

KITCHEN

Nicola updated the room with new pendants, bar stools and an antique cupboard from Kempton Park Market. 'Bringing in rustic wood furniture as a contrast to the white appealed to me,' she says. 'Earthy, natural tones remind me of South Africa.' Cowbell pendants, £95 each, Loaf. Weathered bar stools, £150 each, Eastburn Country Furniture



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY 1930s semi-detached house
LOCATION North London
ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen-diner/living area, office, cloakroom, five bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms
PURCHASED 2018
PREVIOUS PROPERTY
 'We lived nearby in a four-bed developer home,' says Nicola.

PERSONAL SPACE

Wanting to honour her South African roots, Nicola Kotkis ensured her home has pieces that reflect her heritage

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN | PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES FRENCH | STYLING MARISHA TAYLOR

FAVOURITE ROOM *'There's so much space for us to mingle in the extension and the skylights make it light even on gloomy days'*



DINING AREA

A pair of black-framed mirrors create a window-like effect in the room. 'I needed big pieces to fill the wall,' says Nicola. Bramante walnut table is similar, £599, Made. Vistoft rug is a good match, £229, Ikea. Troy arch mirrors, £145 each, Perch & Parrow, share this look. La Redoute's Cedak oak and rattan chairs, £285 for a set of two, would work here



SITTING ROOM

'The wooden panel is a piece of old door that's been re-purposed. I bought it in South Africa,' Nicola says. 'I love the texture and that the hinges are still in place.' Botanical cushions, £30 each; blue tasselled rug, £80, all Homesense. Noir stool, £127, Nordic Nest, has this look

When it came to planning her home, interior designer Nicola Korkis favoured a neutral palette, but with important touches hinting at her South African heritage.

'My taste is classic,' she explains. 'But earthy natural tones remind me of home and I love the unusual pieces I've brought back from local markets.'

Nicola and her husband, Ilan, a solicitor, have lived in London for 17 years and jumped at the chance to buy this extended house, knowing it would be ideal for them and their children, Livia, nine, and five-year-old twins, Gideon and Ezra.

'I was super-excited,' says Nicola. 'It was good to be in a position where

we had the space and layout we wanted, and I looked forward to investing our time and money to make our home look pretty and functional for us.'

The six-metre rear extension provided a large kitchen and dining area with a zone for relaxing. Sliding doors separate it from the front sitting room, which has a built-in toy cupboard so it doubles as a playroom.

'I liked the flexibility of the layout,' says Nicola. 'My office, where I work with my business partner, Lisa Novick, is also the kids' craft room. I turned one of the bedrooms into Ilan's office and at the moment the twins share the loft room so we're able to have a guest bedroom.'

Still, there was plenty to do to bring the house up to scratch. Working with



LIVING AREA

Nicola has squared off this snug area with a sofa and rug, with a beaded chandelier to top off the stylish look. 'I scoured the internet for the right sort of lighting and found this pendant in China, which I absolutely love,' says Nicola. Rug, £600, West Elm. Sofa, £2,000, DFS. Eglo beaded chandelier is similar, £222, Dusk Lighting



BEDROOM

Nicola took colour cues from the pinks and greens in the framed prints. Palm Tree prints, £79 for two, Graham and Green, are similar. Cushion, £50, Fenwick. Throw, £85, Amara

BATHROOM

A simple scheme in taupe with large format tiles is softened by a single leafy plant. Trax Peppered Taupe tiles are similar, £24.95sq m, Walls and Floors



Lisa, Nicola put together a mood board for each room just as they do for clients.

'My taste for neutrals is in complete contrast to our work at Novick Kotkis as many of our clients are adventurous with colour,' she says. 'My scheme is calm and clean and works really well to make our versatile living spaces flow together.'

Nicola kept the high-quality Glotech kitchen and updated the look by swapping chrome island pendants with bubble glass. She added texture with wood, bringing in a dark wood dining table and two antique dressers from her previous home.

'Where possible I try not to buy from the high street as it's easy to get carried away with trends and then find your things are the same as everyone else's,'

says Nicola. 'I've always liked cross-back wooden chairs and convinced a wedding hire company to sell 14 of them to me.'

Family visits to South Africa often yield something original for the house. Four decorative ceiling panels make an intriguing wall display in the extension. 'With clients, we like to build a design idea around something personal they love and I've done the same here,' explains Nicola. 'We have all kinds of homeware we've bought in markets in Johannesburg that give our home a unique style.'

'Decorating throughout has made the house feel new,' she says. 'It's lovely having all the shared downstairs space as well as separate rooms for specific activities. It's a house that will last us a very long time.'

LIVIA'S BEDROOM

'Having seen this paper years ago, I thought it would be lovely for a child's space,' says Nicola. Hummingbird wallpaper, £97 a roll, Cole & Son's Archive Anthology

MASTER BEDROOM

'I added the dusky pinks as the room needed more contrast,' says Nicola. Check cushions, £65 each; pink throw, £120, all John Lewis & Partners. Olson glass cloche wall lights, £120 each, Heal's

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PERFECT FORM

Runway Gallery artist Belinda Frikh tells us about her lifelong love of drawing and explains how powerful women influence her timeless and striking works



After moving to London in 1996, soon after finishing her studies, Belinda's intention was to stay for three months. Instead, she stayed for 21 years. 'I was instantly drawn to the city's buzz, its cultural heritage and cosmopolitan feel,' she says.

Despite her time in the capital, it is France, her home country, that has had the strongest influence on her drawing. 'I've named most of my ladies after French heroines. I can't pinpoint exactly when I started to draw because for as long I can remember, I was drawing – always drawing – to the exasperation of my parents. I would draw on everything: cereal boxes, books, official documents and letters from school complaining about me always drawing. Then, much later on, I studied at L'École Supérieure d'Art in Annecy, then the École d'Arts Appliqués in Lyon,' she says.

The focus of Belinda's work is womankind: glamorous, uncompromising and beautiful. 'When I visualise the female form, I see a different code of beauty: a wit, composure, a unique imperfection, a smouldering look, a trailblazing attitude. I find these attributes in female characters



in literature, in strong cinematic female leads and in historical heroines.'

Her hand-drawn pieces are a fusion of the cultural references she has collected. She takes inspiration from the 1920s, as well as from Klimt, and she cites Biba's Barbara Hulanicki as another major

influence on her work. 'My eyes are mainly drawn to the past,' she confesses.

Owning a piece of art is as easy as clicking a button with online venture Runway Gallery. Showcasing contemporary, fashion-focused works from celebrated artists, [runway-gallery.com](#) enables you to snap up original prints for your home.

ARTWORK (FROM TOP LEFT) COLOMBINE, PACÔME, BOTH BELINDA FRIKH AT RUNWAY GALLERY
LIVING ROOM PHOTOGRAPH VERONICA RODRIGUEZ/STYLING - MEDIACONTENT.COM

COMING NEXT MONTH... Wildlife photographer Jake Mosher from rural Montana talks about his Metamorphosis collection inspired by the intricate patterns on the wings of butterflies and moths. Selected pieces are available exclusively at Runway Gallery.