

A recipe for rural living

Food writer Natasha Corrett's contemporary yet cosy Cotswolds cottage houses a mix of family pieces, vintage and high-street buys... A haven of inspiration



Left Natasha at home in her dream country cottage.

Right The sitting room sofas are from Habitat and are 20 years old – they have been reupholstered and restuffed. The ottoman is from Rose & Grey and the cushions are from Oka. Natasha found the Persian-style rug on Wayfair

Words
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TOP TIP

A patterned rug adds warmth to the otherwise neutral palette in the sitting room



Interiors



Left Natasha sourced all the sanitaryware new from eBay. Of the exposed pipework, she says, 'Five years ago no plumbers in the Cotswolds had done anything like that before and they thought I was mad!'

Below The cottage is Grade II-listed and was originally two smaller properties



FIVE YEARS AGO, the food writer Natasha Corrett swapped the capital for the country, moving to a cottage in the Cotswolds – and as the daughter of renowned interior designer Kelly Hoppen, she wasn't afraid of taking on a project when relocating. With a strong sense of her own decor style – and with a few gems passed down from her mother – she has collaborated with local tradespeople to create a comforting sanctuary that she, her husband Simon and their three-year-old son Rudy call home. Here's how she did it.

Why did you leave London?

I grew up in the country so it's a

move that's always been in the back of my mind. Simon and I rented a tiny cottage as a weekend retreat for over two years to see how often we'd use it and we eventually spent less and less time in London. We were always so desperate to get out. By renting we got to know the Cotswolds really well and it enabled us to identify the villages that we'd like to live in.

What appealed to you about this particular cottage?

I definitely like a project; the previous owner had lived here for 28 years and it was really run-down. We saw a lot of properties but Simon said that my face in-



TOPTIP

Mismatched Kilner jars and a vintage wooden trug add to the kitchen's informal vibe

stantly lit up when I walked in here. Originally it was two small cottages and it is Grade II-listed; there were so many lovely features, such as exposed stonework and beautiful beams.

How much work did it need?

We didn't do anything structural but gutted the interiors and started again, putting in new bathrooms, the kitchen and all new carpets. A lot of the beams were dark and covered in thick gloss paint, so we sanded them back and painted some white, which has made everything feel so much lighter. We'd like to extend but the listed status is making it tricky to get permission.

As someone who cooks for a living, how did you make the kitchen hard-working?

I really love marble but I'm constantly using turmeric and lemon and I would have destroyed it, so I went for a porcelain top instead and it looks just like the real thing. I put an island in because it's more sociable for chatting while cooking. Our village isn't on the gas mains so under the island are two steam ovens and there's an induction hob. The units are made up of Howdens carcasses and I had a local joiner create bespoke oak fronts with a lovely taupe stain finish. I entertain a lot and we also have an outdoor kitchen



Left The shelves are made from old scaffolding boards and the shade of green paint on the walls was mixed by Natasha. The porcelain worktop is from Precious Marble in Bedfordshire

Below The orange armchair is a favourite piece – nicknamed the ‘Alice chair’ because of its outsize proportions



Above Both the dining table – which has been stripped back to bare wood – and the large hanging lamp used to belong to Natasha’s mother, interior designer Kelly Hoppen

that my brother-in-law built for me where we’ve got a barbecue and a wood-fired pizza oven.

How has your mother influenced your style?

Her creativity has certainly rubbed off on me but my taste is incredibly different to hers – I embrace colour more and I think my look is softer. Mum has always said to have a muted background and then add accessories for colour, otherwise you’ll end up getting bored and find yourself painting the walls every year, and I think she’s right. I always seek her opinion and won’t even pick a lampshade without asking what she

thinks of it. I’ve inherited a few pieces from her, some lamps and the dining table, which was lacquered and I had stripped back to bare wood.

Where do you like to shop for homewares?

I’m a bit of a bargain-hunter; I love Cox & Cox, Wayfair and eBay and I often look on Vinterior. Lots of my cushions are from Oka – they have so much choice. My favourite piece is the big orange chair in the living room; we call it the Alice chair because you feel so tiny in it, like Alice in Wonderland. I bought it from a little shop in Notting Hill about 10 years ago and it’s been reupholstered three

times since. I’ll often have a vision of what I want and if I can’t find it then I’ll find someone locally who can make it for me.

How have you solved the conundrum of storing your toddler’s toys?

There is often lots of mess everywhere. But Rudy has a unit that houses about three-quarters of his toys, a little wooden play kitchen in the sitting room and a big basket to put the rest in. We don’t have a playroom that you can shut the door on so we’ve had to make it work within the space. *Natasha’s new book, ‘Family Kitchen’, is out now (Mum Knows Best, £25)*