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Design
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LANDING Nicola chose 'Yesterday's Flower' by Paint & Paper Library for the ceiling because 'the skylight wouldn't look nearly as good against white'. **Woodwork** in Pure & Original's 'Courtly Rose' sets off the Vanderhurd runner. **SPARE ROOM** Paint & Paper Library's 'Beetlenut' on the ceiling is paired with Galbraith & Paul's 'Tile' wallpaper in coral to bold effect. An armchair in George Smith's 'Mohair' in auburn provides a pleasing contrast with the blue kantha quilt from Toast



bouncing off the river. When they stir in a breeze, the heavier stripes in the weave make a lovely dappled light in the room.

At the point when Nicola came to the project, the owners had plans to build a glass extension. However, she felt that this would be incongruous with the style of the house, as well as being subject to glare from the river and potentially too hot in summer, and would offer very little privacy from passing boats. Having taken the two main reception rooms for the kitchen and a relaxed sitting room, Nicola agreed that a more grown-up space was needed.

So she designed an orangery, with three full-length windows overlooking the river views and a skylight with electric blinds that filter the light throughout the year. Its dark blue walls give the space a serene glamour, and the moss greens of the sofas and ottoman sing out against this background. The floor in teal bejmat tiles (the sturdier, brick-shaped version of zellige made for use on floors) completes this blue heaven. More bejmat – this time in black – work in harmony with the aubergine walls of the corridor behind the orangery. This leads to the library, where dark-painted shelves provide a strong backdrop for a Victorian library table and a jolly yellow and green vintage stool.

Nicola revels in creating these bold splashes: 'Colour is a magic toolbox for connecting spaces, creating atmosphere and making sense of things.' Though this does not always mean very strong colours: 'Rooms where you spend most time are best with a calm palette, while less-visited areas can be more intense – nice to dip into, but not where you want to be every morning at 7.30am.'

The main bedroom is a case in point. The restful pinks and mauves of its walls, ceiling and curtains, are pointed up by a handsome blue-grey headboard. The dressing room nearby, in vivid blues, provides a jolt of colour, though both rooms have the same shade of mauve on the ceiling. And the vivid spare room is positively exhilarating to dip into. 'As a small bedroom overlooking the road, it could have been disappointing,' says Nicola, explaining why she and her team chose strong red Galbraith & Paul wallpaper, intense 'Beetlenut' gloss paint from Paint & Paper Library for the woodwork and ceiling and an Oka rug with a large-scale pattern.

Nicola has created a colourful house with a relaxed atmosphere for the lucky owners. It is also a place in which carefully considered hidden storage makes it easy to be tidy. 'You have got to cover practical needs first,' she says. Though once that is done, she can add the soul □

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Nicola Harding & Co: nicolaharding.com

DRESSING ROOM (top left) The vibrant blues of walls in Paint & Paper Library's 'Spruce', **woodwork** in Pure & Original's 'Libo Bay' and a striped From Jaipur With Love **dhurrie** create a strong look. **MAIN BEDROOM (left and opposite)** A wooden **chair** from 8 Holland Street is anchored by a bespoke Guinevere **rug**. Pure & Original's 'Calm' was chosen for the **walls**, establishing a restful mood and showcasing the **headboard** in 'Charlton' charcoal blue corduroy from Tissus d'Hélène. The Vaughan **lamp** on the chest of drawers and the **stool** at the foot of the bed in Peter Dunham Textiles' 'Mica' stripe in indigo pick up on the blues of the dressing room next door