

# GREEN AND SERENE

Illustrating how organic materials and sustainable building techniques can work together to create a des res, this London house is cool on all fronts

PHOTOGRAPHY Mary Wadsworth  
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## KITCHEN

Lime plaster walls are an eco choice and have a characterful patina.

Bespoke units with Silestone worktops in Basalt by Little Greene, designed by Emil Eve and built by Evoke Projects. Polished concrete flooring, Lazenby. Light, Spark & Bell. Tap, Hansgrohe. EcoMortar R50 lime plaster, Saint-Astier



**DINING AREA**

This light-filled space is in an extension built using Douglas fir from viable forests in Wales.

Vintage **table**, Ercol. **Chairs**, Ercol and Heal's. Wall **light**, Spark & Bell. Ceiling **pendant**, Isamu Noguchi for Vitra



## COURTYARD

Extra light is pulled into both the living room and kitchen thanks to this ingenious design idea, which also gives the couple another outdoor space.

Wood panelling in Douglas fir.  
Table and stools, Habitat.  
Terracotta floor tiles, Baked Earth



## What a relief that the idea of ‘sustainability’ is no longer immediately associated with build-your-own-yurt-type housing and is now seen as the buzzword

for future-proofing our homes and, increasingly, making them beautiful too. Sharon Lee and Lucas Dussurget’s renovation of a neglected Victorian house in southeast London is an exciting example of how building well with green materials and techniques can create a home with longevity. ‘We love it because it shows that eco can be about cool, contemporary design – not earnest or dull!’ says Sharon. She and Lucas chose architects Emma and Ross Perkin of Emil Eve Architects because, ‘they got that we were not just asking them to design a house, we were asking them to help us create our home,’ says Sharon.

The couple – she grew up in Hong Kong, was previously in the film business and is now a trainee psychotherapist, while he grew up in Toulouse, France, and is an IT exec – had a pretty good idea of what they wanted. They had lived in the house, ‘getting to know it, seeing how the light travels’, before making changes. Their brief to Emil Eve was for ‘a generous entertaining space, lots of storage, natural light, two sinks in the en-suite bathroom – and somewhere to hide the cat’s litter tray!’ (More on this later.)

The aim was to open up the house while still keeping the feeling of distinct, separate spaces each with its own identity. The living room, created from two receptions knocked into one, is cosy with comfy seating, a log burner and a family piano. It leads to a small outside area, inspired by the traditional Chinese courtyards Sharon admired growing up, which in turn connects to the more contemporary open-plan kitchen-diner where pancake brunches and boozy evenings take place. ‘We’re total foodies,’ says Sharon. ‘We love to cook and to entertain and the garden becomes another dining room in the summer.’ In fact, she confides, they primarily

chose their house because it is round the corner from an enclave of diverse and interesting restaurants.

When it came to the nuts and bolts of the house, sustainability and natural materials were a given, with planks of Douglas fir from viable forests in Wales forming the exposed timber structure of the kitchen extension – and much of the joinery, too. Breathable lime plaster walls (insulated with sustainable wood fibre panels) have a soft texture in the changing light, while earthy terracotta

tiles in the back garden complement the colour and grain of the Douglas fir. Tall glazed doors and deep-framed timber windows pull as much light as possible into the rooms and create defined views across the ground floor and garden.

For a house like this it was super-imperative that builder and client were totally in tune. ‘Emma and Ross worked closely with the builder, Dan Sawicki of Evoke Projects,’ says Sharon. ‘Obviously the fine detailing in the exposed timber structure and joinery was especially crucial and we’re very happy with that and the end result throughout the house.’

Upstairs on the first floor the warmer shades of the guest bedrooms were inspired by the colours of the buildings in Bologna (where Sharon was a student) and

the pink-hued houses in Lucas’ hometown, whilst their own bedroom in the attic is calming shades of oyster grey and white. Clever cupboards pop up throughout the house – under the kitchen seating, set into the eaves in the attic. And, even more impressively, Archie the cat has his own private cloakroom cupboard (with said litter tray) accessed via a cat flap in the downstairs loo!

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emileve.co.uk; evokeprojects.co.uk

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#### THE OWNERS

**Sharon Lee, a trainee psychotherapist, and Lucas Dussurget, an IT executive, plus their cat Archie.**

#### THE PROPERTY

**A three-storey, semi-detached Victorian house in southeast London. On the ground floor is the living room, an internal courtyard, a kitchen-diner and small garden. On the first floor is a study, a bathroom and two guest bedrooms. The top floor has the main bedroom with an en-suite bathroom.**





## home truths

### DESIGN HERO?

**Ludwig Mies van der Rohe** for the way he blurred the boundaries between interior and exterior, the way he made roofs float and the way he made the complicated look simple.

### DREAM HOME?

**Fallingwater** in Pennsylvania designed by **Frank Lloyd Wright** in 1935.

### IF YOU WERE A SOFA, WHICH ONE WOULD YOU BE?

**B&B Italia's Atoll Soft** - comfy, classic, petite.

### LAST THING YOU BOUGHT FOR THE HOUSE?

**The Boa Pouf** by **Sabine Marcelis** for **Hem**.

### FORM OVER FUNCTION?

**No**, and I have learned this the expensive way!

### SECRET OF A HAPPY HOME?

**Compromise** - in every element...

## DINING AREA

**Bespoke built-in seating extends to form a day bed by a window looking out to the garden. All the seating has storage.**

**EcoMortar R50 lime plaster**, Saint-Astier. Douglas fir **timber** treated with White oil, Osmo.

**Seating** designed by Emil Eve; upholstered in Chenoa in Indigo by Scion

## LANDING

**A roof window in the attic space allows light to filter all the way down the stairs.**

**Walls in** Oyster, Bauwerk Colour.

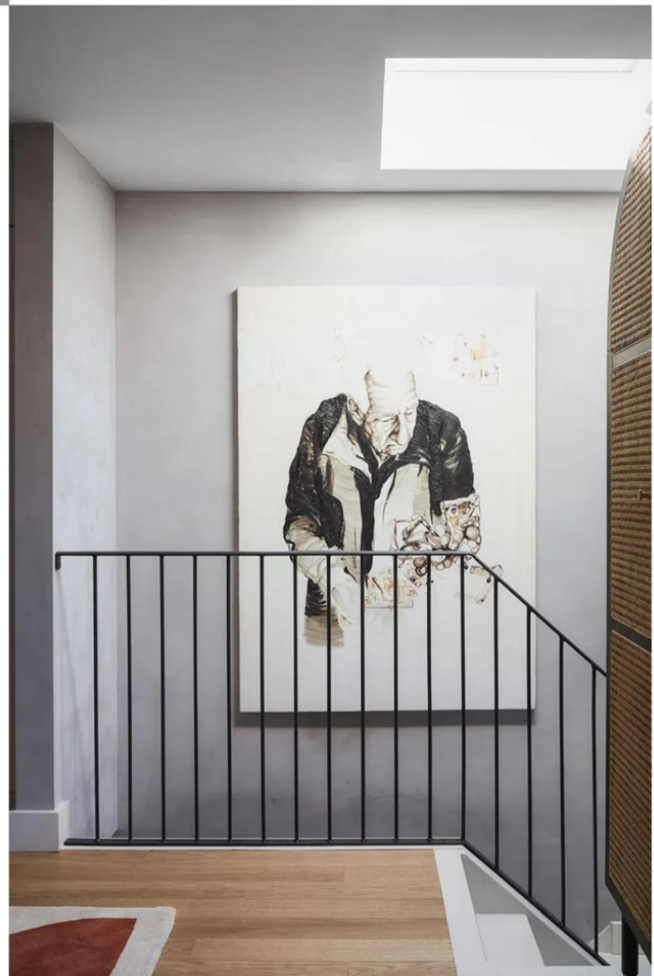
**Flooring**, Havwoods. **Artwork**, Alexia Achilleos. **Cupboard**, find similar at La Redoute

## BEDROOM

**Quirky touches add personality and demonstrate that the house doesn't take itself too seriously.**

**Walls in** raw plaster. **Stool**, Urban Outfitters. Hanging **light**, Tala.

**Bedding**, John Lewis & Partners. Hand **vase** (with dried flowers), Rockett St George. Patchwork **artwork** by Sharon









WE LOVE THE  
END RESULT OF  
THIS RENOVATION  
AS IT SHOWS ECO  
CAN BE ABOUT COOL,  
CONTEMPORARY  
DESIGN - IT DOESN'T  
HAVE TO BE EARNEST



## MAIN EN SUITE

'The use of microcement was inspired by a hotel room that I loved while holidaying in Santorini,' says Sharon. The couple sacrificed a bath in order to have two sinks and a large walk-in shower.

**Walls in** microcement, Microcement South East. **Basins and taps,** Victoria Plumbing. **Mirrors,** Dunelm. **Wall light,** lights.co.uk. **Cabinets,** custom made by Evoke Projects. **Black stool,** Galvin Brothers

## MAIN BEDROOM

The eaves are fitted with useful storage cupboards and drawers that extend back a long way.

**Walls in** Oyster, Bauwerk Colour. **Bedding,** Anthropologie. **Wall lamp,** DCW Editions

## BATHROOM

The green tiles were inspired by the colours of forests in Japan. The irregular tones give that handmade, imperfect quality.

**Walls in** microcement, Microcement South East. **Tiles,** N&C Tiles and Bathrooms. **Towel,** Anthropologie. **Fittings,** Lusso Stone







## MAIN BEDROOM

The new 'zen' attic space was designed to be a real retreat. Everything is streamlined - even the shelving.

**Walls in** Oyster, Bauwerk Colour. **Flooring,** Havwoods. **Lamp,** DCW Editions. Find similar **Wake Up and Dream artwork** on Etsy. **Chair,** Sklum

THE MAIN CRITERIA  
FOR THE COLOUR  
PALETTE WAS THAT  
IT WAS CALMING

