

HOMES & GARDENS®

DECEMBER 2015
£4.20

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

STEP INSIDE FABULOUS FESTIVE HOUSES
BEAUTIFUL IDEAS FOR WELCOMING ENTRANCES
DECORATING SCHEMES FULL OF WARMTH

ALL IN THE DETAIL
Pretty tree decorations
Stylish wreaths
Recipes for sweet treats

THE ART OF GIVING
Glorious gifts
for family & friends

Comfort & joy

CELEBRATE THE MAGIC OF THE SEASON

H&G EDIT DECEMBER

The *people, products* and *places* creating a buzz this month



With Christmas fast approaching, create instant festive cheer with this delicately ornate brass candelabra. Position in a window to welcome guests to your home.

Eden candle tree candelabra, H44xW43cm, £42;
Luna star decorations, £9 set of six; both Rowen
& Wren, 01932 847538, rowenandwren.co.uk.



GREEN WITH ENVY

Your front door is sure to be the most glamorous in the neighbourhood with this limited-edition festive wreath, diam46cm, which combines mistletoe and fragrant eucalyptus. It costs £95 and is available online from 1 November at Jo Malone London, jomalone.co.uk, and through the new boutique on London's Regent Street.



ON THE RIGHT LINES A contemporary take on traditional Christmas style, stripes are the perfect partner for eclectic tableware. Linum's cotton Core tablecloth in Dark Charcoal Grey, 170x250cm, £99, and matching runner, 45x150cm, £25, create a bold statement for festive tables. Contact 01491 571880, linumdesign.com.



Interior designer Nina Campbell will be among the **celebrity readers at a carol concert** at St Luke's Church in Chelsea on 8 December in aid of Place2Be, the UK school-based children's mental health charity. Tickets cost £30 for adults and include free entry for one child (additional children cost £15 each). To book, visit place2be.org.uk/carolconcert.

KEEPING THEM SWEET

The chocolate treats of the future have arrived! These charming, gold-dusted robots, £7.50 for six, from Chococo, 01929 421777, chococo.co.uk, are made from 43 per cent Venezuelan milk chocolate and come in their own metal capsule.



OCH AYE THE BREW

Where does the best tea in the world grow? Not Sri Lanka or China, as it turns out, but the Scottish Highlands. The award-winning Dalreoch Single Estate Scottish Smoked White Tea, from £35 for 15g, grown in Perthshire by The Wee Tea Company, 07860 933832, weeteacompany.com, will make the perfect gift for tea lovers.

PLAYING TAG

Finish presents in a cheery fashion with these Nutcracker character gift tags, £5 for six, from Meri Meri, 01242 575868, shopmerimeri.co.uk.



SILK ROUTE

Taking its name from the French word for ribbon, the new Rubans silk bedlinen collection from Gingerlily, 0343 216 9902, gingerlily.co.uk, will lend a glamorous mood to the bedroom. Made from Mulberry silk and a silk/cotton mix, each yarn is individually dyed and then woven on a jacquard loom. The range is available in Gold and Sage (above) and costs from £28 for a 40cm sq pillowcase.

STAR GAZING

This beautiful solid-brass Star topper, 30x20cm, by Ferm Living, is sure to add an elegant finishing touch to your tree. It costs £42 at CPHDeluxe, 0800 808 5115, cphdeluxe.co.uk.

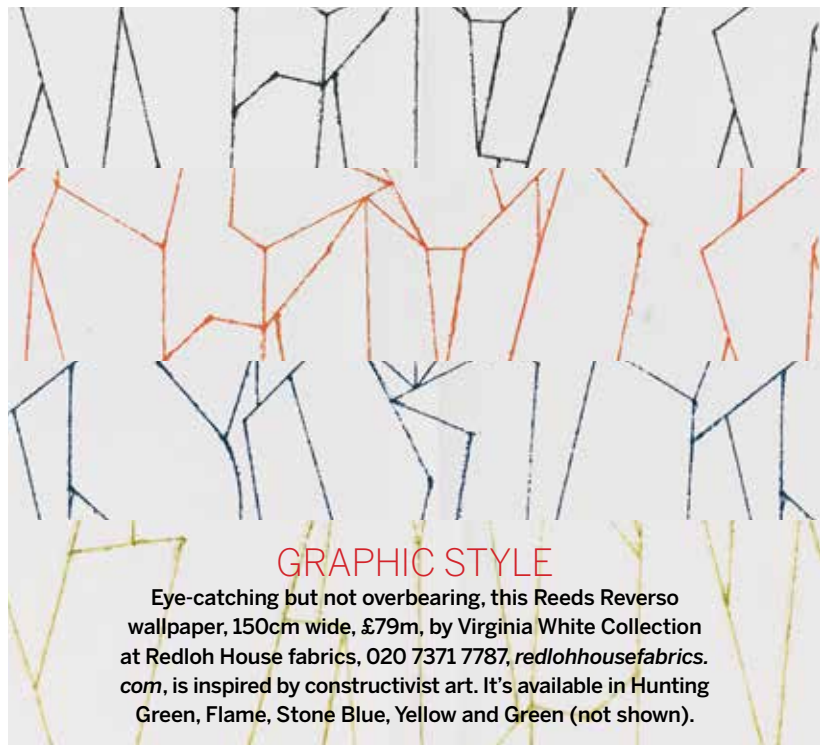


Covering carnivorous Christmas needs in one fell swoop, new online artisan butcher, **Meat Porter**, meatporter.com, brings high-quality meat and poultry direct to your kitchen. The site features simple drag-and-drop ordering and next-day delivery is free across the UK.



BEST BAR NONE

We've loved Richard Brendon's bone-china tea and tableware for years. Now the British designer has moved into new territory with this glamorous lead crystal Diamond barware collection, which costs from £40 for a shot glass (above left), and is made by craftspeople in the Czech Republic. We're picturing cosying up in a wingback chair with a fine malt whisky. Contact 020 8962 8924, richardbrendon.com.



GRAPHIC STYLE

Eye-catching but not overbearing, this Reeds Reverso wallpaper, 150cm wide, £79m, by Virginia White Collection at Redloh House fabrics, 020 7371 7787, redlohousefabrics.com, is inspired by constructivist art. It's available in Hunting Green, Flame, Stone Blue, Yellow and Green (not shown).



SIMPLE PLEASURES

Celebrating the beauty of British wood, these turned decorations, H5cm, £9 each, by Sebastian Cox at Heal's, 020 7896 7451, heals.com, are made from oak, chestnut, ash, elm and walnut. Mix with white porcelain pieces for a charming, pared-back tree.



SMART WEAVES

Featuring a sophisticated palette of navy blues and rich reds, the Britannia collection is the latest offering from Ian Mankin's Lancashire mills. The fabrics come in the company's signature stripes, checks and plains, including Dunoon in Dark Navy, £49.50m, and Campbell Union in Peony, £39.50m, shown here as stylish napkins and place mats, perfect for a festive table. Contact 020 7722 0997, ianmankin.co.uk.

FEATURE MORAG BRUCE

If you enjoy the smell of a freshly cut fir tree, then take a look at **ScentSicles**, £6 for six, from John Lewis, 0345 604 9049, johnlewis.com, which are infused with fir fragrance and can be hung discreetly on your faux tree.

MINI TREND

ARCTIC TUNDRA

Graphic statement style for cool interiors

RIGHT Polar Bear porcelain plate set, dinner plate, diam27cm; dessert plate, diam21cm, **€135**, Tes-Ted X Esprit Porcelaine, tes-ted.com.

BELOW LEFT Mountain Moon woven cushion, 48cm sq, **£65**, Donna Wilson, 020 7749 0768, donna-wilson.com.

BELOW RIGHT Polar Bear cashmere travel blanket, 80x200cm, **£550**, Montesogno, 020 7117 2595, montesogno.com.



CAST MASTERS

Since 2011, Chisel & Mouse, 01273 251335, chiselandmouse.com, has been recreating buildings in plaster. Its latest architectural icon is the limited-edition St Paul's Cathedral, H30xdiam20cm, **£325**, which comes in a glass dome.



JOIN THE CLUB

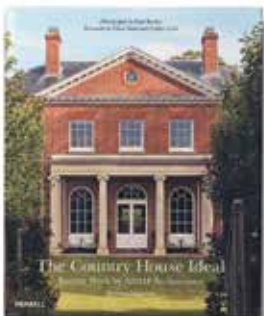
There's an exotic mood to French Connection's latest furniture collection, which features polished mango wood and soft, textural upholstery in neutral hues. Its debonair Club chairs, H75xW71xD70cm, £495 each, are the perfect partners to the Gunmetal coffee table, H35x diam100cm, £380, which blends Japanese and industrial style, while the alcoves of the sleek Married bookshelf, H170xW60xD30cm, £285, can be easily adjusted to suit your needs. Contact 0333 400 3285, frenchconnection.com.



A CUT ABOVE Any cook would be delighted to receive this Chef knife set, £100 for three, from Fate London, fatelondon.com. The exquisite handmade designs have beautifully marbled Damascus steel blades, brass trims and handles crafted from olive wood, horn and bone.

ON THE BOOKSHELF

The pursuit of classical perfection is the focus of architectural historian Jeremy Musson's new book, *The Country House Ideal*, £40, published by Merrell, 020 7928 8880, merrellpublishers.com, with photography by Paul Barker. The 19 English and Scottish houses in a range of historical styles are all by Adam Architecture, which specialises in balancing traditional techniques with the comforts of modern life, energy conservation, technology and sustainability.



TIMELESS APPEAL Christopher Howe was so inspired by a treasured book of antique linen chintz samples, he dedicated an entire fabric collection to the exquisite florals, geometrics and paisley patterns. Printed in Lancashire on linen, Thimble Prints consists of eight beautiful designs, including (clockwise, from top left) Folies Bergère in Ermine, Knurl in Brick, Rambling Rose in Mauve and Cypress in Cocoa, all 140cm wide, £102m. Contact Howe at 36 Bourne Street, 020 7730 7991, 36bournestreet.com.



SNUG AS A BUG Be the best guest ever, by arriving with your own smart and cosy sleeping bag. Filled with PrimaLoft insulation and lined in soft cotton sheeting, the Iris Pinstripe indoor sleeping bag costs £150 from The Good Guest Company, 01264 731500, thegoodguest.com.



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AN AMERICAN CLASSIC



Crafted in Vermont for Ralph Lauren, this Bennington tableware has a rustic chic with enduring appeal. Pitcher, H19cm, £90; bowl, H11xdiam37cm, £110. Contact 020 7535 4600, ralphlaurenhome.com.



ONE TO WATCH

VOLTA CEILINGS

Thierry Thenaers (left) and Eddy Dankers are reviving the classical art form of painted ceiling canvases

Thierry, what's your background? After graduating from the Van Der Kelen Logelain School in trompe l'oeil techniques and then training in Florence as a painter at Palazzo Spinelli, I began painting huge canvases for set designers in the opera. The scale of the canvases stayed with me, especially their potential for interiors projects where they can be fitted seamlessly to ceilings or walls. **What is special about this technique and the result it gives?** The technique enables us to undertake any bespoke project, as we magnify or adapt the given design and then transpose it to the canvas. Working worldwide, our pieces are hand-painted on fire-retardant canvases as large as 12x60m. Once the canvas is painted, our specialised team can fit it on site in one day. The advantages of painting on canvas, rather than on the ceiling, include short lead times, no need to accommodate craftspeople and mess in

your home for long periods, ideal working conditions for the artists and, as the canvas won't crack, no need for touch-ups.

What kinds of projects have you undertaken? We mainly work on residential and hospitality projects, but with our experience in set design we also carry out restorations, including the stage curtain for the Royal Opera of Versailles; that was my favourite project, without a doubt.

What are your future plans? We want to alter the received wisdom of the last one-hundred years, whereby ceilings have been neglected as a decorative opportunity. We've widened the appeal of painted canvases by creating contemporary designs in modern colours, as well as more classical works. Through new techniques, including virtual reality visualisation, clients are able to see how the final result will look before they order. *Volta Ceilings, 020 3416 6754, voltaceilings.com.*





Find even more inspiration to create a space you love at housetohome.co.uk. Discover thousands of beautiful images for every room, including festive schemes like this, then store them all in your own digital moodboard.

BACK TO BASICS A new mobile phone from Swedish company Punkt aims to undo modern addictions to updates, notifications and alerts. You can use it to call or text, and aside from a simple calendar and clock, that's it. Designed by Jasper Morrison to liberate, calm and encourage the user to live in the moment, the MP01, £229, Twentytwentyone, 020 7288 1996, twentytwentyone.com, has a toughened yet light glass screen and a battery life of around 20 days.



ON COURSE

PLANTING DESIGN

For garden designers, landscape architects and professionals looking to expand their skills and expertise, the London College of Garden Design, 01483 762955, lcmd.org.uk, has a new six-month planting design certificate course based at Kew. Tutors include nurserywoman Rosy Hardy, ornamental grass specialist Neil Lucas and Tony Kirkham, curator at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, who will be exploring core planting skills and garden style through lectures, workshops and garden visits. The 15-week course, held on Thursdays and Fridays, starts in January 2016 and costs £5,995.



FROM FAR LEFT Axor One thermostat; Olio tableware for Royal Doulton; 2012 Olympic Torch.



DESIGNER Q&A

BARBER & OSGERBY



Winners of this year's London Design Medal, Shoreditch-based Edward Barber (far left) and Jay Osgerby, count a stellar collection of products in their portfolio, including the Tip Ton chair and 2012 Olympic Torch. Their latest design is the Axor One shower control for Hansgrohe

What was the starting point for the Axor project? We looked at all the controls necessary to operate an overhead shower, hand shower, bath spout and body jets, and realised that knowing which lever to turn was like controlling a submarine. We wanted to simplify that complexity and create something that would work harder and smarter.

What does the Axor One do? You can control multiple water outlets from one element. It's easy and intuitive to use, which you need when you are vulnerable – that is, naked in the shower.

What was the greatest challenge? To get all the complex functionality condensed into one control was difficult and it took us four years to develop. It is an elegant and quiet piece that looks incredibly simple and obvious, but that's often the secret to a good design.

What's next? We have more projects in the pipeline for B&B Italia, Knoll, Mutina and Vitra, and more for Axor, including a new shower head due to be launched in 2017. Let's just say that it won't be a standard design.

Barber & Osgerby, 020 7033 3884, barberosgerby.com.

INTERVIEW AMELIA THORPE PORTRAIT ALICIA CONNAN

BOX OF DELIGHTS The Applique Radieuse wall lampshade from Paris-based designer Sarah Lavoine hits the geometric trend beautifully, as if Mondrian had developed a taste for sorbet tones. The cotton shades come in two sizes: H12xW25xD12cm, €115 and H36xW25xD12cm, €155, and in blue, pink, green or orange. *Contact 01 42 96 34 35, sarahlavoine.com.*

All set for Christmas? Make it your best ever by visiting our blog, hglivingbeautifully.com, for smart gift ideas, festive events, stylish decorations and delicious recipes.

3 OF THE BEST **CRACKERS**

1 Hand-decorated ceramic gifts with 22-carat gold detail. **Rory Dobner crackers, £350 for six**, Fortnum & Mason, 020 7734 8040, fortnumandmason.com.



2 A selection of luxury gifts in marbled and gold designs. **Marbles crackers, £65 for six**, Selfridges, 0800 123400, selfridges.com.



3 Spread some Christmas joy with these bright, sparkly crackers. **Neon Fringe crackers, £17.50 for six**, Meri Meri at SCP, 020 7739 1869, scp.co.uk.



DESIGN EYE

BARBARA CHANDLER



Homes & Gardens' design correspondent debates the importance of function over form in product design

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but when it comes to design, it seems there is a bit more to it than that. An intriguing survey has shown that the more beautiful we consider an object, the more we anticipate that it will function well. Conversely, if a product's function proves unsatisfactory, we then see it as less beautiful.

These findings are from research commissioned by bathroom brand Ideal Standard, which describes it as "a neuro-scientific study into how the brain perceives and interprets beauty." A combination of EEG scans and online responses found there was a conflict (measured by electrical activity) when the brain had to reconcile a product it found aesthetically pleasing with the fact that it performed poorly.

Researchers from Mindlab, a leading agency in Brighton, have termed this clash of feelings as "aesthetic dissonance" and their findings have been analysed by neuroscientist Dr Jack Lewis. "In simple terms, if a beautiful object lets us down, we may not consider it beautiful anymore," he explains.

Dick Powell, from one of Britain's best-known design consultancies, Seymourpowell, goes on to say, "Designers have always intuitively understood this principle, but now it's been established scientifically. This knowledge should drive the design industry forward to create products that work just as beautifully as they look." Indeed, function must follow form.

So where does that leave the triffid-like Juicy Salif lemon squeezer designed by Philippe Starck? Notoriously, it does not squeeze lemons very well, yet it has captured the imagination of a generation of design buffs and is now happily celebrating its 25th anniversary. A limited edition of 299 in bronze at £850 each sold out, while squeezers in white and the original stainless steel cost just £49. Ironically, its manufacturer Alessi has just published a 25th anniversary catalogue titled *25 years without squeezing a lemon*.

Juicy Salif citrus squeezer in White, £49. Alessi, 020 7518 9091, alessi.com.



STANDING THE TEST OF TIME

Fans of the bold British style epitomised by iconic designer David Hicks will love the Benson sofa (above), created in the Seventies for Parker & Farr and now reissued to mark the brand's 65th birthday. It measures H74xW213xD84cm and costs £4,068. Contact Parker & Farr, 020 7736 1310, parkerandfarr.co.uk.

This festive season, take a trip back to a time when train travel was rather more glamorous. **Board the historic steam-hauled Belmond British Pullman train** at London Victoria, sip Champagne in its vintage carriages, then settle in for a leisurely five-course lunch while taking in views of the wintery countryside. From £415 per person. Contact 0845 077 2222, belmond.com.

HOT STUFF Whether your home is period or contemporary, the new collection of fire surrounds by Eric Cohler for Chesney's, 020 7627 1410, chesneys.co.uk, will have something to suit your style. The Griffin (shown here), 112x147cm, £5,940, is made in petite granite with strong fossil markings and a polished-steel finish.



TREASURE HUNTING The global, artisanal homewares collections from online store Nkuku are now available in the brand's first lifestyle shop and cafe, housed in restored historic barns near Totnes in Devon. As well as its own ranges, the store will be a showcase for antique, one-off and unusual pieces from around the world. Contact 01803 866847, nkuku.com.