

# CONSERVATION NEWS

Kent

Winter 2024 • Complimentary

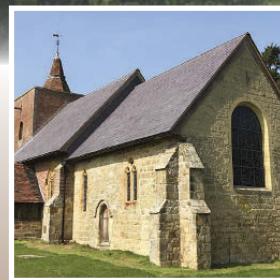
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# WINTER 2024

# Welcome



The winter months can be a struggle: cold dark days and the aftermath of a hectic Christmas can take their toll on our energy levels and mood, so it's important that we fill out lives with wonderful things to lift the spirits while we await the coming of spring.

Here at Conservation News we know just how to find a little light in the dark – quite literally in our feature on bringing light into your home!

We've also got delicious chocolate recipes to tickle the taste buds, home features to help you make your living spaces an oasis of comfort and calm, and gardening features that help you see that nature can be beautiful even when the skies are grey.

So settle in with Conservation News and welcome in the new year with us!

*Dawn*

*Competition winner from our autumn issue:  
Sarah Sutton from Maidstone*



## CONSERVATION NEWS

[conservationnews.co.uk](http://conservationnews.co.uk)

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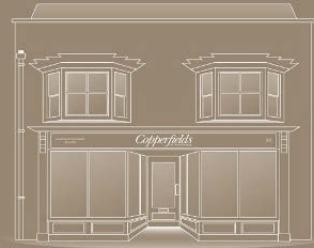
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WINTER 2024

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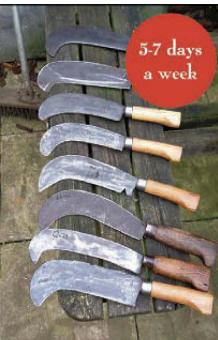
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## Natural decorations

Bare stems revealed in winter offer a range of ornamental opportunities. Bring some dried seedheads inside, along with bright stems, such as willow and cornus, and some holly for decorations including wreaths or make woodland-inspired foliage pendants or wine glass stem decorations using eucalyptus sprigs.



## PRUNE GRAPES

Early winter is the best time to prune grape vines.

Leave it too late and pruning cuts are likely to bleed sap and weaken the plant.

Lop your vine back to a basic minimal framework. Don't be afraid to be radical: grape vines only fruit on new growth.



# GARDEN NOTES

Even though it's cold outside, winter gardening allows you to keep your garden thriving.

It is an important time to prepare your garden beds and plan for the season ahead to ensure your efforts lead to a productive and beautiful garden all year round.



## WINTER WALKS

Wrap up warm and blow away the cobwebs by taking a stroll in the gardens of Hever Castle where the warm winter bark of the redwood trees glows against the winter sky. Hever's yew topiary looks fantastic with a covering of snow or frost and the majestic hellebores nod gracefully in the winter sun. [hevercastle.co.uk](http://hevercastle.co.uk)



The Bedgebury Pinetum becomes adorned with colourful lights, turning into a magical wonderland by night. There are singing trees, colour changing lights, giant baubles and snowflakes. [forestryengland.uk/bedgebury](http://forestryengland.uk/bedgebury)



## Winterise the greenhouse

Don't forget to winterise the greenhouse. Make sure plants stay healthy and pest-free, keep harvesting winter salads and watering and feeding overwintering citrus plants when needed. If you can heat your greenhouse, do so, either with an electric warmer or a simple paraffin one. If your greenhouse is unheated, wrap plants in a frost protection blanket or bubble wrap during severe cold snaps, making sure you remove the covering when the temperature rises to prevent rotting.

### Plants for winter colour

**Camellia 'Yuletide'** – a bushy, evergreen shrub covered in polished foliage and has brilliant red flowers.



**Holly 'Argentea marginata'** – a cultivar producing abundant red berries. Evergreen hollies are easy to grow, succeeding on most soils. Best planted as young container plants any time of year. They respond well to pruning, making them excellent subjects for topiary and training as standards.



### What to do in the garden now

- During mild winters, you can still plant fruit trees, shade trees and flowering trees.
- When temperatures are below freezing, plant new evergreens, rose bushes and shrubs.
- Prune shrubs and deciduous shade trees.
- Keep up with raking.
- Put a compost pile on top of your garden to protect bulbs and perennial plants from frost.
- Spread out a layer of mulch over your garden.
- Do maintenance on your garden tools.
- Think of the plants that you're going to grow next year, and sketch out plans.

### Grow it, cook it, eat

Winter doesn't mean it's the end of the growing season. If you've really got into growing your own fruits and vegetables, with all their environmental and health benefits, and are looking for kitchen garden ideas that extend into winter, there are many delicious crops that flourish in the colder months. Carrots are just one example and make a perfect side dish to your Sunday roast.





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# HIP HIP HOORAY!

Roses grace the garden with gorgeous blooms, fragrance, and form. They also produce beautiful rosehips! Extend the interest in roses by fostering hips that enliven the winter garden in all sizes, shapes, and colours.

**N**ow the autumn has given way to winter and the timely cold weather is upon us many British growers will be lifting their roses for the start of the bare root planting season.

November through to March is the best time to plant roses and bare root stocks are cheaper than potted plants later in the season.

Roses bring so much to the garden with their exquisite flowers and fragrance but many species and varieties have another hidden gem that only reveals itself as the summer ends: rosehips!

It's one of my favourite features of many roses and one that brings pure joy when other areas of the garden are diminishing. Amongst the

barley and umber colour of the autumn garden sparkle little jewels of colour. Iridescent with rain drops and sugar-coated in the frost, they bring colour and drama to any outdoor space.

Beyond their ornamental value, rose hips provide wildlife with a winter food source and are a great source of vitamin C for us as well as the birds. Rosehips can be collected and easily turned into jelly or jam with just a little effort. They are also beautifully decorative to bring inside the home. The stems and sprays can be used to make wreaths and garlands – let your imagination run wild!

There are roses with hips for every situation from large areas to pots on the patio.





IN ORDER TO ENJOY THE HIPS DEADHEADING HAS TO STOP BY MID AUGUST SO THAT THE FLOWERS CAN DEVELOP INTO ROSEHIPS FULL OF SEEDS. WAIT UNTIL JANUARY TO PRUNE THEM AFTER THE HIPS HAVE NATURALLY WITHERED.

Some of my favourite roses for their hips are:

*Rosa Rugosa* has large, rounded orange hips abundantly produced and long lasting . This wild rose is ideal for informal hedging and coastal gardens with bare root plants being sold at a very reasonable price.

*Rosa Glauca*, one of my absolute favourite varieties. Striking grey-blue foliage and glowing single pink flowers give way to small, perfectly round, dark red hips.

*Rosa Canina* or Dog Rose is a great choice for wildlife gardens, its hips are beloved by birds and make excellent syrup. Earlier in the year the pale pink delicate flowers have bright yellow stamens attractive to bees and hoverflies.

Rambling rose *Rosa Filipes* 'Kiftsgate' is a great rose for covering a large wall or climbing into a large tree. It bears clusters of white, open flowers in the summer followed by large sprays of small red hips.

*Rosa Pimpinellifolia* also known as the Scotch rose is a smaller rose with creamy white flowers and the most enchanting deep purple, almost black, shiny hips. It thrives in sandy soil

and will happily grow on chalk.

*Rosa Moyesii 'Geranium'* is a large shrub rose that can be grown as a climber with bright coral flowers during the summer followed by fantastically shaped elongated orange red fruits.

*Rosa Dannahue* is a new variety modern shrub rose by David Austin that is perfect for a pot. It has dusky apricot yellow blooms that have an old-fashioned quality and an exquisite scent. They are followed by orange rounded hips.

Getting creative with your rose hips is the fun bit, there are many things to make and do.

They are also delicious and packed with antioxidants and vitamin C, perfect for boosting your immune system. However they cannot be eaten whole straight from the plant as they contain tiny hairs around the seeds that irritate the throat and stomach. The jelly inside the hip has to be extracted. The simplest way to do this is to squeeze the hip near the end that was attached to the branch. You will see the soft orange jelly escape. This can be eaten raw or prepared into rosehip jelly.



“

THINK ABOUT PLANTING SOME ROSES THIS WINTER FOR A BEAUTIFUL AND LONG SEASONAL DISPLAY THAT EXTENDS BOTH THE AESTHETIC AND WILDLIFE BENEFITS OF YOUR GARDEN.



## *Creating a rose hip wreath*

Why not use rose hips to create a beautiful, natural wreath? The rich red and orange hues are perfect for Christmas and look great alongside pinecones, evergreen branches, and dried flowers.

Start by wrapping moss or ivy around a wire or natural wreath frame. Add sprays of

rosehips along with other foliage by tying in small bunches with fine wire and working around in a circle clockwise from the top, fastening each bunch close to the next at a slight angle away from the centre of the wreath.

Finish with a ribbon to hang it.

## *Making rosehip jelly*

- Collect hips, wash, dry and cut in halves.
- Cover with cold water in a stainless steel pan and add an apple cut in half to the water.
- Bring to the boil and simmer until the hips are mushy. Remove the apple.
- Strain the liquid through a piece of muslin or a jelly bag.
- When all the liquid has passed through the bag, measure the juice in a measuring jug and pour into a clean pan.
- Bring to the boil and add 500g of jam sugar for each ½ litre of liquid, boil until setting point is reached and you see the consistency turn from liquid to a thicker syrup. It should take between 5 and 15 minutes.
- Pour into clean jars, and cover.

Use as a spread, a daily tincture, add to gravy, stews, porridge and whatever else you fancy.

Bare root roses are available from many British rose growers, including here in Kent and are available to order online.

MY FAVOURITE GROWERS ARE:

**Rumwood Nurseries**, Langley, Maidstone ([rumwoodnurseries.co.uk](http://rumwoodnurseries.co.uk))

**David Austin Roses**, Albrighton, Shropshire ([www.davaustinroses.co.uk](http://www.davaustinroses.co.uk))

**Peter Beale Roses**, Norwich, Norfolk ([www.peterbealesroses.com](http://www.peterbealesroses.com))

So think about planting some roses this winter for a beautiful and long seasonal display that extends both the aesthetic and wildlife benefits of your garden into the darkest months of the year.

If you'd like advice on planting roses during this bare root season or designing roses into your planting schemes I would love to hear from you.

[Sarah@thegardencreative.com](mailto:Sarah@thegardencreative.com)  
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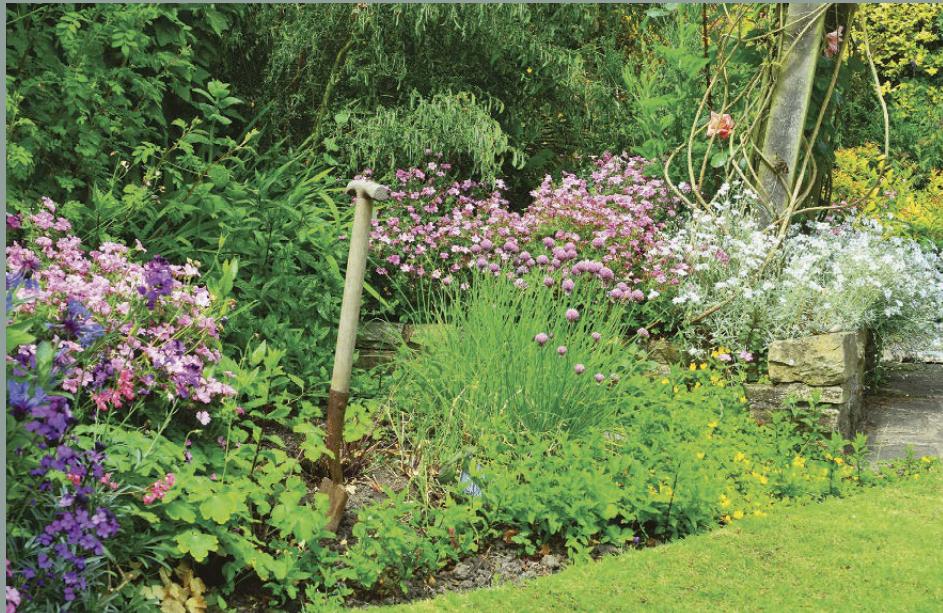


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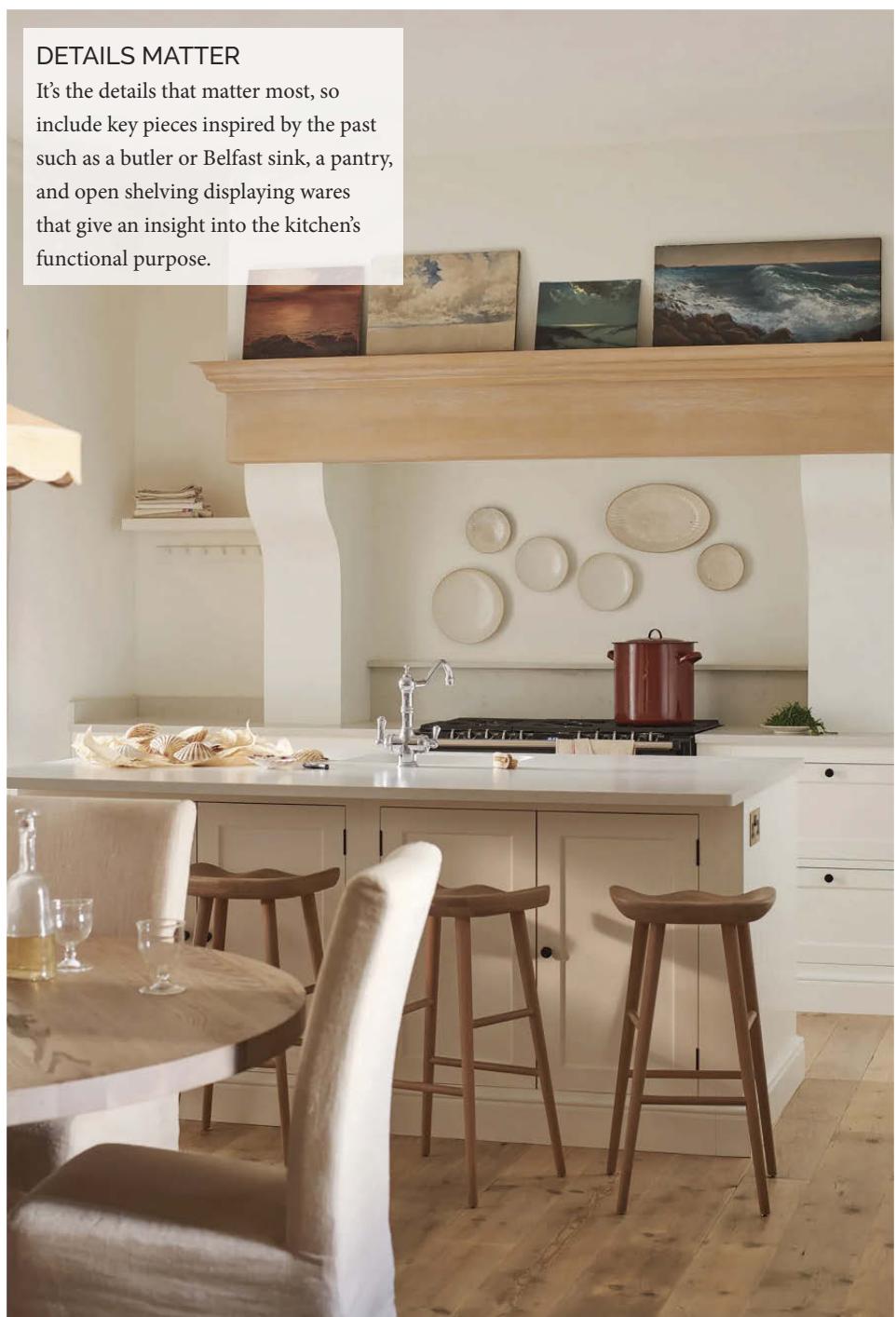
## VICTORIAN KITCHEN FEATURES

- A large cook's table or island unit
- Freestanding furniture such as a glassware/crockery dresser
- Ornate cornicing and twisted pilasters
- Pulley clothes dryer above a range cooker
- Scullery-style wet area with butler's sink
- Copper items such as jelly moulds and kettles
- Cream or white painted cabinetry mixed with oak or teak worktops
- Dentil moulding and intricately carved corbels



## DETAILS MATTER

It's the details that matter most, so include key pieces inspired by the past such as a butler or Belfast sink, a pantry, and open shelving displaying wares that give an insight into the kitchen's functional purpose.



## TAKE A STAND

Although the pedestal sink was popular in Victorian bathroom ideas, their love of wood and expensive materials was demonstrated in the design of bathroom furniture such as washstands. This beautiful version is a great example of how an historical item can be updated and made suitable for use in modern homes.



## RAISE IT UP

If you're looking at types of toilet, there's one key rule to adhere to when it comes to choosing the best one for your Victorian bathroom idea: opt for a high-level cistern toilet with exposed pipework. This design not only pays homage to Victorian engineering but also adds an element of decorative flair to the bathroom.



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Along with her selection of cards, Charlotte sells original artworks, mini-framed artworks and decorations, as well as keepsake commissions. These range from child portraits, cards, wedding gifts, and simple pet portraits in her illustrative and papercut style. There is also a small range of stationery and whimsical stickers.

Charlotte is inspired by the small joys, those glimmers of daily life: a steaming cup of tea, a good book, a quiet afternoon, an early pastel sunrise, a clear starry night, a fresh pot of coffee, a puzzle on a rainy Sunday, a slow morning, a long walk in the woods, her children embracing their childhood, and whimsical fairytales.



Other things that inspire her are Scotland, the works of Beatrix Potter and children's books. Charlotte's cards and illustrations can be found on Etsy (CharlotteHeatherIllo) and in a few independent shops dotted around Kent, as well as several seasonal markets throughout the year. (Instagram @charlotteheatherillustration.)

- Made in Ashford
- Native Three, Folkestone
- Canterbury Makers • Macknade, Faversham
- Especially Health, Sevenoaks

After a year at art college, Charlotte studied Fashion Design at Nottingham Trent University and during her time there, she discovered a real passion for illustration. Joining Association of

## - Artist profile -



Illustrators for a short time, graduating, and then getting admin jobs to support herself financially, her dream to illustrate children's books remained. Becoming a mother and seemingly always surrounded by piles of paper and a box filled with materials to colour and draw with, gave her the creative nudge she needed to pursue her love of illustration a bit further, taking it more seriously.

During lockdown, Charlotte and her children regularly sat at the table creating, as well as joining in with online art clubs and signing up

for workshops and mini creative courses.

In early 2022 she registered as self-employed, almost at the same time as becoming a single parent. Signing up to a free online business course, she pushed herself out of her comfort zone, and applied for her first market for a month's time, with zero stock at all. It was the motivation she needed to get started.

The year ended with having illustrated her first Children's book, in collaboration with a local grotto. All things magical and Christmas! A story that fuelled her dream...

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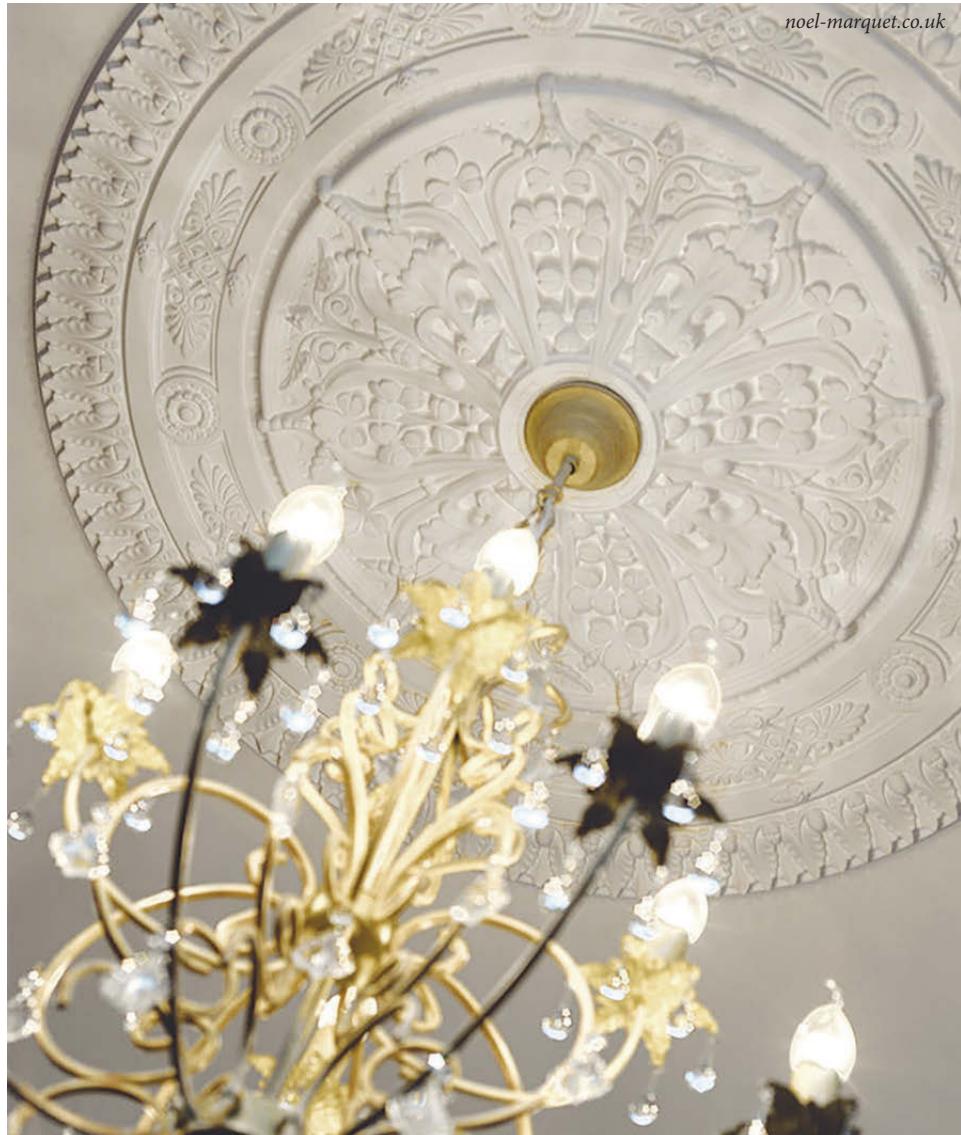
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- *Decorative details* -

# PLASTER CRAFT

Plaster ornamentation adds character to any room and has been around since the 17th century, when plastered ceilings became the must-have decor of choice for wealthy families.



## A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

The ceiling rose has been a part of interior decor since the 1600s, but if you think its function is purely decorative, think again. In fact, this type of decoration was originally installed to stop the ceiling getting scorched and discoloured by candle or gas flames, meaning that you only had to redecorate the rose – not the entire ceiling.



*ambient-architecture.ie*



## CORNICE STYLES

Cornices are decorative moldings that run along the upper edge of the walls where they meet the ceiling. In Victorian design, you'll find different cornice styles, such as dentil cornices with small and acanthus leaf cornices adorned with intricately carved foliage motifs. Each style brings a unique character to your room, allowing you to choose one that matches your interior decor.



## WALL PANELS

Wall panels are a versatile and stylish way to add texture and dimension to any interior space. Panel molding consists of rectangular or square frames applied to the lower portion of the wall, creating a panel effect. These can be used in conjunction with dado rails or as standalone features. They add depth and texture to your walls, enhancing the overall aesthetic of the room.



## Maintaining plaster mouldings

*Decorative plasterwork can be a room's crowning glory, but often suffers from damages. Use our maintenance checklist and repair guide to restore mouldings to their original beauty.*

### Maintenance checklist

- Find the cause of damp patches and staining and correct at source.
- Check for loose sections of plasterwork.
- Note cracks and other damage.
- Identify and deal with problems associated with supporting timber work.
- Look for rot or insect attack.
- Clean dust and dirt from crevices and remove accumulated paint layers.
- Seek specialist advice if in doubt.
- Repair missing pieces or areas of damage.

### Repair guide

When undertaking renovation or repair work, try to avoid removing mouldings as plasterwork easily crumbles, and timber splits and chips.

Where removal is necessary, photograph, number and note the position of all sections so that they can be correctly returned later.

Minor damage may be repaired with a proprietary filler, while plaster of Paris is ideal for larger repairs. However, plasterwork requires considerable skill so it is advisable to employ a craftsperson where significant or intricate work is required.



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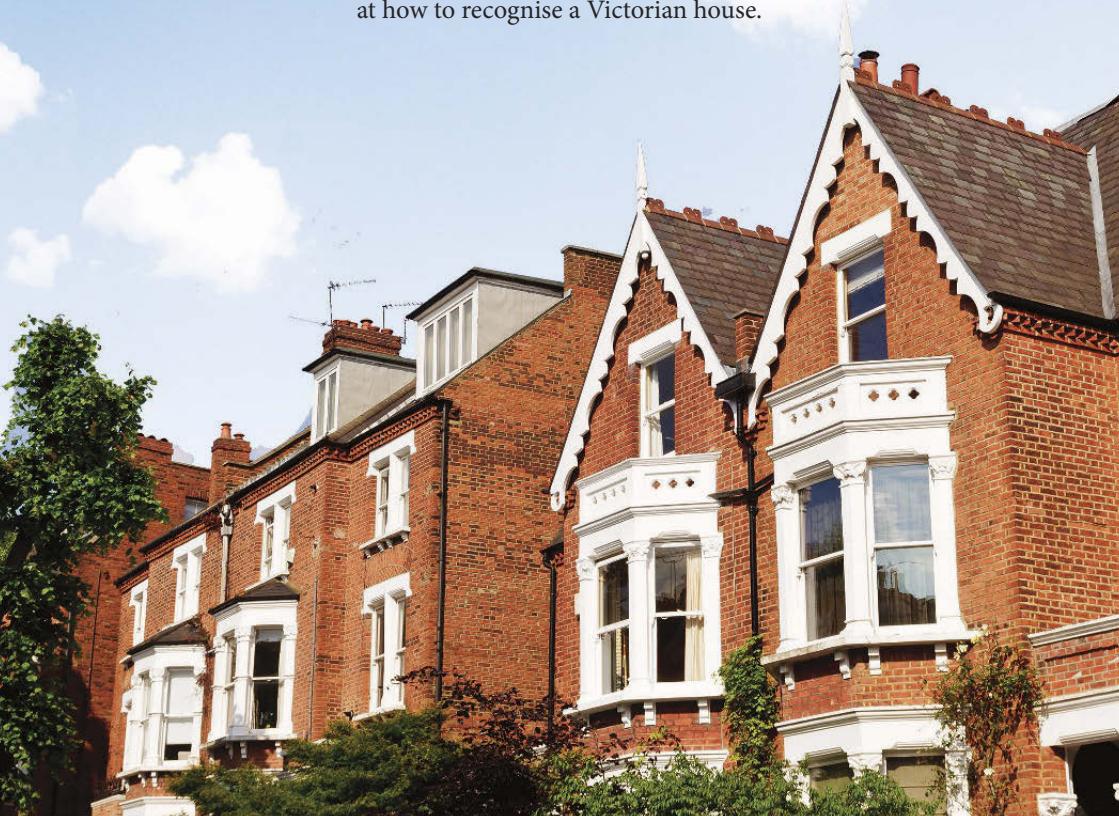
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# ECLECTIC GRANDEUR

We continue with our series of guides to period property, to help you easily identify key features and architectural styles. This time we're looking at how to recognise a Victorian house.



The Victorian era spans an extensive period between 1837 and 1901, whilst Queen Victoria was on the throne. It was a time of enormous change due to the Industrial Revolution, which resulted in huge numbers of workers moving from the country into urban areas, with subsequent surges in population growth. This resulted in the creation of vast quantities of housing providing accommodation for all

classes, including the new workforce, plus the new middle-classes and also the wealthiest. This goes some way to explain why today many of us live in a Victorian house, whether it's a terraced property or something much grander. They are a common feature of our housing stock throughout the UK, and a very popular choice for home owners as they lend themselves to refurbishment and updating as modern family homes, suiting our 21st century lifestyles.

## EXTRAVAGANT ELABORATE EXTERIORS

The love of simple design and symmetry of the preceding Georgian era became old fashioned and from the mid-1800s domestic buildings were heavily influenced by styles and trends that were very much more dramatic, like the Gothic Revival, Arts and Crafts movement and Italianate styles. Victorian houses were characterised by steep slate or tiled roofs sometimes with carved ornaments on the highest points. These embellishments continued throughout the exterior with the addition of ornately carved bargeboards; these timber trims were usually attached along the gable or roof-line. The use of terracotta tiles and patterned brickwork became very popular, all adding to the overall elaborate and showy quality of Victorian design.

## PRESTIGIOUS POINTY PORCHES

The decorative theme of the house's exterior would be echoed in the front porch, usually single storey, which would be adorned with the same style of ornamentation to match the house, including the steep angles of the roof and the intricately carved bargeboards. These were a wonderful way of drawing attention to the entrance of the home, almost becoming a 'shrine' to the most important feature, the front door.

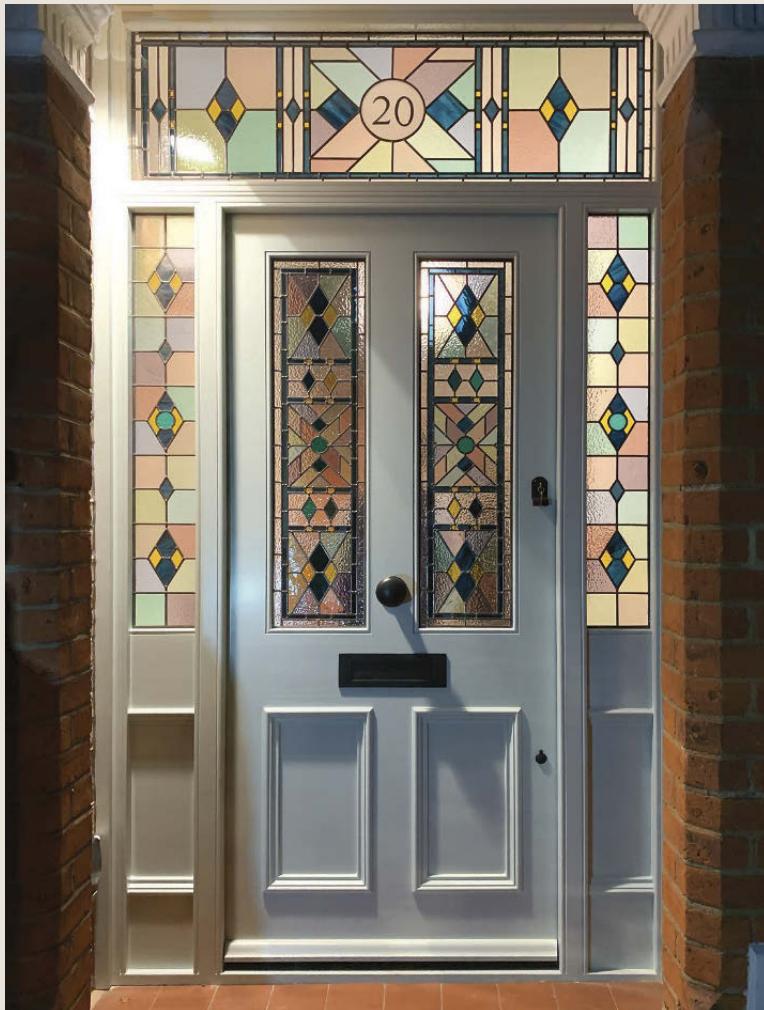
## STUNNING STAINED GLASS

A major advance in glass making technology, the introduction of plate glass, had an enormous impact on residential buildings in this period. Stained glass, which previously would have only been used in churches and large municipal buildings, as it would have



*theenglishporchcompany.co.uk*

been incredibly expensive, was now available to the more humble homeowner, not just the fabulously wealthy. Beautiful colourful stained glass panels were commonly used in entrances and feature windows on stairways. Typical Victorian designs were made up of borders of striking colours flowing around the panel. The central part of the design would consist of geometric shapes, usually pale shades, sometimes opaque, that would contrast beautifully with boldly colourful, eye-catching central features. These were usually stylised birds, fruit and flowers with flowing stems and leaves.



*cotswold-doors.co.uk*

## FABULOUS FRONT DOORS

The front door was an opportunity for the householders to put on a show and to impress visitors approaching the threshold of a well-to-do Victorian property with their wealth, respectability and fashionable style. Doors were usually made from timber and would have carved panels and matching architrave surrounds.

The upper panels would quite often have decorative stained glass panels inserted into them, which helped illuminate the interior and were yet another opportunity to impress. Some properties from this era still have the original stained glass in situ, but if you live in one where they haven't survived, it's worth considering reinstating with reproduction panels, or salvaged ones.



## IMPRESSIVE INTERIORS

Venturing past the beautifully patterned floored hallway into the interior of the Victorian house you would usually be met with large rooms with high ceilings, and, particularly in the reception rooms at the front of the property, the homeowners will have 'pulled out all the stops' employing the full range of elaborate design features the period is so well-known for. Everything was highly decorative: panelling, dado-rails, ceiling roses, cornicing and picture rails. The over-the-top design will have also spread to the staircase, which would be an opportunity to show off the wealth of the household, with an ostentatious design statement full of intricate carved details in the newel posts, handrails and balusters.

## TREASURED TRENDY TILES

By the late 1800s many ordinary Victorian terraced houses had geometric encaustic tiled flooring. These trendy and colourful tiles were most common in the hallway, and their use even spread outside the house to the pathway approaching the front entrance. They were an incredibly hardwearing and practical way of adding colour and making a style statement, indicating that the household was fashionable and well-to-do. Many were covered over in the past because they were considered old hat, especially in the 60s and 70s, so it's well worth a check if you live in a Victorian house to see if you've got some buried tile treasure waiting to be revealed and restored.



### WONDERFUL BAY WINDOWS

The introduction of plate glass also had an impact on the look and most importantly the size of windows in Victorian housing. Windows could now become much larger, sometimes single or double paned sash windows, and the much-loved bay window became very popular. These allowed more natural light into the interior of the house, which gave the impression of a roomier living space. If you're the proud owner of a Victorian home with a bay window, it's an asset that can be made much of as a useful additional space. Here are some ideas of how you can make use of this and bring it up-to-date to suit your lifestyle: create a window-seat with storage built in underneath, or a reading nook. You could fill it with plants and greenery that will thrive in the extra light to get your 'green fix' without venturing outside. Maybe it could be your mini-office or working from home recess, or if it's big enough it could be your dining area?

### FASHIONABLE FEATURE FIREPLACES

As the only way of heating the home, there was usually a fireplace in every room of the

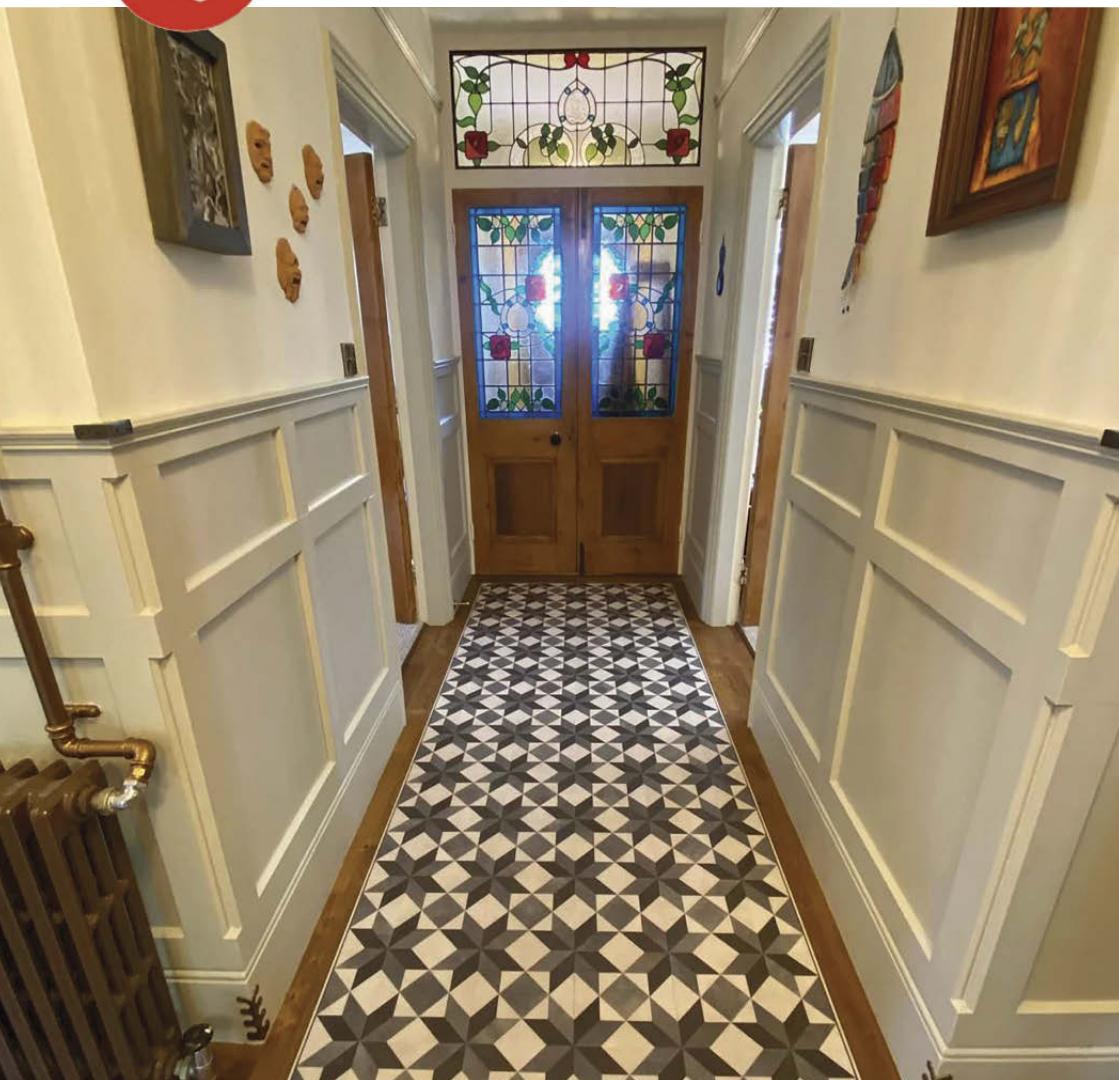
Victorian house. Sadly many were removed or covered over in the effort to update houses in later times, but thankfully some have survived. Original Victorian fireplaces were elaborately decorated and were mass produced cast iron. Ornate fire surrounds of wood, cast iron, stone, marble and slate were added to draw attention to this most important

feature in the home. Tiles with floral motifs and geometric patterns also became popular later in the period. If your Victorian home is missing its fireplaces it's good to know that there are many companies that offer reproduction and original refurbished fireplaces, so you can restore what was an integral part of the Victorian interior.





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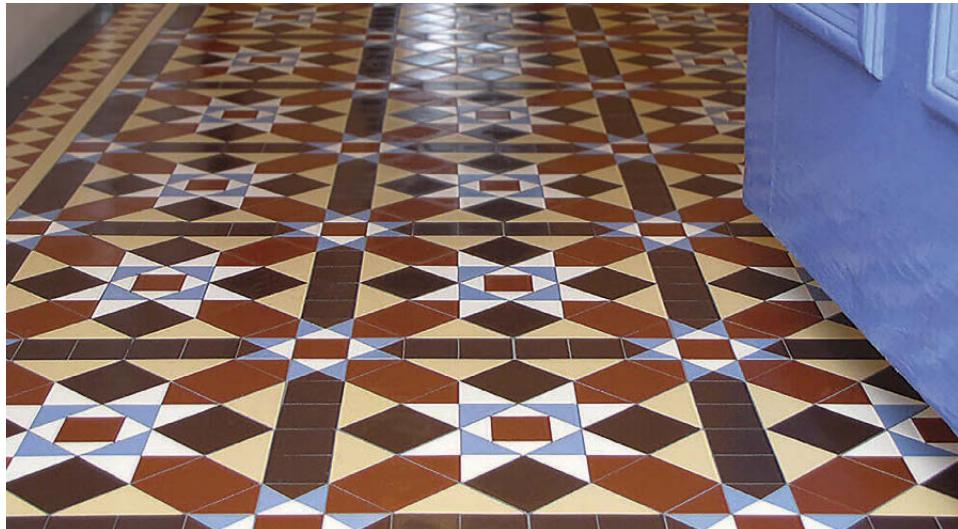
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# HOW TO... RESTORE VICTORIAN TILES



ANYONE LIFTING A HALLWAY CARPET IN A VICTORIAN HOUSE DOES SO WITH ANTICIPATION, ALTHOUGH EXCITEMENT MAY WANE SLIGHTLY AS THE MAJORITY OF ORIGINAL TILES MAY HAVE SUFFERED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF WEAR AND TEAR.

**B**egin the restoration process by thoroughly cleaning the tiles. Sweep or vacuum the floor to remove loose dirt and debris. Use a mild detergent, baking soda or a specially formulated cleaner and warm water to mop the floor. Avoid using abrasive cleaners or harsh chemicals that can damage the tiles. For stubborn stains, use a soft-bristle brush and gently scrub the affected area. Rinse the floor with clean water and allow it to dry completely before proceeding.

If you are not successful at removing waxes and coatings without using chemicals, make use of a sealer remover to eliminate them and to remove water-based acrylic sealers. After applying the product to the floor and allowing it to sit there for ten to twenty minutes, the sealer should have become more malleable.

Because the chemical may seep into the tile surface, you need to keep the surface wet as you work, so divide the area into manageable parts. Scrub the area using a cleaning pad. Continue until all of the remains of the old sealer have been removed.

Remove the thick residues with a plastic blade. Use some clean, warm water and a sponge, and then dry with a towel or cloth after removing any residue that may still be present.

After that, give it a few washes with a weak solution of an alkaline cleaner, which should be diluted 1 to 10 with water.

## REPAIRING

Once the tiles are clean and dry, it's time to repair any damaged or missing ones. For small chips or cracks, you can use epoxy or adhesive to fill in the gaps. Carefully apply the adhesive



and smooth it out to match the level of the surrounding area. If a tile is completely broken or missing, try to find a replacement that matches the original design.

### REPLACING GROUT

Over time, the grout can become discoloured or deteriorate. To restore the appearance of the floor, consider replacing the grout. Remove the old grout carefully, taking care not to damage the surrounding tiles. Once removed, clean the gaps thoroughly and allow them to dry. Mix a fresh batch of grout and apply evenly. Wipe away any excess grout with a damp sponge and allow it to cure for the recommended time.

### MAINTENANCE TIPS

To maintain the beauty of Victorian floors, establish a regular cleaning routine. Sweep or vacuum the floor regularly to remove dirt and debris that can scratch the tiles. Mop the floor with a mild detergent or cleaner and warm water to keep it looking fresh. Avoid using abrasive materials that can damage the tiles.

Periodically sealing the tiles can help protect them from stains and wear.



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# A LIGHT TOUCH

OWNING A PERIOD HOME IS A DREAM FOR MANY, HOWEVER, THEY COME WITH THEIR OWN SET OF CHALLENGES, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO NATURAL LIGHT. FORTUNATELY, THERE ARE PLENTY OF WAYS TO ENHANCE THE NATURAL LIGHT IN YOUR HOME WHILE RESPECTING ITS CHARACTER.



[thewindowsanctuary.com](http://thewindowsanctuary.com)

## MAXIMISING WINDOWS AND DOORS

One of the most straightforward ways to increase light in a period home is to make the most of its existing windows. Original sash windows can often be restored to their former glory, allowing more light to flood into your spaces. Consider refurbishing these instead of replacing them. Repairing wooden frames, upgrading to energy-efficient glass, and ensuring that they open smoothly can dramatically enhance your home's brightness.



[thewhitecompany.com](http://thewhitecompany.com)

## OPT FOR LARGER WINDOWS

If you're willing to invest a little more, think about enlarging your windows. This doesn't mean compromising your home's historic integrity; instead, look for ways to add larger panes that complement the original design. For instance, a Victorian home can benefit from floor-to-ceiling windows in a dining area creating inviting in more sunlight.

## FRENCH AND BI-FOLD DOORS

Replacing solid doors with French or bi-fold doors is another excellent way to enhance light. These designs create a seamless connection between your indoor and outdoor spaces, making the home feel larger and more inviting. When opened, they allow natural light to flow freely from the garden into your home, especially in open-plan living areas.

*john-lewis.co.uk*





### THOUGHTFUL EXTENSIONS

A well-designed extension can bring a wealth of light into your home while adding valuable living space. Consider a glass extension to the rear of your property. This modern approach contrasts beautifully with traditional architecture and can create a stunning visual experience. A glass roof or wall can flood the space with light, making it a perfect spot for a kitchen or family room.



## EMBRACING OPEN-PLAN LAYOUTS

Many period homes have compartmentalised layouts, which can hinder the flow of light. If possible, consider opening spaces. Removing non-structural walls can create an open-plan layout that allows light to travel freely between rooms. This design not only enhances light but also fosters a sense of community within the home, perfect for modern living.

## STRATEGIC ZONING

When transitioning to an open-plan layout, consider how to zone spaces effectively while maintaining light flow. Use furniture, rugs, and lighting fixtures to define different areas without creating physical barriers. For instance, a sofa can delineate the living area from the dining space while still allowing light to permeate throughout.



## COLOUR AND DECORATION

Once you've maximised the light in your home through architectural choices, consider your interior design. Light neutral colours on walls can make spaces feel larger and airier. Additionally, incorporating mirrors and reflective surfaces can bounce light around the room, amplifying its effect. Choose furnishings that complement the light aesthetic – think light woods, soft fabrics, and metallic accents.

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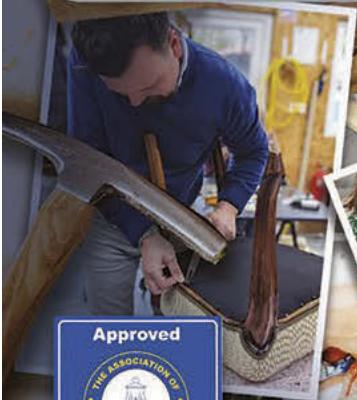
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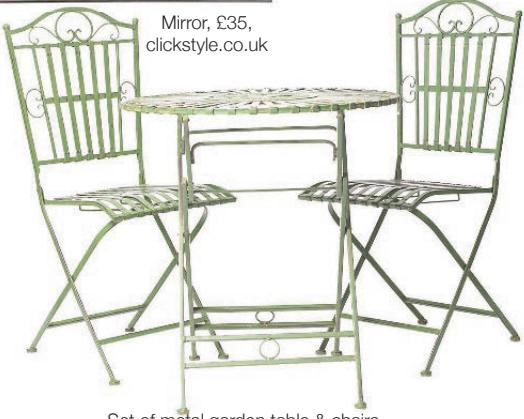
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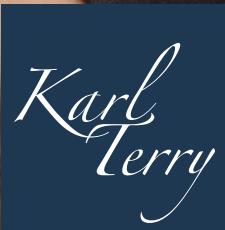


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# Putting the heart back into Hartridge House



We've been fortunate to have previously featured several projects from the renowned historic building and specialist conservation company, A T Palmer Ltd in recent years. The features on their projects always make fascinating reading, illustrating the full breadth of their workforce's talents, skills, and their amazing attention to detail. They have built up an enviable reputation as one of the most highly respected firms in the field and recently celebrated their 75th anniversary.



Here's yet another shining example of their work, as we take a look at Hartridge House. This was the total refurbishment and extension project of an early 20th century house in Kent that was crying out to be brought up to date and to be sympathetically restored as a masterpiece of modern living.

The Grade II Listed, Hartridge House is described as standing high above the Weald of Kent, commanding panoramic views. The building is a red brick country house built in 1913 for Colonel Charles Grey, a respected horticulturalist and nursery owner. It was possibly built to designs by the Arts and Crafts architect, Mervyn Macartney. It was sold in 1920 and had many different owners over the years,

for a time it was used as an office building for an Insurance company. However, when the new owners purchased it in 2022, very little had been done to the property for over forty years. The heating system was virtually defunct, it was a very cold and run down house, in need of a total refurbishment.

The architects Stephen Langer based in Tunbridge Wells were appointed by the owners to develop the designs for the total upgrade and refurbishment of the house, with an additional orangery extension to one side. Stephen Langer is a well-known RIBA Chartered Practice with a wealth of experience in conservation projects of Listed and period properties. They have a specialist design philosophy that is ideally suited to the particular needs of this project. Their ethos is to use a conscientious approach





to energy and ecological conservation in their designs, to ensure they are as future-proofed and sustainable as possible. It follows that one of the most important considerations for the owners was that the property be brought up to date to be as sustainable and eco-friendly as possible, so the architects were the perfect choice.

A T Palmer Ltd commenced work on the sympathetic envelope repair whilst Listed planning consent was being sought. This included repairs to the roof, windows, cleaning all the brickwork and basically getting the exterior of the house ready for the next stages of the refurbishment to begin.

The designs, along with all the structural engineers details for the total refurbishment, renovation and orangery extension included improvement of insulation to the external fabric. The existing metal cased lead light windows couldn't be touched because of the Grade II Listed status, so new secondary timber double glazed windows were fitted inside the existing windows, to improve the energy efficiency.

The highest priority was to ensure the overall energy efficiency of the house and to upgrade its eco-credentials. The solution to this was to install a ground source heat pump and a solar array, along with under floor heating in much

of the ground floor. Everything that could be done to keep the building warm and to make it sustainable has been done, even the swimming pool is heated from the ground source heat pump and solar panels.

The orangery extension constructed by A T Palmer Ltd to the side of the original house is a tour de force. It has created a substantial and generous living space that has access out on to the swimming pool area, with a double height vaulted atrium ceiling, which bathes the room with additional light. Great care was taken to match the bricks for the orangery to the original house, which are specially made for the project and being 50mm thick handmade bricks. A local handmade brick company was found, to work with A T Palmer Ltd and the owners, to



develop a blend of 4 different colored bricks and the percentages of each colour to be used to match the original bricks of the house. The effect is stunning.

Right from the start the owners took the refurbishment and construction on as their own project and have been actively involved every step of the way. They lived in the house through the build, from section to section. This was made possible by creating a self-contained living accommodation complete with kitchen on the second floor, which meant they were very much in situ and able to work with the team on the project.

The owners worked closely with the architects as they created the drawings for the design,



the layout and the flow of the house. They also chose all the interior finishes themselves and have done an amazing job in creating stunning rooms with décor that evokes the era that the house was built in, selecting wallpapers, tiles and colours that are reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts movement and have masterfully blended these with more contemporary styles, achieving an overall elegant and modern interior throughout. This is a real triumph.

As the principal contractor, A T Palmer Ltd was responsible for the complete project. They were also heavily involved in developing the details of the fabric and materials used, even down to sourcing secondhand clay tiles for the new orangery roof to match the existing house. Their highly skilled and multi-talented workforce were also responsible for all the interior work creating the cornicing, exquisite detailing, all the beautiful bespoke carpentry including cupboards, paneling, flooring and also fitting the sanitary wear throughout.

The owners, the Architects, AT Palmer Ltd and everyone involved in this inspiring project should be rightly proud of the wonderful work that has gone into rejuvenating what was a tired and rather dismal dwelling that had seen better days. They have breathed new life into Hartridge House, it is now recreated as a beautiful and sustainable home, that can take its rightful place in the 21st century and beyond into the future.

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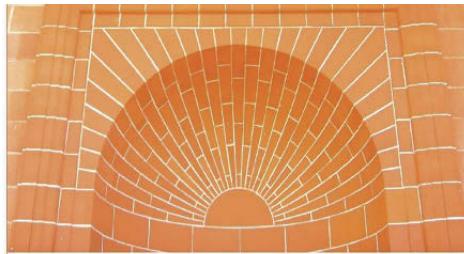
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## ABOUT US

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# Full steam ahead for Prestige Brickwork

We're catching up with an extraordinary Kent based building conservation company that we introduced you to a couple of years ago, to find out how the important work they carry out to rejuvenate period properties and to breathe new life into them has progressed and to highlight some of their notable recent projects.

**I**t's great that public awareness of conservation of all types has become more embedded in the psyche of society today; hopefully more and more of us have moved away from a throw-away culture, on to embracing a mindset that sees the value of restoring and renovating, which of course



is an ethos that's at the heart of any reputable building conservation company, like that of Prestige Brickwork.

Prestige Brickwork is based in Canterbury, covering the south-east including Kent, London and Essex. It's a family run business, established over six years ago by Sam Webster, who's not a rookie in terms of building experience, with 20 years plus under his belt. Sam and his team are much in demand as

they specialise in working on period properties from all eras, Tudor, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian, and nowadays as more modern properties are requiring remedial work and maintenance, their services and expertise are in demand for 20th century and some more recent 21st century properties, especially as some of these also require their skills with materials like lime mortar, which is more often associated with older heritage properties.

The Prestige team offer an all-round service, which covers specialist repairs and repointing to all types of brickwork, structural crack repairs, brick and stone replacement along with general property maintenance as well. They also have the expertise to sympathetically and sensitively carry out conservation work with lime, which is an essential requirement for historic building repairs. This is vital as the use of authentic materials like lime mortar to effect repairs using time-honoured methods, aids drainage, stops moisture building up, allows the building to breathe, giving the structure a natural resilience, and what Sam has often referred to as 'natural damp-proofing'.

Some of the other benefits of using these more traditional methods and materials are environmental; modern materials like concrete are well known to have a dreadful reputation for being a big pollution problem, so there are gains to be made by looking to the past.

So what else does this dedicated and professional team of builders have that sets them apart from the run of the mill? The answer is something that Sam has in his armoury, that he is passionate about and very keen to promote as his secret weapon, and that is the use of steam cleaning.

Sam has found that this produces amazing

results. Steam cleaning can remove layers of plant matter and grime that have built up on the exterior of buildings over many years. The steam cleaning machine is heritage approved and is safe to use on all building materials, bricks, tiles and stone, even soft sandstone, unlike jet washing and even more abrasive sand blasting of masonry, that can cause irreparable damage.

Once all the old grime has all been cleaned off, old mortar can be carefully scraped away, and it's important to note, the gentle steam cleaning does not disturb viable mortar, so repointing isn't usually necessary. If it is, it's then replaced with the appropriate material, usually a traditional lime.

This sympathetic, but highly effective cleaning method has the power to transform the brickwork to looking almost as good as the day it was originally built, allowing the property to hold its head up and shine again.

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# ON A HIGH

## From Humble Beginnings

In 2009, a simple but seemingly insurmountable challenge sparked what would become a remarkable entrepreneurial journey.



**A** simple but seemingly insurmountable challenge sparked a remarkable entrepreneurial journey: "Sorry mate, don't think it's possible," said the guy from the scaffold company when asked about accessing a tricky area of a property for some painting.

But for Richard Green, of Up & Out Platforms Ltd based in Whitstable, this response in 2009 planted the seed for a new business venture.

After 18 years as a shift manager at Thamesport container terminal, Richard was looking for a change. He had gained considerable experience in property

maintenance by working on his own property, but a specific project – painting the back of a house with constricted space and an orangery – led him to explore alternatives to traditional scaffolding. The solution was a piece of machinery he had never heard of before: a spider lift. Compact, versatile, and able to reach areas that seemed impossible for other equipment, this cherry picker-like machine seemed like the perfect solution.

But there was one problem: no local companies seemed to offer these lifts for hire. The national companies did, but their costs were prohibitive, especially since he only needed the lift for a short period. Undeterred,

UP & OUT PLATFORMS IS THRIVING, WITH A GROWING FLEET OF FIVE PLATFORMS AND A SOLID REPUTATION BUILT ON CUSTOMER SERVICE...





he took a leap of faith, purchasing a second-hand 17m spider lift from a seller on the south coast.

The early years weren't without challenge. The machine sat unused for much of the time, as Richard wasn't sure whether it was the right fit for a fully-fledged business. But then came a pivotal moment when a new job opportunity arose as Operations Manager for London Gateway container port, and during this period his son Tom completed his degree.

In 2018, father and son made the bold decision to officially launch Up & Out Platforms. Armed with their 17m platform and a renewed sense of purpose, they invested in a larger, more powerful machine – a 21m Teupen Leo 21GT, with an incredible 12m of outreach. The investment was significant, requiring the family to extend their mortgage, but it proved to be a turning point. At first hiring out the equipment was slow, but with persistence, word

of mouth, and strategic outreach to local tree surgeons, the bookings started to flow.

Seven years later, Up & Out Platforms is thriving, with five platforms and a solid reputation built on customer service and versatility. Unlike traditional cherry pickers, which are often cumbersome, heavy, and difficult to manoeuvre, spider lifts are lightweight and mounted on tracks. This makes it possible to operate on lawns and delicate surfaces without leaving a mark. Their compact size – under a metre wide and just 2m high – means they can access areas other platforms simply can't reach.

Customers are provided with expert advice on the best platform for their needs, and site visits are conducted to ensure smooth installation. The family-run company focuses on quick, efficient service. From tree surgery to roof maintenance, bat surveys and lots more besides, the range of applications for their equipment is vast. They even help with installing Christmas lights.

What started as a small solution to a seemingly impossible task has blossomed into a thriving business with a loyal client base and more than fifty 5-star Google reviews. The ability to adapt, invest in the right equipment and take calculated risks has paid off.

For those in need of elevated access for any number of projects – whether it's tree care, building maintenance or unique jobs like lifting a pool table for a house move – Up & Out Platforms offers a cost-effective, efficient alternative to traditional scaffolding.

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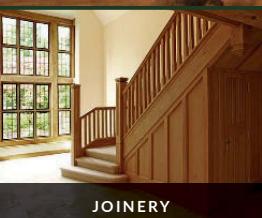
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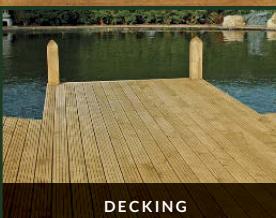
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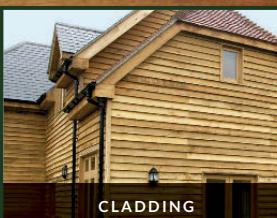
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# WHY SEEK LEGAL ADVICE



The specialist team at Whitehead Monckton, can provide you with the expert support you need, in good times and in bad, to resolve the complex people issues you face. We understand that your people are key to the success of your business or organisation.

From the employer to the employee, from settlement agreements to disputes, employment law covers a wide range of issues and is an area that is subject to frequent changes; as we have seen with the Employment Rights Bill 2024 which proposes to dramatically change the legal landscape. It is ever important for employers and employees to stay up-to-date to ensure they are aware of their rights and obligations.

Employment is a big part of our lives and so it is likely that many people will come across situations that require guidance from time to time. Seeking legal advice, is the best way

to ensure you stay protected on employment matters that may be affecting you.

In this article, we will explore 3 Common reasons for seeking legal advice for employment -related issues.

## CONTRACTS AND POLICIES

One of the most common reasons an employer may seek legal guidance is for help surrounding their employment contracts and policies.

Employment legislation can be lengthy and confusing, so when it comes to employment contracts and policies, you as an employer may not just be able to tweak a free sample template you find online. Seeking legal advice will ensure

that your contracts and polices are up to date and compliant with the latest requirements, protecting you against any potential claims. If you are an employee or worker, you are entitled to receive a written statement (often referred to as an employment contract) on or before your start date.

#### THE REDUNDANCY PROCESS

The redundancy process is one that is quite complicated for both the employer and the employee. Seeking legal advice, as either party, is a great way to ensure you know what your rights and obligations are during the process. As an employee, you are required to seek independent legal advice for any settlement agreements you are entering into. This is to ensure you are fully aware of the terms and conditions of the agreement. As an employer, you are required to follow certain steps to ensure that you are upholding your statutory duty and are acting fairly throughout a redundancy process.

#### RESOLVING DISPUTE

#### AND EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL CLAIMS

Disputes can arise between employers and employees for a number of different reasons and so seeking legal advice in such situations can be crucial in ensuring you can reach an effective resolution. Employment law specialists can provide parties with guidance on the law and also suggest options to resolve matters, whether this be through alternative dispute resolution or, where necessary, litigation. Seeking legal advice may also be crucial in stopping these disputes arising in the first place. Ensuring you as an employer are meeting your duties towards your employees removes risks of claims and helps to protect everyone within the workplace.



#### KEY TAKEAWAY

Both employers and employees may at some point find themselves needing employment law advice. Employment specialists often have years of experience dealing with difficult and complex situations and are best able to ensure your issues are dealt with confidently and efficiently by providing you with guidance that is tailored towards your specific circumstances. Getting timely and accurate employment law advice can help you maintain healthy working relationships and also save you a lot of stress going forward.

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## Little Statenborough House, Eastry

A handsome Georgian house providing a wonderfully comfortable and stylish family home with a charming annexe and flexible home office, set in thoughtfully landscaped grounds.

**L**ittle Statenborough House is a handsome Georgian property, providing a beautifully styled family home combining its period layout with the open plan spaces so favoured for modern living.

Set centrally in the original symmetrical façade, the front door opens to a hallway with reception rooms to either side. The sitting room is an elegant room arranged around a fireplace and flooded with light through a large sash window. Wooden flooring continues through to the adjacent kitchen/family room, which occupies a later extension and conservatory beyond. Facing south-west, these rooms together provide a fantastically generous family

area with plenty of space and light. The timeless dark blue units in the kitchen are arranged around a central island and the conservatory provides ample space for a large table with immersive views of the beautiful gardens.

Returning to the hall, a second reception room is currently arranged as a sumptuous cinema and is another delightful room, with a large sash window, part-panelled walls and doors to the courtyard on one side and the outdoor kitchen on the other. Towards the back of the hall is a large, immensely practical utility and laundry room and pantry. A boot room gives access to the back door.

To the back of the house, a further sitting





room has French doors leading outside. Beyond is a charming bedroom with an en suite shower room. This space would work well as a private area for guests, if desired.

An elegant staircase rises from the hall turning on a half landing and arrives at the first floor. On the first floor there are four bedrooms. The principal bedroom benefits from an adjoining dressing area which leads through to a smart en suite shower room. French doors offer access to a roof terrace and elevated views over the garden. The remaining bedrooms, one of which has an en suite shower room, are arranged across the front of the house; all have sash windows. The generous family bathroom has a shower and a freestanding bath; this is a fabulous room with part-panelled walls and wonderful wallpaper.

#### The Stables annexe and home office

Behind the house, set around a courtyard, is a self-contained annexe to one side and a home office to the other. The annexe comprises an open-plan sitting room/kitchen, two bedrooms and a bathroom; the office building has potential for a variety of uses, including as an excellent gym, spacious yoga studio or as a second self-contained annexe, subject to any necessary consents.

#### Outside

Little Statenborough House is approached via wrought-iron gates set between brick pillars. The gravel drive leads to a turning circle and plenty of parking. The gardens are as beautiful as the house, imaginatively laid out to provide the perfect back drop. A series of outdoor 'rooms' and settings provide a sanctuary in which to socialise and relax.

A formal courtyard sits between the house, annexe and the home office, with column yews

planted symmetrically around a fountain.

Close to the house, sheltered by mellow brick walls is a terrace with an outdoor kitchen and barbeque. A lawn with silver birch grouped to one end is bordered by established shrubs. Steps leads to a sunken seating area surrounded by stone pillars and planted with jasmine and roses, amongst other shrubs. The eye is drawn through to a gothic stone window set to the end of the Italianate swimming pool garden beyond. Beyond a tall beech hedge, the garden is less formal. Picturesque 'ruins' are set on the edge of a wildlife pond and provide a magical vista from the conservatory. Tucked behind a hedge is a vegetable garden and greenhouse.

## The details

### *Main house:*

Reception hall | 2 Sitting rooms | Cinema room | Conservatory | Kitchen/family room | Utility/laundry room | Boot room | 2 Cloakrooms | Principal bedroom with dressing room and en suite shower room | 4 Further bedrooms (2 en suite) | Family bathroom | EPC rating D

### *The Stables annexe:*

Sitting room/kitchen | 2 Bedrooms | Shower room | EPC rating TBC Home office with kitchenette and cloakroom | Off-road parking | Swimming pool | Pool house | Garden

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# Chocolate Banana Bread

PREPARATION TIME: 15 minutes

COOKING TIME: 50-55 minutes

## NORTH AMERICA

**Makes: 1 x 24 x 12cm  
9½ x 4½ inch loaf**

125g/4½oz/½ cup butter, softened, plus extra for greasing and to serve

125g/41½oz/¾ cup soft brown sugar

2 eggs, lightly beaten

150g/5½oz dark (bittersweet) chocolate, melted and left to cool

3 ripe bananas, peeled and mashed, plus 1 small banana, peeled and cut in half lengthways

1tsp vanilla extract

200g/7oz/1½ cups self-raising flour

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/gas 4. Grease a 24 x 12cm/9½ x 4½ inch loaf pan with butter, and line with baking paper.

In a large bowl, beat the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy using an electric hand mixer. Add the eggs, beating well, then stir in the melted chocolate, bananas, vanilla extract and flour until just combined using a wooden spoon.

Spoon into the prepared pan. Place the two banana halves on top of the cake batter, pressing lightly so that they adhere to the cake.

Bake in the hot oven for 50-55 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the middle of the cake comes out with just a few crumbs clinging to it.

Remove from the oven and leave the cake in the pan to cool for 10 minutes, then turn out on to a wire (cooling) rack to cool completely.

Serve in slices with butter for spreading.



# Chocolate Brownie Cookies

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

COOKING TIME: 11-13 minutes

## NORTH AMERICA

### Makes: 12 cookies

25g/1oz/2tbs butter, chopped, plus extra for greasing

175g/6oz dark (bittersweet) chocolate, broken into pieces

1 egg lightly beaten

100g/3½oz/½ cup caster sugar

1tsp vanilla extract

40g/1½oz/½ cup self-raising flour

60g/2¼oz/¾ cup pecan nuts, toasted and chopped

85g/3oz/½ cup milk chocolate chips

small handful of sea salt, to garnish

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/gas 4. Grease 2 large baking trays with butter.

In a small saucepan, melt the butter and chocolate together over a low heat, stirring with a wooden spoon until smooth. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside to cool. In a large bowl, beat the egg and sugar together until thick and creamy, using an electric hand mixer.

Stir in the melted chocolate mixture, vanilla extract, flour and nuts using a wooden spoon. Finally mix in the chocolate chips. Place tablespoons of the mixture on the prepared baking trays, leaving approximately 10cm/4 inches between them to allow for spreading.

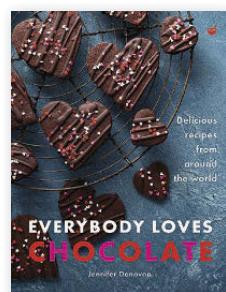
Bake in the hot oven for 6-8 minutes, or until the cookies are puffed and cracked, but still moist.

Remove the cookies from the oven and transfer them to a wire (cooling) rack to cool. Garnish with a pinch of sea salt.

### WIN A COPY OF EVERYBODY LOVES CHOCOLATE

For your chance to win a copy of Everybody Loves Chocolate, please email your name, address and telephone number to: [dawn@conservationnews.co.uk](mailto:dawn@conservationnews.co.uk)  
Closing date: Friday 8 February 2025

*This is an extract from  
Everybody Loves Chocolate:  
Delicious recipes from around the world  
by Jennifer Donovan  
Published by Nourish*



*A one-stop bible for chocoholics, this book offers everything you need to quench your sweet tooth cravings.*



# FOR THE LOVE OF CHOCOLATE

Nestled in the heart of Whitstable, Kakawa Artisan Chocolate and Dessert Lounge is the brain child of chocolatier and all round food expert, John Jeffrey.



**H**aving been in the food industry for over 20 years, lockdown gave John the chance to sit back and think about what he really wanted to do with his life. Like many of us at the time, John was experimenting with different food recipes, but his experience gave him an edge, and he had soon created a series of chocolates, which he began to distribute during the pandemic following intense interest.

So popular were his products that, John realised his dream of opening his own artisan chocolate business, and the rest is history... or it would be if John was content to run just any old sweet shop.





Instead he has set his sights on bigger goals:

- To be an industry leader
- To create a zero waste business
- To pass his knowledge and passion on to the next generation.

Well in just four short years, John is well on his way to meeting all his goals. Kakawa is already a zero waste business; the store runs regular workshops for aspiring chocolatiers, and with stockists as far away as Edinburgh, the role of industry leader is tantalisingly close.

The Kakawa Dessert Lounge is open 6 days a week and serves an irresistible range of chocolate, milkshakes, waffles and more, and Kakawa products are stocked locally in Fenwick, Chartham Blue Diamond Garden Centre, Algar Lodge farmshop in Deal, and Loddington farm in Maidstone.

Details of products, stockists, workshops and menus can be found on the website, but the most important thing to note is this:

Chocolate is available everywhere... but truly exceptional chocolate is harder to come by, and Kakawa Artisan Chocolate is a rare find indeed!



KAKAWA ARTISAN  
CHOCOLATE

Phone: 01227 851918

Email: [hello@kakawaartisan.com](mailto:hello@kakawaartisan.com)

Socials - [@kakawaartisan](https://www.instagram.com/kakawaartisan)

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Sun Dec 15th - Blue Devils

Sun Dec 22nd - Gumboots

Sun Jan 5th - Dylan Band

Sun Jan 12th - Squeeze Gut Alley

Sun Jan 19th - Bill Saxby and The Dan

Sat Jan 25th - The Secret Gig

Sun Jan 26th - Native Oysters

Sun 2nd Feb - Blue Devils

Sun 9th Feb - Gumboots

Sun 16th Feb - Brad Pittance

Sun 23rd Feb - Barracuda

Sat 1st Mar - The Secret Gig

Sat 2nd Mar - Blue Devils

*Please refer to the website as bands are subject to change.*

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SCAN ME



# WHAT'S IN SEASON

Eating seasonally means eating foods that are naturally in harvest at that time of year, and eating locally means eating food that can be grown in the UK.

seasonally is about pleasure, variety and discovery. So, what should you be looking for this winter?

**DECEMBER:** the festive season brings a traditional bounty of fresh fruit and veg. Serve sprouts and parsnips alongside your turkey, add cranberries to colourful cocktails and dates to sticky Christmas puddings.

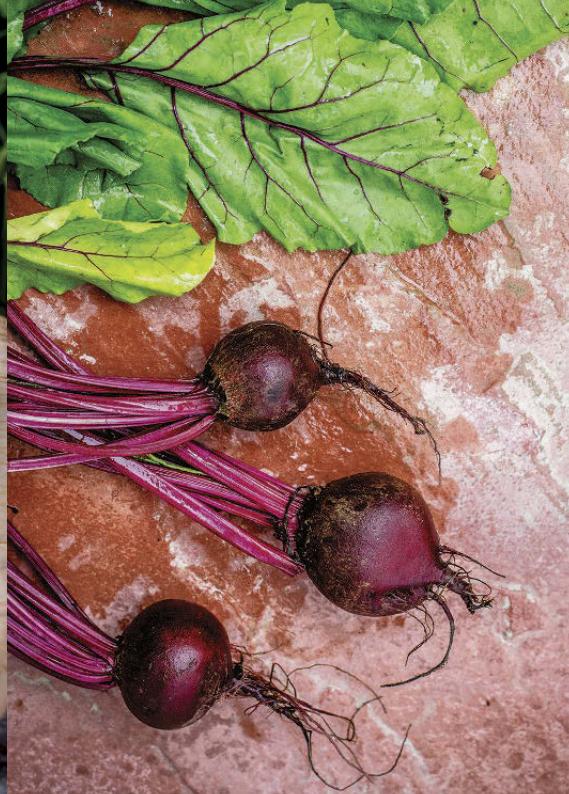
**JANUARY:** Choose between savoury toast in the morning with creamy avocado, or sweet with tangy homemade marmalade using Seville oranges. Earthy Savoy cabbage and purple sprouting broccoli bulk out winter dinners, while lemons and limes brighten up grey days.

**FEBRUARY:** Hearty celeriac and sweet potatoes are versatile and plentiful. Leafy kale is perfect for adding freshness to your favourite winter salads and comfort dishes. For sweet treats, gorgeous grapefruit and juicy plums add vibrant colour to grey winter days.

**E**ver thought about where your food comes from? We've become used to having any food we want at any time of the year. But out-of-season produce means flying it in from overseas or using intensive farming methods such as pesticides and greenhouses to force them to grow year-round.

Eating local and seasonal food is not only more tasty and healthy, but better for the environment.

It makes for the richest, most delicious and healthy diet... we just need to make a conscious effort to discover it. Eating



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Christmas  
orders being  
taken



[www.lowerhardresfarmshop.co.uk](http://www.lowerhardresfarmshop.co.uk) email: [info@lowerhardresfarmshop.co.uk](mailto:info@lowerhardresfarmshop.co.uk)

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## CHILHAM SHOP

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This harvest pie is packed with canned lentils and vegetables and uses potato and leek soup to bring everything together for a hearty and savoury supper.

# A COOKBOOK FOR WINTER

Get cosy with this comforting collection of seasonally inspired recipes – the ideal cook's companion for the winter months. Featuring more than 95 recipes for winter eating and entertaining, from soups and stews to melted cheese, pasta, pies and puddings, plus warming hot drinks, this book provides all the inspiration you will need.

**SERVES**  
**4**

## YOU WILL NEED

500 g ready-made puff pastry

1 egg, whisked

2 x 400-g cans green lentils, drained and rinsed

400-g can baby carrots and petit pois, drained and rinsed

400-g can green beans, drained and rinsed

400-g can potato and leek soup

25 g plain flour, plus extra for dusting

15 g butter, diced

1 teaspoon dried mixed herbs

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/2 teaspoon curry powder

a 28 x 20 cm/11 x 8 inch baking pan

## HARVEST PIE

## METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200°C fan/220°C/425°F/Gas 7.

Cut the block of pastry in half and roll out one half on a floured work surface to about 3 mm/1/8 inch thick. Use this to line the baking pan, allowing the pastry to overhang the top lip of the pan. Line with baking parchment and baking beans (or raw rice, etc.) and blind bake in the preheated oven for 20 minutes. Remove from the oven, remove the parchment and baking beans, then brush with some of the whisked egg and return to the oven for another 5 minutes.

In a mixing bowl, gently fold all the remaining ingredients together. Pour into the baking pan on top of the cooked pastry and level out with the back of a spoon. Roll out the remaining pastry to cover the top, crimping around the edges to seal.

Pierce the top with a sharp knife to help the steam release, brush with the remaining egg and season the top.

Bake in the oven for a further 30 minutes or until the top is golden. Leave to rest for at least 15 minutes to allow the filling to set before serving.

SERVES  
6

## YOU WILL NEED

- 8 large plums
- 3 pears
- 250 g fresh blackberries
- 1 tablespoon crème de cassis (optional)
- 4 tablespoons soft brown sugar

## COBBLER TOPPING

- 180 g plain flour
- 11/2 teaspoons baking powder
- a pinch of salt
- 75 g unsalted butter, diced
- 50 g granulated/caster sugar
- 125–150 ml buttermilk

## CINNAMON CRÈME FRAÎCHE

- 150 g crème fraîche
- 2 teaspoons icing sugar, sifted
- a little ground cinnamon

a 2-litre Dutch oven

# BAKED ORCHARD FRUIT COBBLER WITH CINNAMON CRÈME FRAÎCHE

## METHOD

Preheat the oven to 170°C fan/190°C/375°F/Gas 5.

Halve, stone and thickly slice the plums. Peel, core and thinly slice the pears. Wash and dry the blackberries. Place the fruit in a bowl, add the cassis, if using, and brown sugar, and stir well to combine. Transfer the fruit to the Dutch oven.

To make the topping, sift the flour, baking powder and salt into a bowl and rub in the butter to make fine crumbs. Stir in the sugar. Work in enough buttermilk to bring the mixture together to make a slightly sticky dough. Spoon mounds of the topping over the fruit layer, allowing some fruit to remain uncovered.

Transfer the Dutch oven to the preheated oven and bake uncovered for about 30–35 minutes until the topping is risen and golden and the fruit is oozing rich juices. Check halfway through and cover the pan with the lid if the top is beginning to over-brown.

Meanwhile, make the cinnamon crème fraîche. Stir the crème fraîche, sugar and cinnamon together until combined. Serve with the fruit cobbler.

## WIN A COPY OF A COOKBOOK FOR WINTER

For your chance to win a copy of *A Cookbook for Winter*, please email your name, address and telephone number to:

**dawn@conservationnews.co.uk**

Closing date: Friday 8 February 2025

*This is an extract from*

*A Cookbook for Winter* published by Ryland Peters & Small (£22)  
Photography © Ryland Peters & Small





This versatile dish can be easily adapted to any time of year, using pretty much any fruit you like.



OPENING TIMES

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# PINOT NOIR goes global

THERE IS NOW MORE FABULOUS AND BEAUTIFUL PINOT NOIR BEING MADE IN THE WORLD THAN EVER BEFORE: FROM OREGON TO CALIFORNIA, TO GERMANY TO NEW ZEALAND, AND OF COURSE FRANCE. BUT PINOT NOIR HAS ALWAYS BEEN A TRICKY GRAPE TO GROW, BECAUSE IT DOESN'T ALWAYS FOLLOW THE RULES.

Until quite recently, Pinot Noir was judged on how similar it was to red Burgundy, which is where Pinot Noir is famous for its excellence. But then winemakers started to wake up and realise that, rather than try to emulate the style of Pinot Noir from Burgundy, why not make a fantastic wine that is unique to its own growing environment and love it for its individual style!

So today, we have a range of exciting different styles of Pinot Noir from lighter versions with cherry and strawberry flavours to heavier, weightier styles with a gamey, savoury character.

The general consensus is that Pinot Noir grows best in cool climates such as New Zealand and even England, but some fantastic wines have been made in the warmer regions of California where there is a cooling influence.

## PINOT NOIR AROUND THE WORLD **France**

In Burgundy, the Côte d'Or is where the top wines are made and the surrounding areas of Côte Chalonnaise, Auxerrois





and Maconnais produce more 'affordable' wines which tend to be less complex than those from the Cote d'Or. Red Burgundy from the top vineyards have their own distinct styles and recognisable flavours, but given the complexity of the structure of vineyards in this region, it needs a high level of expertise to determine exactly where the wines come from in a blind tasting! As a result, there is no one single flavour profile – some are chewy and plummy, some are muscular and dense, whilst others are soft, round and scented with strawberries.

In Champagne, Pinot Noir never reaches the same ripeness as for red wine, as varietal character is not the aim for this

grape in Champagne, but it merely adds structure and body to the wine. It accounts for 38% of the area under vine in Champagne and is the dominant grape in Montagne de Reims and Côte des Bar. The name Blanc de Noirs refers to a Champagne made from black grape varieties alone, such as Pinot Noir and/or Meunier and actually means white from black. So the flesh alone without the skins makes

the juice and gives its colour to the wine which, of course, is white.

### **Germany**

Germany is the third largest grower of Pinot Noir in the world, after France and the USA. The best Spatburgunders (as Pinot Noir is known here) lie between a pale, lightish style to a more full-bodied style from the warmer, more sheltered regions such as Baden and Pfalz which are naturally two of the best regions to grow and ripen Pinot Noir in Germany. Baden is the most southerly and therefore the warmest of the wine growing regions, and Pfalz is uniquely placed as a natural extension of Alsace.

The Vosges mountain range in Alsace extends into Germany and becomes the Haardt Mountains which provide sufficient rain-cover, coupled with solid diurnals (marked changes in day and night temperatures) and you have what is a relatively warm climate, given the region's geographical location. Wurttemberg and Rheingau are also warm enough to ripen



this grape as they benefit from proximity to rivers which help radiate heat to the vines and give protection from winds from the mountains as well as relatively warm summers. Wines from these regions are not as complex as those from Burgundy but have pleasant, ripe cherry and raspberry flavours and medium alcohol.

## New Zealand

This region is of course famous for Sauvignon Blanc, but it also has a reputation for producing

some of the best Pinot Noir in the world, with no shortage of cool sites but lots of sunshine. The most notable regions are Martinborough in North Island, Marlborough in South Island and Central Otago (further south). Pinot Noir from Marlborough tends to be lighter than most Central Otago Pinots, similar in hue to those of Martinborough and the aroma

profiles are generally very fruit-forward. They mostly have red fruit, raspberry and cranberry, although some tend more towards black fruit with notes of cherry. Wines from Central Otago, however, can be weightier with undertones of shrubbery and savoury notes with tannins in general tight and focused.

## USA (California and Oregon)

You might think that California is too hot for such a delicate grape as Pinot Noir, but along

the central coast the key characteristic is the east/west-positioned valleys that allow Pacific fogs to roll right in and cool the vineyards. This creates the ideal conditions for a silky, strawberry, cranberry and cherry-scented Pinot that won't break the bank.

Historic ranch lands, a romantic coast, country roads, stay-a-while towns, and grapes – lots and lots of grapes – make the Central Coast an outstanding wine country destination. Top vintners have transformed the Central Coast into one of the state's premier wine regions, with hundreds of wineries and expansive farmlands reminding you that more than grapes grow in this fertile region.

Continue south towards Santa Barbara County to discover Pinot Noir paradise, as coastal fog filters through the east-west oriented valleys to create one of the state's most diverse winegrowing regions. Even with the cooling fog this region is warmer, and notice the fuller body, higher alcohol in the wine but also a soft, velvety character.

Wines from the Russian River valley and Carneros are darker than those from the Central Coast, with black cherry as opposed to strawberry flavours and slightly weightier and a little pricier as well.

Oregon's Willamette Valley is a world-leading producer of Pinot Noir, with the grape accounting for over 60% of the region's wine production. The valley's unique climate and geography, along with its diverse soils, create ideal conditions for growing Pinot Noir.

Pinot Noir from Oregon is often described as having bright red fruit flavours like cherry and raspberry, with delicate floral notes and a subtle earthiness. It can also be dry, spicy, and herbal, with underlying red or dark fruits. More heavily oaked wines may have notes of cinnamon and vanilla. Oregon Pinot Noir tends to be more acidic, fresher, and less fruit-forward than Californian but improved winemaking techniques, better clones and experimentation are producing wines that just get better and better!

Pinot Noir's subtle flavours make it an excellent choice for a range of dishes, from complex meat and poultry meals such as those we have at Christmas to lighter fish dishes such as salmon or trout, or even vegetable based. The lighter tannins in this wine make it very food friendly and it is one of the most amazing grapes on the planet – literally there is a style to suit everyone – why not shop around to find your favourite?

*Rowena Hawtin Dip WSET*



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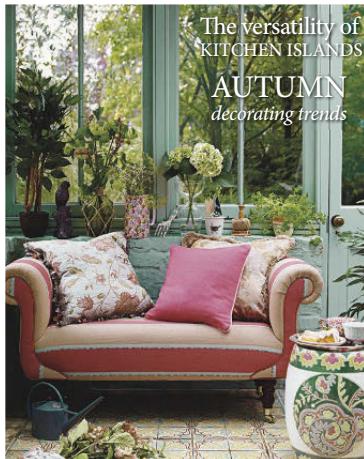


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