

The

ENGLISH HOME



Celebrating the essence of English style

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MERRY & BRIGHT

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MAGICAL HOMES

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Creating a connection with nature was one of the driving forces behind the vision for this Victorian house: 'I wanted it to feel like a respite in the city'

While for some, the arrival of the festive season means a mad dash to the shops in search of those elusive gifts, for interior designer Emma Sims-Hilditch, it prompts a long country walk with her family, collecting the natural foliage that she will later use to decorate their London home. With vases of greenery on worktops, and fir garlands twinkling with white lights lining mantels and even strung above the roll-top bath in the principal suite, this is a stylishly unfussy Christmas affair with a firm nod to the colours and textures of nature – much like the design approach that permeates the family's Parson's Green property.

Creating a connection with nature was one of the driving forces behind the vision for this Victorian house. "I wanted it to feel like a respite in the city," explains Emma. As the founder of interior design studio Sims Hilditch, Emma is a proponent of the timeless English country house aesthetic, redefined to reflect the needs of our contemporary lifestyles. She applied her expert decorator's eye to the interiors, but not before considerable thought went into reconfiguring the terraced house – originally a two-up, two-down worker's cottage – to create an expansive, well-conceived space for city living. "People say it's now a Tardis," laughs Emma.

Working with her architectural planning team at Sims Hilditch, and with input from her husband, John, the co-founder of homeware brand Neptune, who is "passionate about architecture", Emma set about restructuring the house to best serve the family's needs, eking out every inch of space to ensure the house worked hard from top to bottom. ▶

RIGHT The upstairs sitting room features an antique armchair from Brownrigg Interiors with a cushion from William Yeoward, and an Olivia sofa and a Keswick coffee table from Neptune. The Swedish flatweave rug is from Robert Stephenson and the linen curtain fabric is Pure 3 in Moon Shell by de Le Cuona. The QVC K by Kelly Hoppen pre-lit Christmas tree is embellished with faux willow spray from The Faux Flower Company and decorations from The Danes.

