

DINING ROOM
 'I always associate green with English interiors,' says Ana, who has combined a deep shade with vibrant fuchsia velvet.
 Walls in Highland Green vinyl matt emulsion, £20.49 for 2.5ltr, Dulux. Recycled glass bottle chandelier, Luzio



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY
 Georgian townhouse
LOCATION Central London
ROOMS Hallway, sitting room, dining room, living room, kitchen, study, utility room, five bedrooms, dressing room, three bathrooms, two cloakrooms
MOVED IN 2018
PREVIOUS PROPERTY
 'We were living in Barcelona before moving to London and renting this house,' says Ana.



KITCHEN
 Pine units were given a lick of paint and handles were added to echo the shades of the dining room. Similar Chelford Shaker-style units, price on request, Howdens. Handles, price on request, Haute Deco



HALLWAY
 'This shade of yellow is so inviting,' says Ana.
 Walls in Soane Yellow emulsion, £48 for 2.5ltr, Papers and Paints. Gold star, from £4.99, Ginger Ray



LANDING
 'Paintings are my favourite way to add impact to a space,' says Ana.
 Paintings by Charlie Day and Bernat Daviu (right). Floor painted in Highland Green Trade satinwood, £43.70 for 2.5ltr, Dulux



LIVING ROOM
 Soft pink velvet offsets the rougher textures of worn timber and antique metal. Try the Crumpet sofa, £2,065, Loaf. Art by Lidia Masllorens

TRUE COLOURS

A dreary townhouse was the perfect place for Ana Engelhorn to express her love for vibrant shades

FEATURE JO LEEVERS | PHOTOGRAPHY PATRICK WILLIAMSON



LIVING ROOM
 'Colour is central to my style. It has such personal associations for each of us,' says Ana. Interior design by Ana Engelhorn (anaengelhorn.com). Chiltern four-seater sofa, £3,716, The Conran Shop. Find similar antique French chandeliers, from £1,450, The Hoarde. Try Extra Large British Rare Breed Jacob sheepskin, £159, The Wool Company

When interior designer Ana Engelhorn, her husband Carlos Rubia Simón and their children Lola, aged 10, and Charlie, three, moved from Barcelona to London, their new rental home was painted in wall-to-wall beige. 'In theory, it was decorated to be a clean slate so that anyone could come in and like it,' says Ana. 'I loved the location and architecture of the house, but I didn't like the decor. Yet I could envisage plenty of ways to make it less dreary, so we decided to go ahead and take it.'

Despite the fact that the house was rented, Ana was undeterred from carrying out a thorough transformation. First, she pulled up a few corners of the cream fitted carpets to see what condition the oak floorboards were in. 'I thought, we're in this 1800s building – imagine what they could look like?' says Ana. Happily, she was pleasantly surprised. The original oak boards immediately gave the rooms more texture and hinted at the property's characterful past. 'Under one floorboard, we even found a bell pull cord that would have once summoned servants,' she adds. 'It felt as if we were peeling back the layers of the house's history.'

DELUXE DECOR

Next, Ana negotiated repainting the walls throughout the house in the strong spectrum of colours she's favoured ever since moving to London. 'Maybe it's to make up for the grey skies,' she laughs. For the hallway and landing, she chose a sunshine yellow. 'It immediately says that we're happy to be here and feels inviting when you walk in.' In the living room, she plumped for a green that's soothing rather than sober, mixing it with hot pinks and deeper blues. The sitting room is wrapped in a warm, all-enveloping shade of red.

Ana then turned her focus to revamping the lighting. She already owned the standout chandelier constructed from vintage green bottles that hangs over the dining table, but the sparkling number in the sitting room was bought more recently in London. Elsewhere, she hung the chandeliers from hooks rather than getting them wired in, with cables that loop across the ceiling and run down to wall sockets. 'I found a style of old-fashioned twisted cable, so the effect still works with the style of the house,' she says.

FABULOUSLY FESTIVE

Artwork is also a key feature. 'Putting contemporary art in a period setting is very much my style; it instantly creates balance and a sense of dynamism,' explains Ana. Similarly, furniture from different eras is seamlessly combined – a modern sofa works well next to 1950s Italian chairs re-upholstered in deep velvet, arranged beneath the twinkling lights of a 19th-century chandelier.

The jewel shades and luxe textures of this house make it particularly atmospheric during the run up to Christmas. Golden ferns, paper stars and winter foliage are all that's needed to add a festive air. 'We love sitting by the fire, and every Sunday the children light a candle on an Advent wreath,' says Ana. When they get their tree, it'll be real, smelling of pine needles: 'I was born in Switzerland so I could never go faux!' She hasn't quite decided on the scheme for her tree yet, but it hardly matters in this home, where iridescent colours and gleam aren't just for Christmas. 25



MASTER BEDROOM
 Punchy meets pretty in this space, with traditional floral curtains set against an enveloping blue paint shade. Ochre velvet quilt, £329, Heal's. Suzani cushion, £185, Pentreath & Hall, would work well here



BATHROOM
 An aged mirror and super-sized artwork add a sense of drama. Marina wood mirror, £95, John Lewis & Partners, has this look. Walls in Celestial Blue vinyl matt emulsion, £20.49 for 2.5ltr, Dulux