBA Award in 2012.  
[www.dugganmorrisarchitects.com](http://www.dugganmorrisarchitects.com)

#### RIYA PATEL

Riya studied architecture before becoming a design journalist in 2009. She is an editor at *Frame* magazine in Amsterdam and formerly the design editor of *Icon* magazine in London. She has also written for the *Architects' Journal* and the *Architectural Review*.  
[www.frameweb.com](http://www.frameweb.com)

*Shot on location at the Geffrye Museum, which explores the home from 1600 to the present day, focusing on the urban middle classes in England. The museum is set in a beautiful 18th-century former almshouses surrounded by gardens in Shoreditch, East London. Free entry. Open Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 5pm. [www.geffrye-museum.org.uk](http://www.geffrye-museum.org.uk)*

above from top:  
Sheridan Coakley thinks it all comes down to good and bad design: 'If something is done well, people either have an instinctive or an educated understanding about it.' Pictured are two of his best sellers, the 'Oscar' bed by Matthew Hilton; and the 'Parallel' shelving system by Terence Woodgate, both manufactured and sold by SCP.



IN CONVERSATION WITH

# PAUL SZUCHMAN & YANIV NORD

SUNSET PARK, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK



words LAURA FENTON  
photography STEVEN BRAHMS







‘Oh, you’re so cute, you’re making me look good,’ Paula Szuchman coos at her 1 ½-year-old daughter Noa. It’s true, her two daughters, Noa and big sister Ida, do make her look good, but it’s Paula’s easygoing manner as she gives the girls their baths that leaves an impression. Paula, the managing editor of a major news website, and her husband Yaniv Nord, a freelance web designer and part-time yoga instructor, are the kind of New Yorkers who seem to have it all figured out.

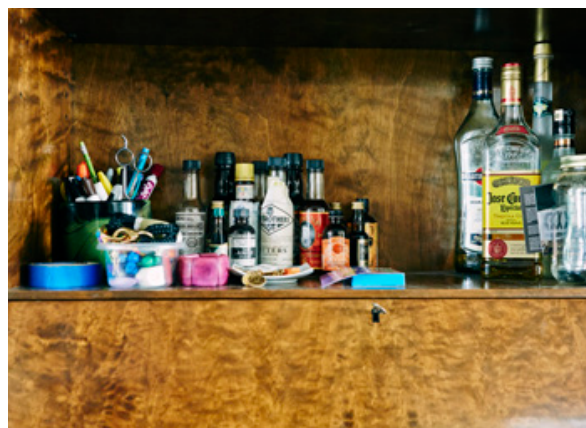
When Paula and Yaniv met in 2003, both were living in Brooklyn, she in Carroll Gardens and he in East Williamsburg. Together, they moved to Park Slope, but after a few years, they found themselves craving more space. They set their sights further out into the borough and found a Sunset Park rental right across the street from the neighbourhood’s park, famed for its panoramic views of the Manhattan skyline and the harbour. ‘Sunset Park felt like such a classic New York neighbourhood in its diversity and the life on the street,’ says Paula who was immediately attracted to the area.

The Brooklyn setting opened up a new world to the couple: A backyard and the park just across the street gave them outdoor space in spades. They loved the architecture and the fibre of the neighbourhood. ‘We’ll walk through Sunset Park and see a Chinese woman doing tai chi, a Hasidic man jogging and Latin American families picnicking, it’s really cool in that way,’ says Paula. Yaniv notes that a side effect of all that diversity is some incredible international cuisine. ‘We have hands-down the best authentic Chinese and Mexican food in Brooklyn,’ he boasts.

So, when a 19th-century limestone just two doors down from their apartment came on the market in 2011, the couple didn’t hesitate to make an offer. ‘We’d gotten into the area and knew we liked it,’ says Paula. While they knew they loved the location, the house itself needed significant work. The couple called in their friends, architects Talia Braude and Philip Pankiewicz, to spearhead the project. ‘I would describe it as a gut renovation,’ Paula laughs when asked about the condition of the house. ‘It was a typical old townhouse—it was just a warren of tiny rooms.’ ➤







Because almost none of the house's original architectural details remained, the couple felt free to strip the space to the bones. Down came walls, away went the dropped ceiling and out came the house's brick walls, which had been hidden behind drywall. The couple wanted an open plan to suit their lifestyle. 'Our lives revolve around the kitchen,' says Paula. Washed in white, it feels more like a downtown loft than a 19th-century row house.

Upstairs, they took the opposite approach, dividing the family's private quarters into intimate rooms. There are three bedrooms, a library (the 'escaping your spouse room') and a small room off the master bedroom, which currently serves as Noa's nursery. Existing skylights let sunshine into the hallway and newly renovated bathroom, while smaller skylights were added to light the library. Paula jokes that the family has a sunset(y) view. 'We don't see the sunset, but we get the incredible cast by the sun setting,' she says.

While Paula and Yaniv have carefully designed their home, it's not a picture-perfect interior straight from the pages of an interior

magazine. Everywhere there are signs of the family life within the walls – the space is clearly the home to two toddlers, yet it is stylish. A rocking horse sits adjacent to the iconic Eames lounge. A chair from Paula's childhood home is marked with a burn from one of her father's cigars. A rotating collection of family photos sticks to the kitchen island, and Ida's artwork hangs side by side with the couple's art collection, which includes a vintage map of Cuba (Paula's father's is from the island) and paintings by their friend, artist William Meddick. A wall opposite the dining table is covered in chalkboard paint inviting doodling.

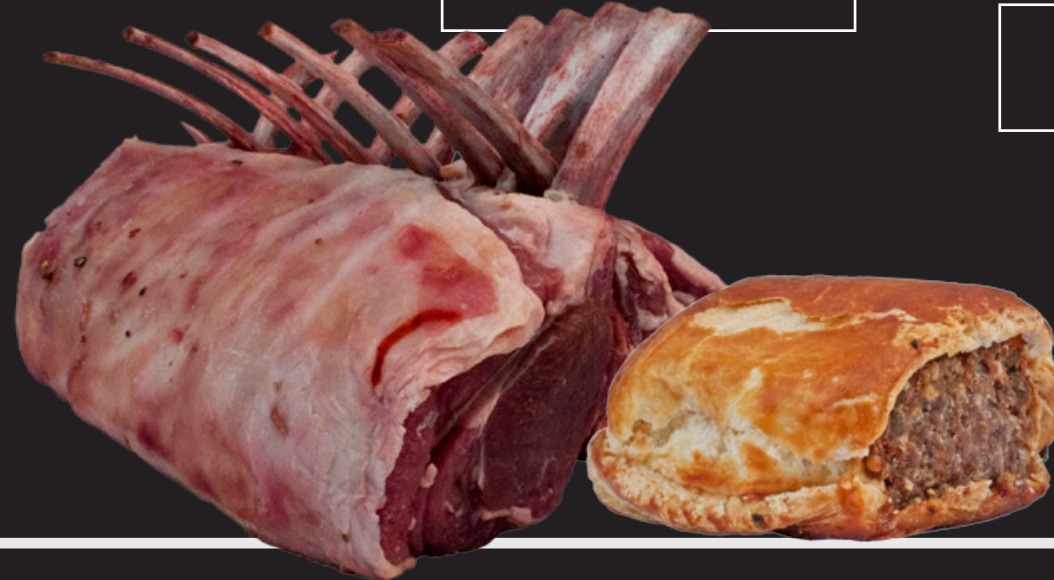
The house also tells a tale of the couple's own travels with mementos from various trips, including figures from a trip to Shanghai and lamps bought at an auction in the Catskills. 'My first job was at a travel magazine,' says Paula, who says they both love to travel, although with small children, it's nice to be home too. Yaniv describes a typical night. 'We'll light up the barbecue. The kids will run wild and the parents will usually gather around the kitchen island or down in the patio – or wherever the wine is'.<sup>6</sup>



LA FROMAGERIE  
2-6 Moxon Street



THE GINGER PIG  
8-10 Moxon Street



LE VIEUX COMPTOIR  
26-28 Moxon Street



## PANTRY TIME

Marylebone exudes the elegance of Regency London and has been one of the city's best addresses for centuries. Plonked just north of Oxford Street, Londoners uphold this charming quarter as the ideal place for leisurely afternoons of cake, coffee and dinner-party plotting



words TOM MOGGACH

**O**f all the London high streets, none rival the classy, independent spirit of Marylebone. This upmarket neighbourhood, rich in Georgian architecture, is an oasis blessedly free from the identikit chain stores that suck on a city's soul.

In their place, you find a smorgasbord of high calibre retailers with oodles of character. Moxon Street, a small side street, has become the self-proclaimed 'Foodie Quarter', crammed with specialists in their field, while on Sunday mornings, a farmers market lures dozens of local producers to the tastiest corner of the capital.

For this rare shopping experience, we owe bizarre thanks to the British aristocracy. Centuries ago, the De Walden family took control of a whopping 92 acres of this prime real estate. Thankfully, they had the long-term vision to develop a street that caters to discerning tastes.

La Fromagerie is nirvana for cheese lovers. Step through sliding doors into the chilled maturing room, stuffed with Europe's finest fromages. Expect rare finds such as Zelu Koloria, an unpasteurised blue ewe's milk cheese from the Pays Basque mountains. Or Pecorino Ubriaco, matured in the pressed skins of the Cabernet grape. Alongside staples such as bread and pulses, the fresh seasonal produce might include Amalfi lemons, Datterini tomatoes, Chanterelle mushrooms or new season garlic. Naturally, all the cheesey accompaniments are also on hand, from charcoal biscuits to chopping boards. There are even ornately carved cheese picks, made by a wood carver in southern Bavaria.

[www.lafromagerie.co.uk](http://www.lafromagerie.co.uk)

The Ginger Pig is arguably the best butcher in London serving fanatical carnivores with prime cuts from rare-breed beasts. Founder Tim Wilson is an accidental farmer, learning his trade after rearing three Tamworth pigs on a near-derelict farm bought for restoration. He now manages over 3,000 acres in Yorkshire, supplying his five shops and high-end restaurants. It's a nose-to-tail approach. Amidst sharpening knives, choose from plump sausages, darkly mature beef fillets, mutton, osso bucco or expertly trimmed racks of lamb. At the other counter you'll find divine sausage rolls, chunky pies, a smoked pigs' cheek paté or perhaps meltingly soft beef stew, served with scoops of aioli.

[www.thegingerpig.co.uk](http://www.thegingerpig.co.uk)

The new kid on the block, this French shop and café lies a few doors further down Moxon Street. Owner Laurent Faure imports directly from handpicked producers. Upstairs, expect off-piste gems such as addictive rosé bubbles from Olivier Bardet in the Alps. His Bugey Cerdon uses artisanal fermentation techniques with no added sugar. Fine spirits, beers and ciders also take pride of place. Downstairs, enjoy an aperitif in the conservatory or pick up gourmet delights such as fine teas from Dammann in Paris, founded 1692. Try the Poudre de Piment d'Espelette – a delightful, subtle spice typically sprinkled onto bread and butter.

[www.levieuxcomptoir.co.uk](http://www.levieuxcomptoir.co.uk)

ROCOCO  
3 Moxon Street



THE PROVIDORES & TAPA ROOM  
109 Marylebone High Street



Among London's world-class chocolatiers, Chantal Coady of Rococo has stylishly led the pack for three decades. Her success is down to dazzling creativity, both in her chocolate creations and an artistic eye for design. This is her brand new shop, following a move from the north end of Marylebone High Street. Indulge in ganache truffles, with flavours such as London honey or blackcurrant and violet, or treats including hand-painted chocolate fish, fluffy marshmallows, chewy nougat or divine bars from her own cacao farm, part of the wonderful Grenada Chocolate Company, a pioneering fairtrade cooperative.

[www.rococochocolates.com](http://www.rococochocolates.com)

Deep-fried squid with Urfa chilli salt, perhaps? Or cacao-spiced pulled beef brisket with a kidney bean salsa? Chef Peter Gordon has built his reputation on outlandish fusion flavours from across the globe. At his flagship restaurant, the downstairs café serves exquisite brunches – arrive early to avoid the weekend queues. Or take the best bits back home: a secret coffee blend from small-batch roaster Volcano Coffee Works; and the legendary muffins, in daily-changing flavours such as poppy seed, rosemary, bacon and Après Soleil cheese.

[www.theproviders.co.uk](http://www.theproviders.co.uk)

*For more local recommendations on what to do and see in Marylebone, as told by onefinestay hosts that live there, visit [www.onefinestay.com/london/marylebone](http://www.onefinestay.com/london/marylebone)*



# AT YOUR SERVICE



From esoteric bookshops to the best park-bench views, a Herb Lester guide only presents the most select facts of a city, the essential info culled especially for discerning visitors. Here, in a *Guestbook* exclusive, we let him lead the way



by HERB LESTER

# NEIGHBO<sup>(U)</sup>R

Two cities, two locales. Which comes out on top?

illustration JIM DATZ

## SOHO, LONDON

For as long as Soho has existed its habitués have bemoaned the changes taking place. The fashionable, shiny, safe and expensive Soho of today is barely recognisable as the same place that in the 1970s was filled with sex shops and vice. Nor as the Soho of earlier years, a place where Italians, French and Germans unwelcome in other parts of the city were able to set up small businesses, a microscopic number of which survive today. Change is a constant here, but an atmosphere remains; it still has its mysterious alleys, its 'French lessons', red lights and peep shows.

As much as it ever was, it's a place to indulge appetites, to eat and drink well, and to be entertained.

### CULTURAL WATERING HOLE

The Coach And Horses in Greek Street. Jeffrey Bernard, John Hurt, Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, Peter Cook and Dylan Thomas have all been regulars

### GAY LANDMARK

The Admiral Duncan in Old Compton Street became an unhappy symbol of gay prejudice when it was targeted by a neo-Nazi nail bomb attack in 1999. Today it is a thriving and happy place again

### CLASSIC ITALIAN SHOP

For meats, cheese, tomatoes, rocket and basil, canned and bottled goods and wonderful homemade pasta, Camisa is among the last of its breed in Soho

### EAT AND WALK

Maletti serves pizza by the square, takeaway only. Choose fast or they'll shout at you, grab and go

### JAZZ CLUB

An institution since 1959, Ronnie Scott's still has shows every night of the week



# HOOD BATTLE

## GREENWICH VILLAGE, NEW YORK

Free of Manhattan's orderly grid, the streets of Greenwich Village are as unconventional as the area's reputation and its inhabitants. It's long been a place where anyone can fit in and make a home or start a business, no matter how eccentric. Soaring property values have done more to homogenise the neighbourhood than any amount of moral indignation achieved in previous decades, which means impecunious artists no longer huddle in the local coffee shops and taverns, but if you look hard enough their legacy remains.

### CULTURAL WATERING HOLE

Jack Kerouac, Norman Mailer, James Baldwin, Delmore Schwartz and Anaïs Nin all drank at The White Horse Tavern. Oh, and Dylan Thomas, who went on his final bender here

### GAY LANDMARK

Following a police raid at The Stonewall Inn in 1969, a riot broke out that marked a turning point in the gay liberation movement. The current bar is not the original, but let's not split hairs

### CLASSIC ITALIAN SHOP

In an area once teeming with Italian grocers, Faicco's keeps the red, white and green flag flying

### EAT AND WALK

Nothing is more New York than eating a hot dog on the go, and by popular consensus Gray's Papaya is the best

### JAZZ CLUB

As the world changes all around it, the Village Vanguard remains a bastion of hip





## HERB LESTER

At Herb Lester, it's all about what you know, rather than how much. This small-scale publishing company shows the way to convey the attitude and essential information about a city in a compact format.

'Ours is not a comprehensive service, there's plenty of that already. People don't need another guide book telling them where to find Hard Rock Café in Paris,' says Ben Olins, who founded Herb Lester with business partner Jane Smillie in 2009.

What make these guides stand out are their strong editorial tone and stringent criteria for the places included. Rather than trying to sort the wheat from the chaff in the usual lowest common-denominator books, users will enjoy all the places featured in the guides (and have the time to do it even on shorter trips). So how is this delicate selection made?

'We normally just pick the places we'd like to know about ourselves,' says Jane. 'Then we group them in an interesting way that works for travellers; *Paris En Famille*, or *Untamed London*, for example.'

The most popular maps are for London, New York and Paris, the holy triumvirate of city guide publishing. But the content differs from hefty tomes by the selectiveness of the information – instead of listing 15 museums, Herb Lester chooses the most interesting.

'We want to make it easy for travellers to have a good time by choosing one perfect museum rather than 15 different ones. It's exhausting to have a list of things you'll never achieve when you're on holiday and much better to highlight things that make a city special.'

The business partners met while working as journalists at Channel 4 and do most of the research, writing and travel themselves. 'Up to 80 per cent of the travelling we've done, and the rest was left to trusted correspondents.'

So who exactly is the elusive Herb Lester? 'He's our ideal boss. After much discussion, we named him Herb Lester,' says Ben. 'Herb's not our alter ego, but an amalgam of the two of us – and beyond. We defer to his judgment. If one of us is keen on a place, and Herb wouldn't like it, it wouldn't be included.'

Herb Lester often gets feedback from people who have found their own personal favourites featured. 'One guy said it was great that we mentioned Jimmy's Corner in NYC, as he thought he was the only one who liked that bar,' says Jane. 'Everybody could do with some help from Herb Lester.'

Upcoming titles include *Stockholm*, *Seattle* and *Portland*.  
[www.herblester.com](http://www.herblester.com)



# LOCAL HEROES

Three New York hosts nominate a character they believe adds that certain something to their neighbourhood



portraits KEN FALLIN



KEITH AND JEAN-MARIE COOPER DURST  
Founders of The Wagging Tail and Water4Dogs, Tribeca

To most people the thought of owning a dog in downtown New York is madness, but they haven't met Keith and Jean-Marie. Founders of The Wagging Tail, they offer round-the-clock care and boarding, grooming and a pool for the neighbourhood's four-legged residents. Best of all, most of the staff have been there since the opening 15 years ago, so my dog feels he's with family and looks forward to his visit. We simply couldn't live in this city without them.

Recommended by the host at North Moore Street 2  
[www.thewaggingtail.com](http://www.thewaggingtail.com), [www.water4dogs.com](http://www.water4dogs.com)



ANDREW BERMAN

Executive director of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (GVSHP)

I met Andrew more than 20 years ago when we were both campaigning for the creation of a public park along the Hudson River. He is a brilliant and tireless defender of our historic neighbourhood. The offices are in the white-washed rectory of St. Mark's Church, but Andrew is rarely there – instead he's out testifying in front of boards, leading rallies, reaching out to community groups, talking to the press, and generally being brilliant. Andrew is for the most part an unsung hero, but I see the results of his good deeds every time I walk through my neighbourhood.

Recommended by the host at Bedford Street, Greenwich Village

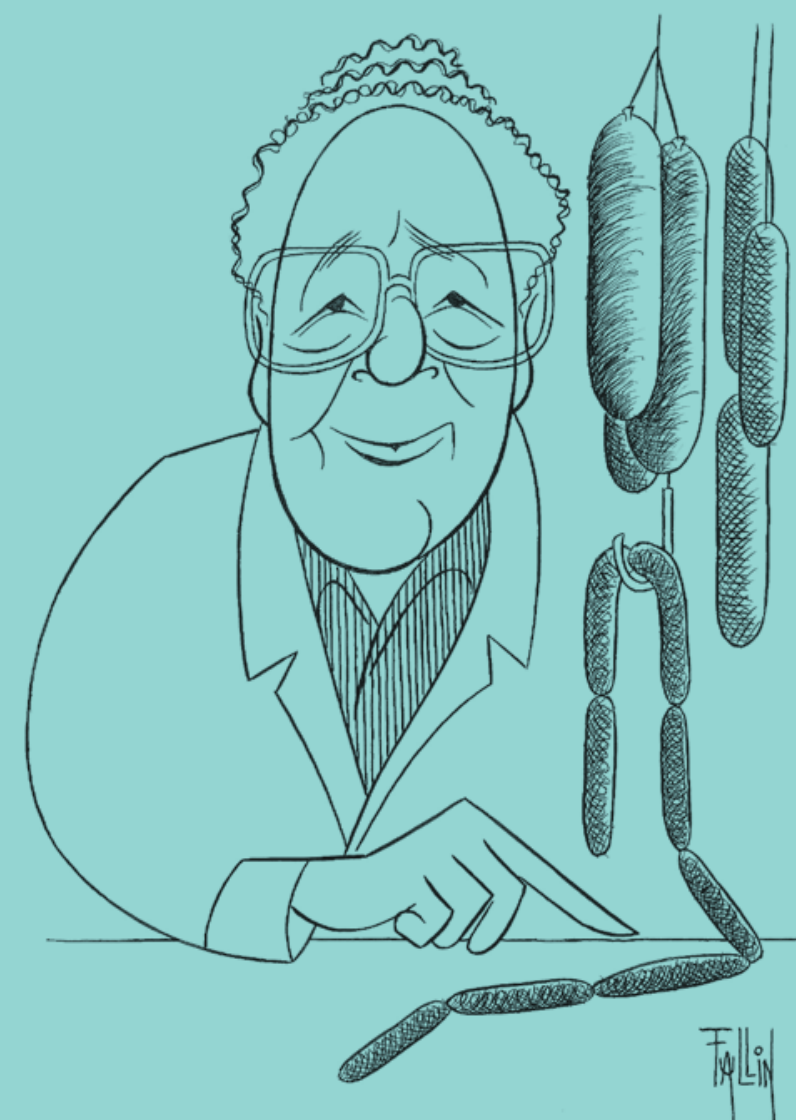
TONY AFFRONTI

Butcher and founder of The Paisanos Meat Market, Brooklyn

Compared to Tony, we're newcomers to this area, having only lived here for three years. The Paisanos Meat Market has been a fixture at 162 Smith Street since 1959, serving up everything from Boston pork butts to antelope chops. We visit the market at least once a week, and often find Tony, who is in his eighties, serving behind the counter. Most of the day-to-day running of the place is now done by his son, Mike, but it is Tony's commitment and personality that makes the shopping experience here so unique and wonderful. Long may it last!

Recommended by the host at Bond Street 2, Boerum Hill  
[www.lospaisanosmeatmarket.com](http://www.lospaisanosmeatmarket.com)

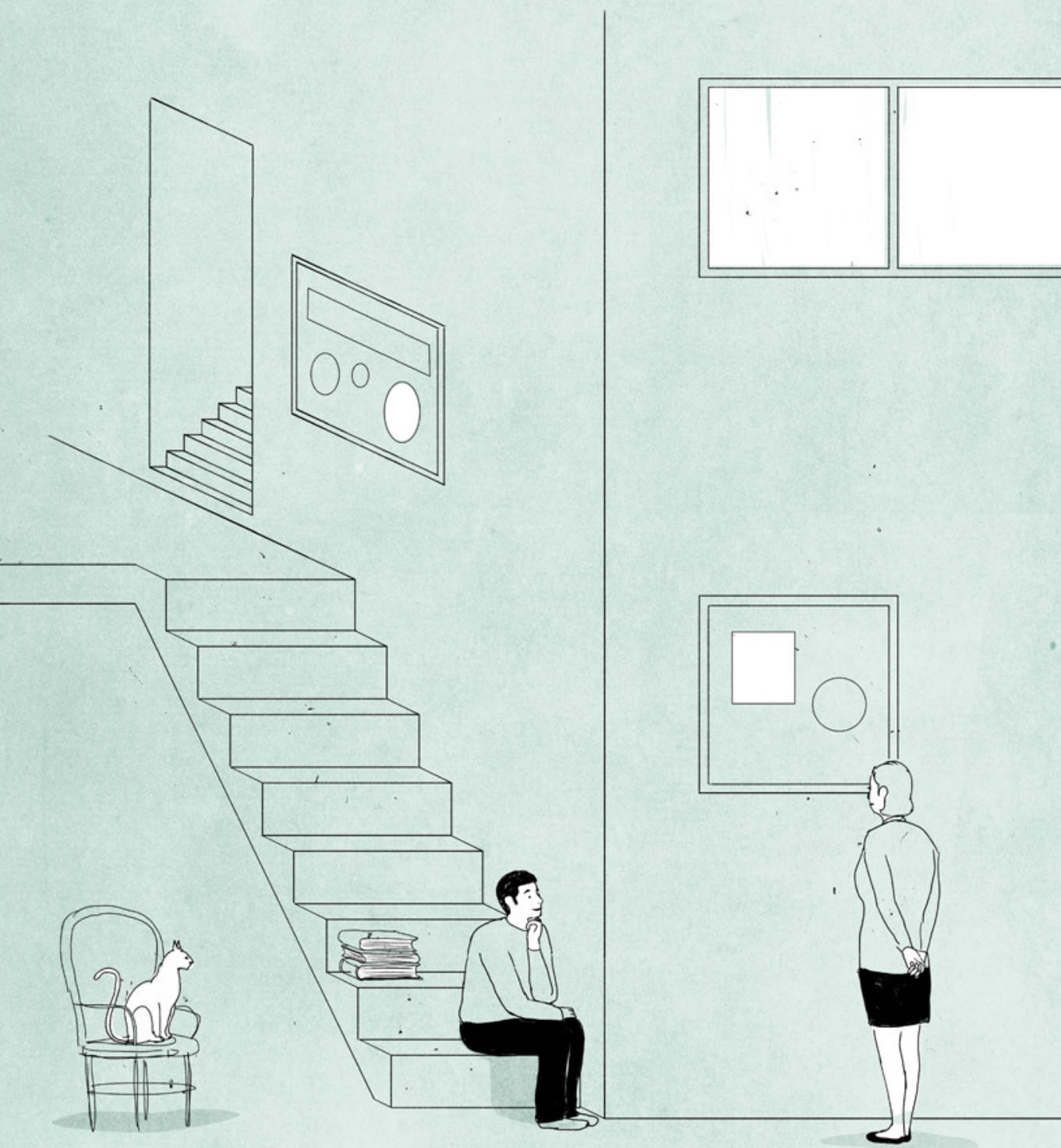
For more local tips from our New York hosts, see the area guides on [onefinestay.com](http://onefinestay.com)







# The Gallery









# 1

## PEMBRIDGE CRESCENT 3

Notting Hill

Though this home sits in the middle of Notting Hill, the vaulted skylights that run along the living space with only the blue yonder above make it feel like a holiday bolthole. It is a place for cultured comfort, with squishy sofas and weighty tomes. A gallery of family portraits show a glimpse of the host's life, an artist, photographer and film-maker with two teenage children. There's art everywhere, propped on chairs and stairs and hung in groups throughout the home, providing a live-in gallery feel.

The house is located at the gently curving, stuccoed Pembridge Crescent, a few minutes walk from Notting Hill tube station and the green sanctuary of Kensington Gardens. Portobello Market is close enough for you to hear the calls from the stallholders while having morning coffee in the secluded courtyard, providing a consummate fusion of feet-up repose and urban buzz.



clockwise from left:  
An Islamic-style arch in the master bedroom gives way to a rose-pink palace of a bathroom; a second bedroom with dazzlingly white walls and a modern ensuite; the sitting room is an Aladdin's cave of paintings and prints, books and bibelots, all bathed in the generous light from a glass ceiling; a sweet and homey kitchen is set off beautifully with the cool mid-century modern dining table and chairs.





# 2

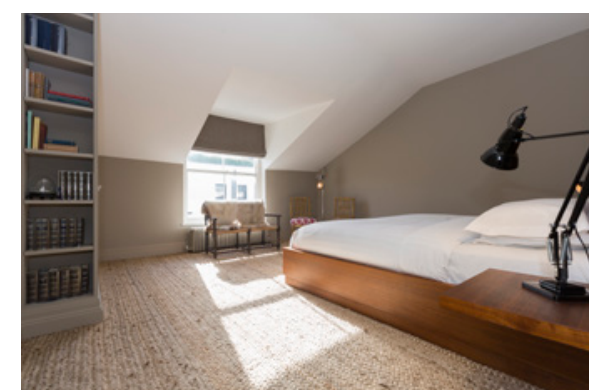
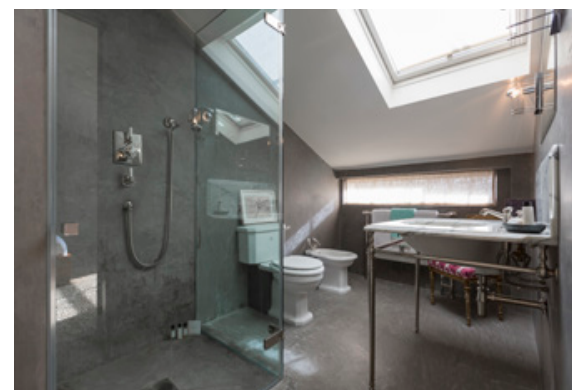
## CLEVELAND SQUARE 2

Bayswater



GUESTBOOK

Enter an elegant wilderness in this tree-top level apartment halfway between Notting Hill and Oxford Street. The artist owner has decorated the home herself, and delved deep into the organic and botanic – silvery fish swim on hand-painted wallpaper, painted tortoise shells and a giant sea urchin add natural roundness to the cool blue and earthy brown of the living room, and the main bathroom is wall-to-wall calming burnished stone. A decked terrace soars high above street level and invites for evening cocktails, while the Serpentine in nearby Hyde Park encourages intrepid swimmers to a dip (or at least a cup of tea at the Lido Café).



clockwise from above:  
Wide windows illuminate exquisite fabrics in the sitting room; the main bathroom is wall-to-wall calming burnished stone; both bedrooms are doubles with luxurious ensuite bathrooms; a terrace soars high above street level

opposite:  
A shoal of hand-painted shimmering fish welcome you





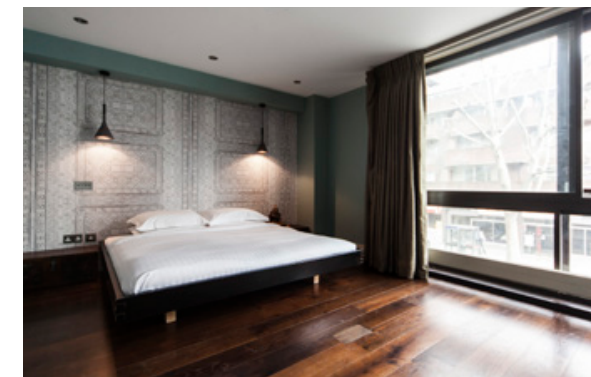


# 3

## CAROLINE CLOSE

### Bayswater

clockwise from above:  
The back garden is the envy of the Tate with its abstract modern art and wildly comfortable chairs; skylights dazzle the games room while the kitchen is styled like a secret forest; there are no less than six bedrooms – and bathrooms; complete with spectacular pendant lighting, Persian rugs, eye-poppingly high ceilings, the cherry trees spangling above the sofa, it's hard to know where to look first in the sitting room.



With its double-height glass doors and hothouse feel with climbing ivy and twinkling cherry-blossom branches, it's a marvel to think that the hosts have transformed a disused office block into this family fun pad. Generous facing sofas and easy seating for 10 round the dining table make for conviviality and if the weather gods are on your side, the garden deck is equally lounge-friendly, with two fantastical art installations overlooking the libations. Kids (big and small) can have their own gathering at the kitchen island, shoot a game of pool or marvel at how exactly the fish got into the under-foot tank (teenagers can hole up in the TV snug). Outside, the West End lies waiting, but when the entertainment is this good indoors, it can wait a bit longer.





This is complete indulgence in one of London's most elegant enclaves, with swirly marble bathrooms, toe-swallowing carpets and swathes of silks around the canopied bed. Finding the marble tub in the master bathroom and the glass roof above it might prove enough fodder for a dream stay, but that's before you've spotted the cinema room, complete with enveloping leather seats. The exalted lifestyle continues on the streets outside – Chanel's flagship store beckons at the end of the road, and Harrods façade glimmers tantalisingly. There are plenty of innovative restaurants around, from Russian babushka-chic Mari Vanna to Heston Blumenthal's time-travelling gastronomic adventure at Dinner – all to provide a life-overhauling experience.

# 4

## WALTON STREET 3

Knightsbridge



this page, clockwise from above:  
The kitchen balcony offers a view over the verdant back garden; a luxurious double tub is enveloped in swirly marble and finished off by a glass roof; the cinema room comes complete with leather armchairs.

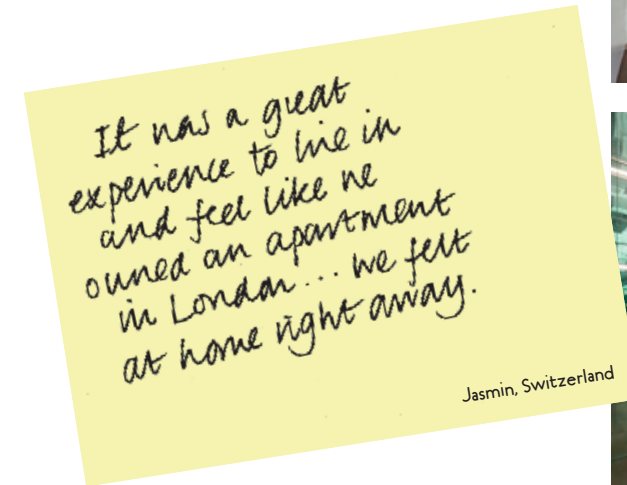
opposite, clockwise from top:  
A heady scent of lavender greets you at the front steps of this pretty stuccoed house; both bedrooms are calm and collected adorned in a palette of creams and pale pastels; a clever galley kitchen offers a glimpse of the garden







clockwise from top right:  
The master bedroom with original brick fireplace; leads to the fantastically mirrored bathroom; an office space decked out with exposed brickwork, modern artwork and a desk that's shiny in the deepest black; a blue heritage plaque announces that Gavin Turk, celebrated YBA, once worked here; the dining room with jaw-dropping views of rooftops and the spire of St Luke; skylights and floor-to-ceiling windows flood the whole space with light.



# 5

## ANCHOR YARD

Clerkenwell

This house of mirrors demands an open mind and appreciation of the zeitgeist. Located in the creative hub of Clerkenwell, the hostess is a designer who turned this former stables and wine warehouse into an architect's dream project, a glass eyrie overlooking the imposing Hawksmoor St Luke's church that is now home to the London Symphony Orchestra. The dining area makes it possible to eat under the stars even when the rain is lashing down, thanks to the glass walls and ceilings, while the spacious patio warms up nicely in the sun. Stainless steel, Plexiglas and chrome is offset by rough brick walls, while the wholly mirrored bathroom provides a never-ending view in the many faceted reflections. This is not a home for the shy and retiring, but a boundary-pushing vision of how a space can make us feel.





# 6

## BRONDESBURY ROAD

Queens Park

Victorian on the outside, high modernity on the inside. The hosts here had no qualms about gutting this brick grande dame and giving her a new lease of life, complete with double-height mezzanine and glass walls. Around the extra long kitchen table, many a late night has been spent entertaining friends and colleagues from the TV industry, while the garden holds both a ping pong table and badminton set. This part of London is yet to be discovered by most tourists, leaving it to the locals who are happy to keep the plentiful pubs and charming shops to themselves – follow their lead and head for a cocktail at Betsy Smith followed by a flick at the Lexi on Chamberlayne Road.







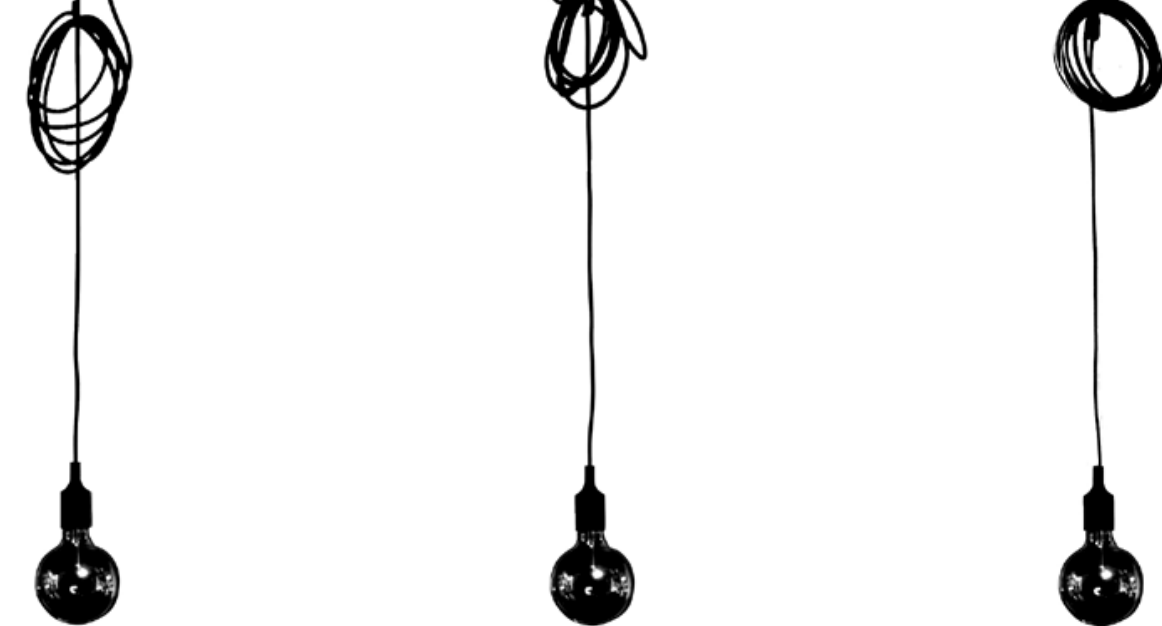
this page, clockwise from above:  
Enormous windows let in light from the garden; the kitchen is fully equipped yet wonderfully spare – slide the blackboard to reveal a pantry; a slick modern dining table comfortably seats eight; a sitting room on the mezzanine level is the perfect five-minute nap spot; the garden invites to games and general frolicking



clockwise from right:  
The children's room is stacked with toys and books; the slate-clad ensuite hides behind a partition in the bedroom; serene colours encourage a good night's sleep







# 7

## PREBEND STREET

Islington

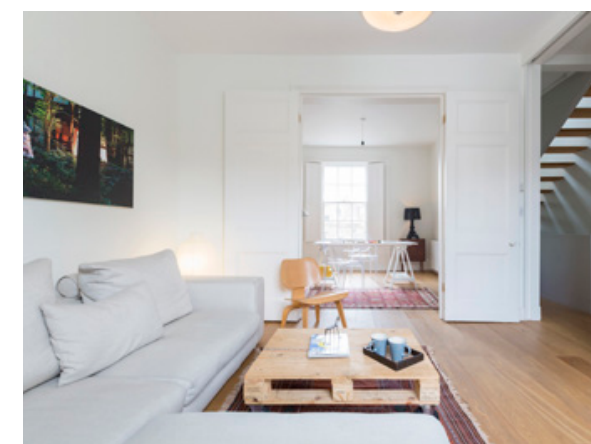


clockwise from below:  
The shiny kitchen and glossy dining table open out into the walled garden; upstairs there's a study lined with books and translucent 'Ghost' chairs; the white sitting room is calm and pretty; one of three Scandi-fresh bedrooms.

opposite:  
The entirely remodelled basement floor is pale and airy and dotted with luminous modern furniture.



The design credentials shine through in this Islington home, with classics by Charles and Ray Eames, Ferruccio Laviani and Philippe Starck strategically placed around the lofty rooms for biggest possible impact. Life here is easy, with kick-back sofas and a welcoming kitchen made for communal cooking. The Scandinavian sparseness stems from its architecture host, while the hits of colour and oriental rugs come from the Indian hostess. In cosmopolitan Islington, their co-mingling worlds come together beautifully, with international restaurants, bijoux bars and sleek shops clustering on the Essex Road and Upper Street just around the corner, attracting not only London locals, but global.







# 8

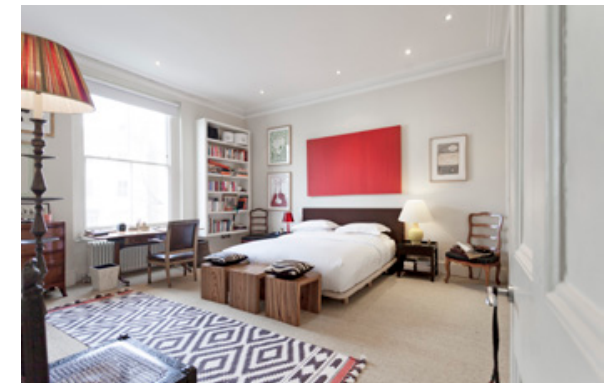
## BASSETT ROAD 6

Ladbroke Grove



There's something quintessentially British about this West London home, with exotic twists that wouldn't feel out of place in a colonial setting. African masks, a leopard skin, and even the stone dachshunds adorning the entrance make you wonder whether there'll be kidneys and kedgeree for breakfast, served in the thoroughly modern dining room. The wanderlust comes from the hostess, a tech consultant and graphic designer who races yachts when she has a spare moment, while the bustling shops of Ladbroke Grove provide the multicultural snacks best eaten with a stiff G&T on the sunny terrace – stiff upper lip optional.

clockwise from left:  
Artworks, books and exotic artefacts provide plenty to look at in the open-plan living area; a chic dining room complete with glass table and stunning art adjoins the sitting room; sunlight streams through the sash windows and glows off the kitchen's wooden surfaces; a sunny roof terrace awaits; the master is a tale of textures, paintings and antique furniture; the shiny, high-spec bathroom.



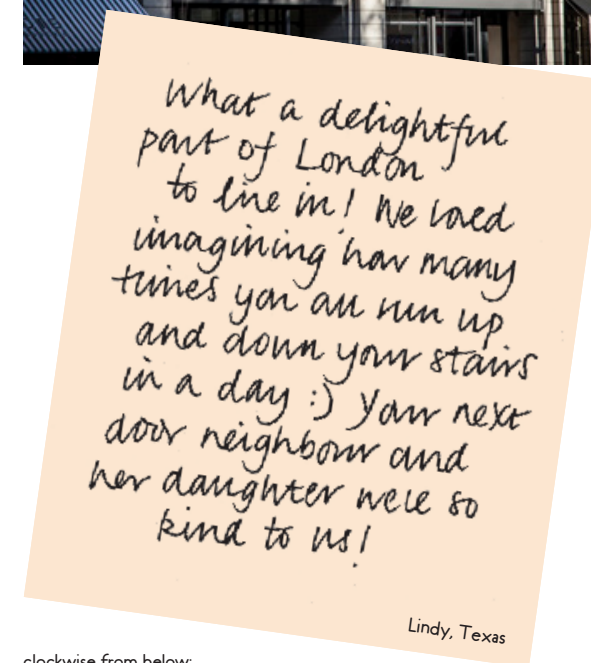


# 9

## CLIVEDEN PLACE

Belgravia

This timeless Georgian home in Belgravia oozes relaxed, good breeding. The hosts, a business man, his wife and their three boys, have created a home with classical heritage but which is still modern enough to harbour a sink-back sofa and giant plasma. The gleaming black kitchen is a contemporary culinary dream, perfect for whipping up a meal from the day-fresh ingredients from nearby Daylesford Organic. Kids can run wild in the playroom, and afternoon Darjeeling is served in the sun-dappled garden. Sloane Square, with shopping nirvanas like King's Road and Sloane Street radiating from it, has a neighbourly feel and locals spill out on the pavement from The Botanist on warm nights, or wander around the Saatchi gallery for a look at the latest from the art world.



clockwise from below:  
A true gentleman's study; the sprawling light-filled drawing room dotted with countless European-and Asian-inspired artefacts; there are four bedrooms, each filled with four posters and enviable antiques; nearby Sloane Square has always been fashionable, yet always kept one foot in the past – a bit like this home.

opposite:  
An ebony-slate kitchen gleams with the latest kitchen equipment.



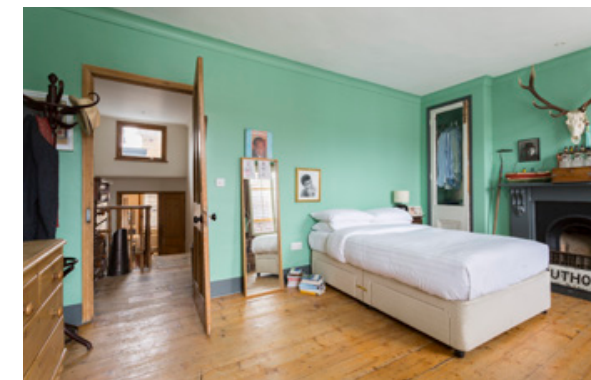
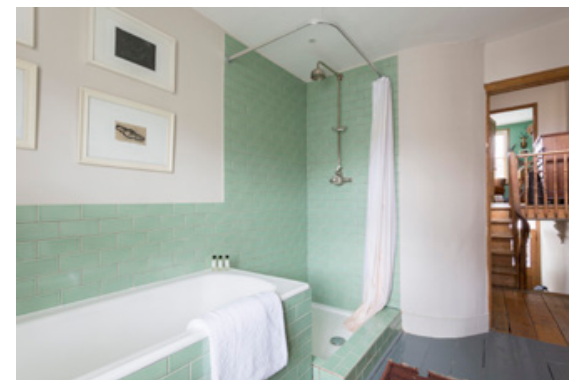


# 10

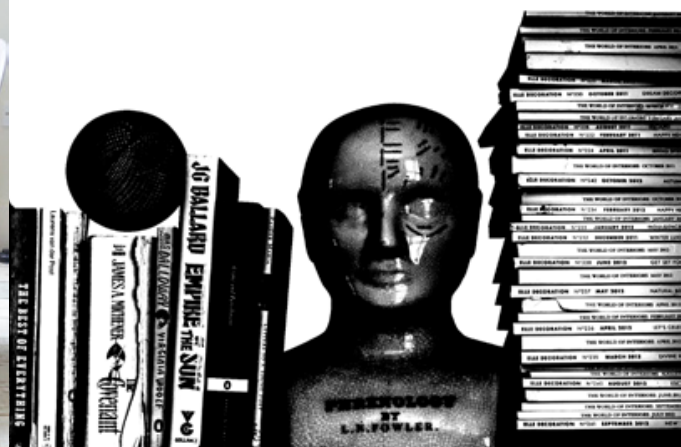
## SALTRAM CRESCENT

### Maida Vale

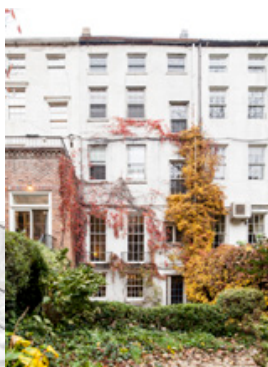
Creating a home from such disparate vintage finds and modern design takes true panache. The South African hostess has brought a hint of louche beachside living, with furniture and floors reminiscent of sun-bleached driftwood, teamed with salvaged, rusted metal details. The result is a bit like a live-in antiquity shop, but with mod cons to stave off a too-rustic experience – deep baths, luxurious beds and a whopping sound system. Maida Vale is home to one of London's prettiest canal stretches, houseboat-packed Little Venice at the junction of the Paddington Basin and Regent's Canal, providing the perfect spot for a stroll.



clockwise from left:  
The jigsawed wooden floor supports a vast oak table; one of three bathrooms; one of three large and airy bedrooms; the master bedroom with its original fireplace and stripped wood floors leads to an ensuite furnished with a freestanding bath; there's a rustic, rough-hewn feel to the enormous open-plan kitchen.

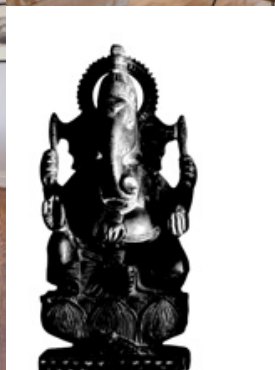
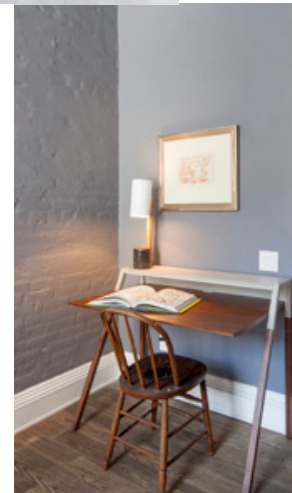






# 10

onefinestay  
members' homes in  
NEW YORK





# 1

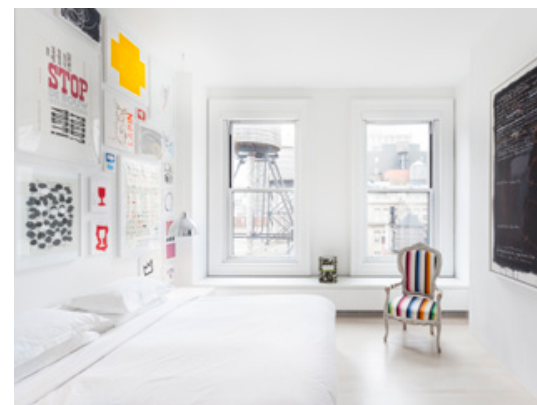
## FLATIRON LOFT

Flatiron



this page, clockwise from below: The nautilus staircase leads the way to four bedrooms below; a muted-grey chaise and sofa are complemented by searing nips of colour flashing from volumes placed here and there; an expansive wall of windows offers a view over the vibrant city below; light streams in to the vast, calm kitchen and dining area.

opposite from top: The glacier-like staircase and photographic seascape belie this loft's place in the heart of the city; eye-catching artwork and design features punctuate the pure white palette; teddy bears and an Eames chair bedeck this child's bedroom.



This loft has 3,000sq ft of pure white-out, with carefully curated graphic brights removing any notions of austerity. The hosts are a young creative couple who share a passion for patterns and splashes of colour, whether in the shape of a red Eames rocker or open art books on display. Their collection of Scandinavian furniture reads like a directory of design maestros; Arne Jacobsen, Carl Hansen, Cecilie Manz... The area supplies plenty of fodder for foodies in the shape of market day at Union Square, with stalls purveying everything from bison steaks to kosher pickles. Nearby lies the edgiest of New York's skyscrapers, the Flatiron Building.

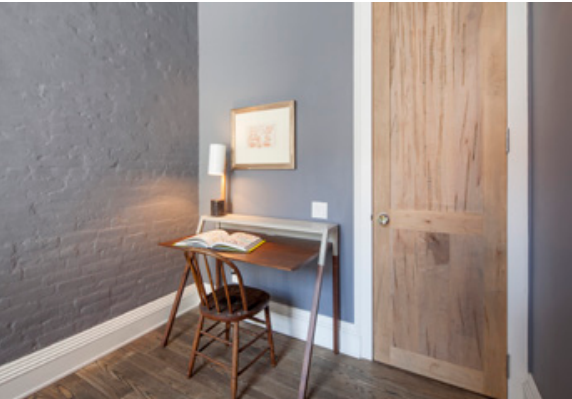


# 2

## PRINCE STREET

SoHo

Stripped back to the essentials, this two-bedroom SoHo home gives you room to think, feel and be. The colour schemes are calming, the wooden floors tactile and the host's carefully chosen furnishings and accessories all have that sense of timelessness that sets your mind free. It's the perfect spot to mull over a day's adventures in colourful SoHo, the neighbourhood fluorescent with high-end flagships and stylish boutiques. Be inspired at the Terrain Gallery, or hone your retail skills at the MoMA Design Store on Spring Street, before dinner at iconic Balthazar brasserie.



clockwise from left:  
Richly grained wood floors and exposed brick walls are complemented by blonde wood kitchen countertops and glossy white cabinetry; an unassuming dining table of surprising size is drenched in natural light; the driftwood bed and weathered planks soften the industrial feel in the master bedroom; attention-grabbing artwork set the scene in the sitting room; a quiet nook for ruminating or reading





# 3

## HICKS STREET Brooklyn Heights



This relaxed and unassuming two-bedroom apartment in a 19th-century townhouse makes a perfect base to explore proud Brooklyn Heights, one of the first suburbs outside Manhattan and with a soul all its own. Your hosts are a creative couple, a successful artist and film producer who have collaborated to make their heirloom home a character study in colour, comfort and design. In the morning, make sure to put good use to that breakfast tray attached to the bed, and come evening, savour drinks on the cosy terrace under the Big Apple sky.

clockwise from left:  
The heavy marble fireplace anchors the eclectic collection of art and installations; the remarkable custom-built library; soft curtains and the palest blue aid relaxation in the master suite; the sun-drenched terrace overlooking old-world Brooklyn; the warm and inviting sage-and-honey kitchen.







# 4

## WATER STREET

### DUMBO

Press a button, and the lift takes you straight into this penthouse-level loft in the middle of Brooklyn's boiler room for tech industries. The hosts have fashioned a personal and refined home, with a finger-tip feel of what will work – from graffiti murals to zebra skins and a teenage room decorated with discarded skateboards, the wheels serving as drawer handles. Double-height windows in the living space give onto a terrace with grittily urban views of the East River, providing a backdrop for the open-plan kitchen and conversation-friendly sitting room – the TV has been banished to a separate room. A tranquil grey scheme is gilded with brass details – the whole space has a raw nerve with a glam edge. DUMBO dwellers are kept oiled at the 68 Jay Street Bar and fed brunch the next day at Superfine on Front Street, with its live bluegrass band.

above:  
Two stacked storeys of wide-eyed windows announce an unmistakable industrial loft legacy.

below:  
A terrace provides sweeping vistas of the East River and twinkling Manhattan beyond.



clockwise from top:  
Industrial, spacious, but with trendy glamour the living space is adorned with plush furnishings, hide throws, and fine art fixtures; the minimal steam-grey master bedroom with a private terrace; a teenage room decorated with graffiti and skateboards; the second floor den where a cosy, coal-coloured study is stocked with books.



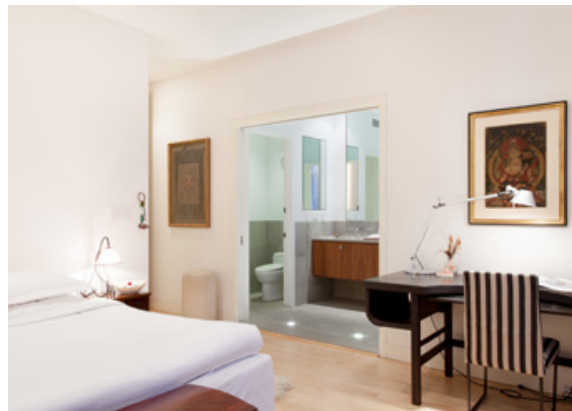


# 5

## UNION SQ NORTH 2

### Union Square

That the owner of this home is a photographer and a student of Eastern philosophy, meditation and mindfulness comes as no surprise. From the Persian rugs to the carefully curated art, this feels like the space of someone who selects items that mean something on several levels, and then arranges them beautifully. Sensory delights in the form of an immersion Japanese bathtub next to a rainforest open shower, as well as a chirpy birdcage doubling as a lampshade all add to the enchanting spell this apartment will hold over you.



above:

The living space contains a sumptuous and carefully curated mix of furnishings including padded leather dining chairs, bird cage drop lights and a mesmerizing abstract canvas.

from left:

The master bedroom where mahogany hues of the tables and bed chest contrast with the soft pinks of the delicate floral canvas; the ensuite bathroom complete with granite tub; the marble mantelpiece and meditation altar





# 6

## WEST 20TH STREET 4

Chelsea

Whether the statues and paintings here come alive at night we're not sure, but this is doubtless a living museum. Owned by a host with a colourful, globetrotting past (born in the Czech republic, raised in Kenya, schooled in England followed by an engineering career in New York), this unique townhouse is one of the best examples of mid-19th century Greek Revival style in the country. Plush but stylish furnishings, elegant colours and a kitchen that makes you feel you should wear swishing skirts and a demure parting are perfect for time travel in the mind. Edith Wharton would feel right at home.

clockwise from left:  
This unique townhouse is one of the best examples of 19th century Greek Revival style in the country; the first of three vast and cheery bedrooms; the brass bed gives a regal welcome to the apricot-hued master bedroom; a sofa and stately armchairs upholstered in William Morris fabric and lamps with classic banker's shades are clustered around a working fireplace; the downstairs dining area is flanked by a galley kitchen and a brick hearth.

The highlight of the weekend (the purpose of which was to find my daughters wedding dress which he did) was the morning conversation in your lovely garden.  
Thank you for memories that will last a lifetime.

Shauneen, Canada







# 7

## WILLIAMSBURG LOFT

Williamsburg

The perfect seaside cottage? It's a couple of blocks from the waterfront, brilliantly bright and washed in a sparing, sunbleached white – a private niche of marine calm. Add a sweet splash of urban savvy, a rush of design-forward sensibility and the perfect convenience of the creative Brooklyn surge and you've got this one-bedroom converted loft. Here the seemingly mismatched furniture has been lovingly assembled for a flotsam and jet(set)sam feel, making a welcoming home for creative strays. While the giant blackboard wall harbours artistic messages and thank yous after vibrant dinner parties, floating away in the all-white bedroom at day's end is a particular treat.



clockwise from far left: Soft white walls are the major design pivot point thoughtfully accentuating soaring ceilings and a wealth of natural light; from good chairs to deliberate art arrangements, the tide of good design is with you here; shelves are stacked with design catalogues and artful tomes; a blackboard wall in the kitchen invites creative thought; the raw-wood dining table connects the open-plan kitchen with the sitting room.





# 8

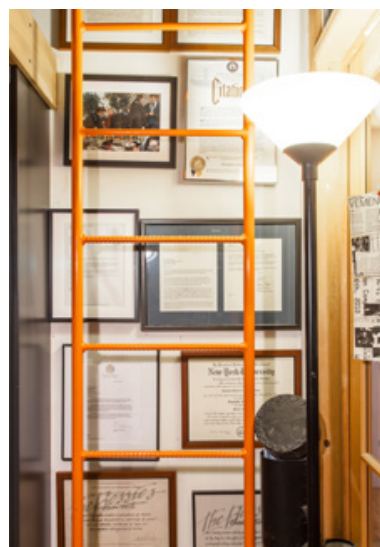
## LIBRARY LOFT

SoHo

This home speaks volumes of one of the hosts' favourite pastimes – reading (the other one, a choreographer, perhaps makes use of the dancefloor-size living room). Almost every free surface of the loft is taken up by books, from weighty tomes to flimsy paperbacks and ranging in subject matter like a mini Smithsonian. Bookworms can curl up in the Florence Knoll sofa, or invite the whole reading group for a discussion around the spacious kitchen table. The home is bohemian, bright and welcoming in a pull-up-a-pew way, with the fine dining options and top galleries waiting in SoHo having to be top of their game to garner attention.

this page from top:  
The study for quiet contemplation; a ladder leads up to the second bedroom; a carved scroll bed in the master bedroom.

opposite from top:  
Floor-to-ceiling bookshelves take up almost every wall of this literature repository; flowing hard-wood floors contrast with the bold lines of the cream sofa and black leather club chair.







# 9

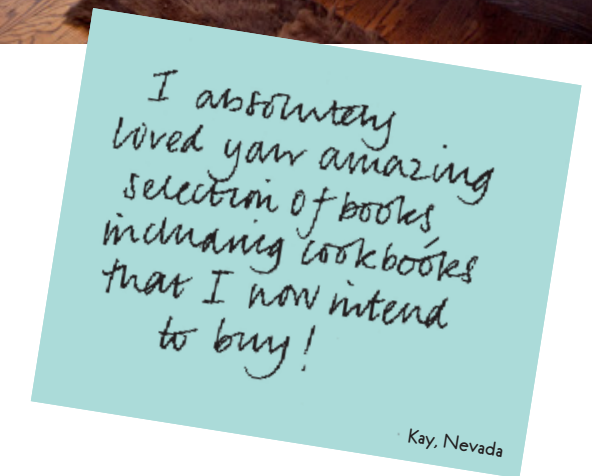
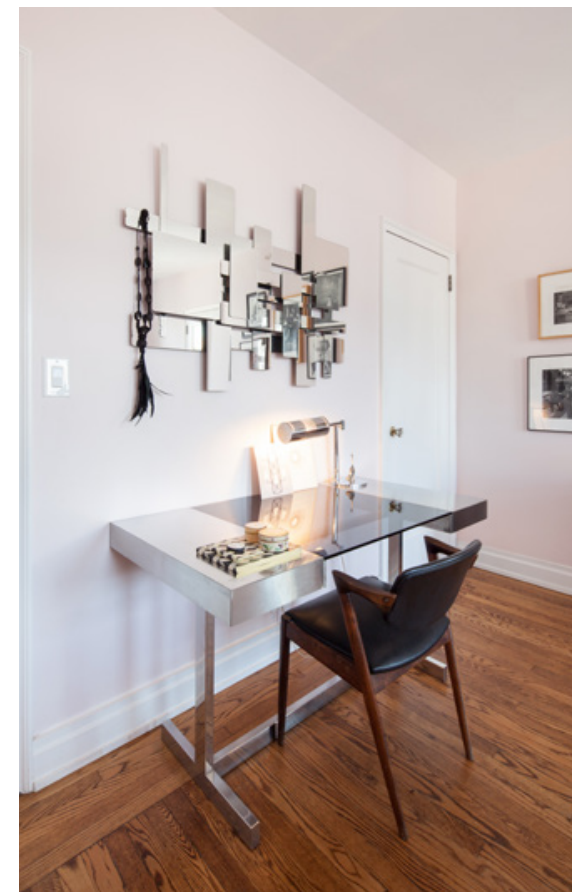
## HIGHLINE OVERLOOK

Chelsea

Location is everything, and this small but perfectly formed one-bedroom flat sits right by the High Line, a former freight rail line built above street level that has been turned into a snaking, linear park. This embrace of the old transmogrified into a modern experience saturates this home as well, with a host who intermingles ages and styles fluently – this apartment would have suited Holly Golightly like an LBD, full of chic monochromes and boudoir-soft textiles.



clockwise from above:  
Smooth suede sofas, hide throws, and a design-forward aesthetic in the living space; the cushy master bedroom with a wall of vintage photographs; the retro-inspired bathroom; a mid-century mirrored desk is echoed by the 1950s sculptural mirror hanging above.





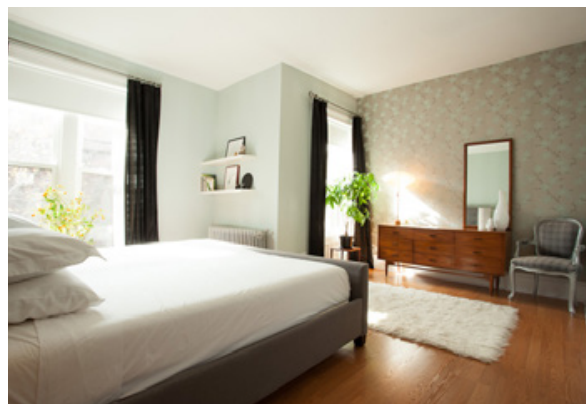


# 10

## CLINTON STREET

Cobble Hill

Inside a quintessential brick-faced brownstone on a picturesque tree-lined block in Cobble Hill, lies this two-bedroom apartment dressed in the colours and textures of the Scandinavian landscape. With rugged elements of nature interspersed with the region's mid-century modern furniture, and teamed with bare floorboards, plenty of houseplants and windows that stream in the sunlight, this is a space that brings the Nordic outdoor in. The simple but very good life is led in this hip area of Brooklyn, making it the perfect place for the writer and TV editor hosts to raise their young daughter and walk the Jack Russell.



from top:  
The living room is infused with a mixture of Scandinavian sleek and log cabin chic; a retro Danish dining set is crafted out of maple-hued wood; the dreamy wallpapered bedroom is finished off with an upholstered bed; comfortable armchairs on the private roof terrace.

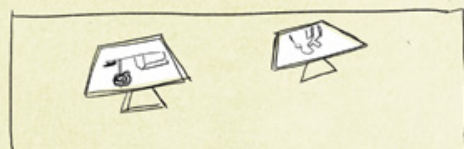
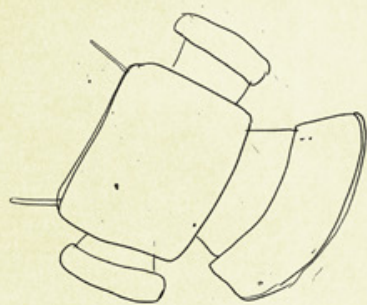
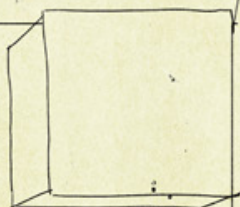
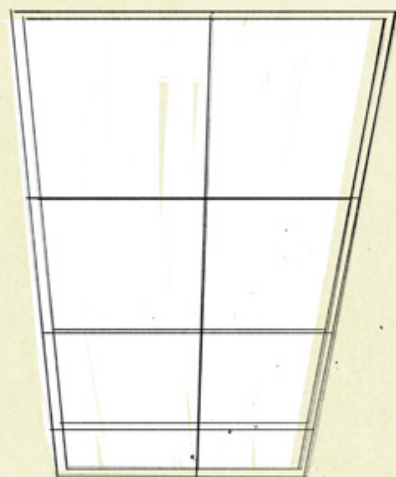
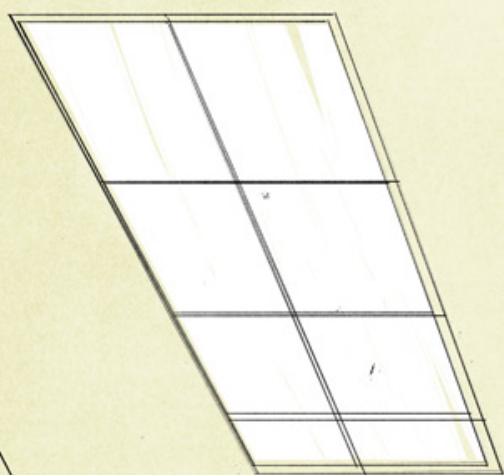
opposite:  
A woven Jens Risom lounge chair is paired with a rough-hewn wood coffee table.









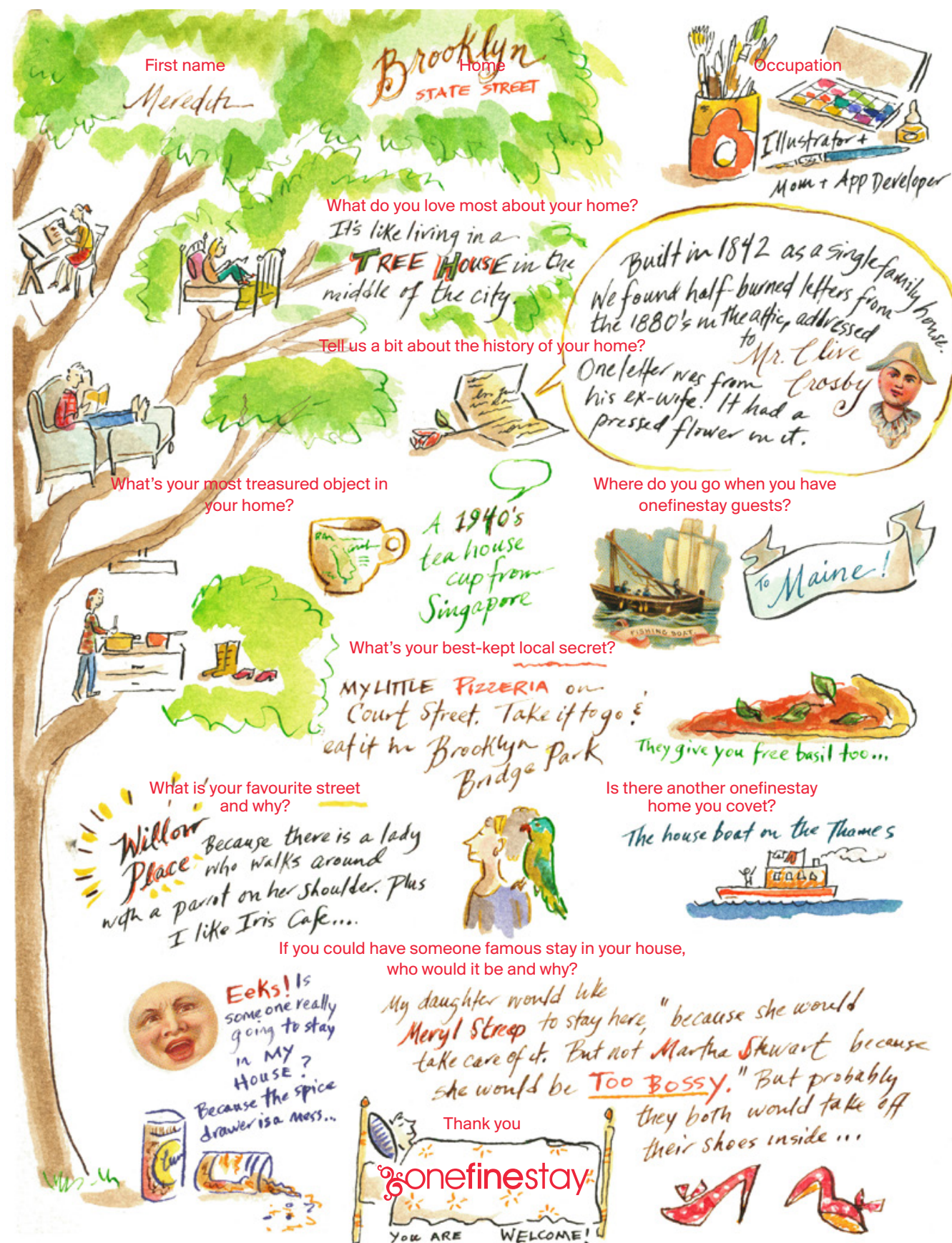


The Snug



# HOME TRUTHS

We hand over the *Guestbook* reins to a selection of our London and New York hosts to uncover the real local secrets, background stories and quirky traits of their homes





First name: Helen  
Home: Highgate Hornsey Lane Gardens  
Occupation: Teacher

What do you love most about your home?

The light, the space - old meets new  
The library, the music room

Tell us a bit about the history of your home?

Edwardian - 1880 -  
servants quarters, cast-iron fireplaces  
stained glass front door.

What's your most treasured object in your home?

Dining Table - made by my husband - circular + 6ft diameter  
Bronze Bust of my daughter

Where do you go when you have onefinestay guests?

on holiday - stay with daughter!

What's your best-kept local secret?

Parkland walk behind our house -  
disused railway land now used for walks & running  
- natural woodland.

What is your favourite street and why?

Regent Street - Architecture & Shopping  
Highgate High Street - Real village feeling

Is there another onefinestay home you covet?

'Old Nichol St'

If you could have someone famous stay in your house, who would it be and why?

Steve Jobs, Oscar Wilde - so witty what a dinner guest.  
Inspirational, came from humble beginnings - innovative.

Thank you

onefinestay

Barack Obama who achieved the unachievable - Great orator - what an honour!

First name: Molly  
Home: Oak Wood Court Holland Park  
Occupation: Journalist

What do you love most about your home?

THE HUGE WINDOWS WHICH LET IN LIGHT THROUGHOUT THE DAY.

Tell us a bit about the history of your home?

ITS A MANSION BLOCK BUILT AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY FOR CIVIL SERVANTS. MY STEPDAD BROUGHT IT 20 YEARS AGO AS A BACHELOR PAD IT WAS THEN A FAMILY HOME NOW MY BOYFRIEND AND I LIVE HERE.

What's your most treasured object in your home?

A PHOTOGRAPH A GOOD TOK IN NEW YORK THAT I LOVE, AND MY BOYFRIEND RECENTLY BLEW UP \$ FRAMED & GAVE TO ME FOR OUR FIFTH ANNIVERSARY AND MY GOLD FISH, BUT THATS NOT AN OBJECT...

Where do you go when you have onefinestay guests?

All over, as much as possible

What's your best-kept local secret?

ON A WARM SUMMER EVENING, GET A PICNIC TOGETHER & FIND A GOOD SPOT IN HOLLAND PARK & ENJOY THE SOUNDS OF THE OPERA

What is your favourite street and why?

ADAM & EVE Mews, JUST OFF HIGH STREET KEN - ITS THE BEST NAMED STREET IN LONDON!

Is there another onefinestay home you covet?

I VE GOT MY EYE ON SPRING STREET, NEW YORK

If you could have someone famous stay in your house, who would it be and why?

BEYONCE, IT MAY BE SMALLER THAN SITES USED TO, BUT I THINK SHE'D REALLY ENJOY WHAT THE AREA HAS TO OFFER!

Thank you

onefinestay

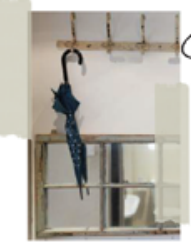


First name Home Occupation

Betty CLIFTON gardens LONDON  
GRAPHIC DESIGNER + CALLIGRAPHER +  
having inky hands

What do you love most about your home?

the height & the light



What's your most treasured object in your home?



THE VIEW FROM THE WINDOWS

What's your best-kept local secret?



Where do you go when you have onefinestay guests?

Florence & Co. FOR ITS BEAUTY, PEOPLE, IDEAS, & INSPIRATION  
AND COMPANY Via Maggio N° 47R Firenze 50125 Italia



THE HIDDEN WONDERLAND OF CLIFTON nurseries : BEAUTIFUL PLANTS & FLOWERS

What is your favourite street and why?



THE amazing MOUNT STREET PRINTERS - THEY SELL MY STATIONERY DESIGNS!

Is there another onefinestay home you covet?

Simone's in PARIS

If you could have someone famous stay in your house, who would it be and why?

BRUNO MUNARI/JEAN COCTEAU/ANDY WARHOL + ANYONE WHO COULD DRAW AN EFFORTLESSLY BRILLIANT TEMPEST OF STARS ★ ALL OVER MY WALLS... THEN AGAIN I MIGHT JUST GET MY THREE YEAR OLD TO DO THAT!

Thank you *grazie* onefinestay

First name Home Occupation

Hugo Manor Road Sales & Marketing

What do you love most about your home?

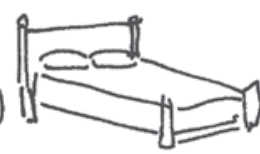
The peace and quiet of our back bedroom overlooking the huge trees of Abney Park Cemetery

Tell us a bit about the history of your home?

It's a Victorian conversion - All I know that the people living there before were pretty strange, and had bad taste. They'd decorated it horrendously!

What's your most treasured object in your home?

My bed: big, sturdy & endlessly comfortable.



Where do you go when you have onefinestay guests?

Travel for work... Maybe recently had a blissful two week holiday in Scopello, a tranquil fishing village in N. Sicily.

What's your best-kept local secret?

The abandoned ~~church~~ church in the middle of Abney Park Cemetery - beautiful, and a little spooky!

What is your favourite street and why?

Stoke Newington Church Street. The church, the shops, garden centre, restaurants and cafes.

Is there another onefinestay home you covet?

The Boat House. Wow. And Fournier Street - looks magical.

If you could have someone famous stay in your house, who would it be and why?

I could spend every weekend there for the rest of my life and be a happy man.

Michael Sandel, for the wine belled debates on justice, society and the economy

Thank you

onefinestay





First name Home Occupation  
 Barbara and Bill Greenwich St.  
 n.y.c. actors/  
 playwrights

What do you love most about your home?

It's sense of history; The knowledge that centuries of lives have been lived in this place.

Tell us a bit about the history of your home?

Our home was built in 1835 by Abraham Cooper, a tailor, who was probably trying to escape the yellow fever epidemic ravaging NY at that time. Many of the home's original features are still intact.

What's your most treasured object in your home?

Barbara's grandmother's china cabinet filled with her belongings.

Where do you go when you have onefinestay guests?

We have a small seaside bungalow in Far Rockaway, N.Y. If we're not travelling for work or pleasure, we're there.

What's your best-kept local secret?

H-B Playwright's Theatre on Bank St. It offers free, quality theatre.

What is your favourite street and why?

Bedford St., because it's not yet been commercialized. There are still small shops and cafes.

Is there another onefinestay home you covet?

In London:  
 #3, Tower Bridge Rd  
 Shad Thames

If you could have someone famous stay in your house, who would it be and why?

Bill and Hillary Clinton. Their residence would be interesting with the historical essence of our home.

Thank you

onefinestay

PROMOTION

# VIVE LE UNHOTEL



illustration KEN FALLIN



We have donned berets, put stripes on our jumpers and, with a hop, skip and a cheery wave, onefinestay has bounded across the English Channel to open the unhotel in Paris. And there the clichés will cease, as we swish about the city opening doors in unexpected places, perambulating to haunts hidden and new, and indulging in pastries and pastis to recover. Our City of Light will be different for all of you. Come, and make your own pawprints here.

If you, or anyone you know, may be interested in becoming a Paris host get in touch on [paris.residences@onefinestay.com](mailto:paris.residences@onefinestay.com)



PROMOTION

NEW YORK

PROMOTION

NEW YORK



A collage of ten images representing various aspects of London. The central image is the word "LONDON" in a large, black, serif font. Surrounding it are nine smaller images: a classic silver car, a riverside walk with a bridge in the background, a narrow street with colorful buildings, a cinema entrance with the word "RENOIR" and "CINEMA" below it, a row of colorful doors, a park with a row of green chairs, a black postbox, and a shop with the sign "PAUL ROTHE &amp; SON".





## OUR SOCIAL WHIRL

### A NOVEL DINNER

The grand finale to a series of events we curated with the brilliant Idler Academy, a pop-up novel dinner brought Evelyn Waugh's iconic *Brideshead Revisited* to life for one night on a hot summer's day in West London. Guests were treated to fine wine, three courses and the Sacred and Profane memories of our very own Captain Charles Ryder, and a fortunate few even found themselves dining in the illustrious company of Aloysius the bear. In the company of fine writing, philosophy and merriment, it was a fitting celebration of one of British literature's finest ever homes.



### A PYTHON COMES TO TOWN

A treat for us in May, with our sponsorship of the opening night of the Festival of Asian Literature, and a chance to meet Monty Python stalwart, onefinestay icon and the man reputed to be the nicest in the world, Michael Palin. In a wide-ranging conversation with *The Times'* literary editor Erica Wagner at London's Commonwealth Club, he talked about how his stellar career has been a series of happy accidents, his optimism when globetrotting and, of course, his new novel, *The Truth*. And you will be unsurprised to learn that a gaggle of us were later to be found patiently queuing, laden with his tomes waiting to be autographed by the author's hand.



### THE ART OF THE MATTER

No bones about it, here at onefinestay we like the urbane, but that's not to say we don't enjoy a little jaunt out of town now and then. So it was that onefinestay NYC joined the great and good of the art world at the 6th annual ArtHamptons Fine Art Fair. Against a backdrop of giant sculptures and polo matches, the team took centre stage to draw the eagerly awaited onefinestay raffle. Artists and art-loving Hamptonites alike entered for a chance to stay in a beautiful, art-filled London home from our portfolio. Not content to leave it to luck, we hear that several people were even plotting to stuff the raffle box. Perhaps we should have expected an element of artistic license given our audience.





#### TRICK OR TREAT

On the 6 June the whole onefinestay staff across London and New York arrived at their desks to discover an itinerary of treats planned for the day ahead. It was well deserved: each and every person had kept his or her nose to the grindstone to deliver five consecutive record-breaking months. In New York, the gang enjoyed a delicious continental breakfast, and later pizzas and ping-pong (in a perhaps inadvisable order). Meanwhile, or more like five hours earlier on BST, the London team were tucking in to breakfast rolls, tasting the East India Company's finest teas, and melting under the hands of some seriously good masseuses. They ended the day with a copious feast of curries, generous supplies of gin, and a hilarious taxi photo booth (these latter in exactly the right order).



#### A PRODUCT OF OUR TIME

April saw the flourishing launch of the tech team into our Social Whirl. Prodcraft is an on-going series of interviews and talks exploring what it means to be a product manager. It has over the course of three sessions welcomed tough-talking product leaders including Dave Thomson, head of product at notonthehighstreet.com, Dave Washa of moo.com and Michelle You of songkick.com to 'fireside chats' at the onefinestay office in London. Sessions run every month and are open to anyone that preregisters, with the chance to catch up via podcasts at [tech.onefinestay.com](http://tech.onefinestay.com).



#### NEW DIGS IN NEW YORK

After hitting its landmark 250 homes last month, the New York office turned another corner – just a block up in fact – into a bright, airy and brand new office space on Hudson Street, SoHo. A warehouse space complete with large windows, designer chairs and acres of the shiniest wooden floors, it seemed onefinestay NYC at only a year-and-a-half old, was now all grown up. That said, with a conference-room table that doubles up into ping pong and plenty of fun and games in the break-out room, things aren't all serious just yet.



# ALL FOURS

Officially, onefinestay was born to four proud fathers on 13th September 2009, and turns four this month. The unofficial story is curiously.



words GREG MARSH  
CEO & Co-founder of onefinestay

New companies don't leap into the world entire; they gestate. In the beginning, there was a crazy idea, and then there was doubt. Then, qualms were overmastered, there was a small team, some cash, a larger team, and finally, in June 2010, a business. Members started joining and guests started staying, and somewhere along the line we knew the crazy idea was also a good one.

Word spread. By the end of our first year we had 40 members; one year later, 250 (those terrible twos). By the time we were speaking in sentences and penned the first edition of Guestbook, more than 1,000 homeowners had opted to make their beautiful homes available to guests that craved a more authentic, more inspiring way to experience a city.

Behind the scenes, it's been challenging, surprising and rewarding in equal measure. Operationally, onefinestay's a delicate dance of people (almost 200, and counting), processes and systems, supported by a blend of technology, hard work, and – at times – bloody-mindedness.

Now as onefinestay toddles into its fifth year of life, we add Paris and Los Angeles to the mix.

With one foot in the Thames and one in the Hudson, and hands at full stretch in Paris to the East and LA to the West, onefinestay is not the sort of toddler that it's easy to visualise: an odd, gangly creature, bestride the globe with limbs akimbo. Yet the metaphor captures something true – we do still have some growing up to do. We still fall off our tricycle a tad more often than we'd like. Then get back on again.

So gradually, year by year, city by city, we become who we are.

