

# PERFECT BALANCE



**SITTING ROOM**  
Bright hues stand out against neutral tones. Margot Accent armchair in Antique Gold, £399, Made. Brass Hector mini floor lamp, £85, is similar, John Lewis & Partners. Floors in Ammonite estate emulsion, £47.95 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball

**HALLWAY**  
A bold yellow wallpaper creates a striking first impression. Cole & Son's Albemarle Chatterton damask wallpaper, £150 a roll, Nicola Casperson Interiors. Karndean's Palio Clic flooring in Arezzo, £27.95sq m, Best At Flooring

In her Victorian terrace, Nicola Casperson has paired high-street finds and designer brands for a look that's all her own

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**KITCHEN**

Nicola achieved this space by knocking three rooms into one.

Moretti rug in Anthracite is similar, £39, Dunelm. Try Mr Clarke clock, 53cm, £100, Newgate Clocks at Amara

**DINING AREA**

A large canvas breaks up the bare-brick wall.

Ekdalen extendable table, £179, Ikea. Stormbreak canvas, €212, Lola Donoghue. Originals All Purpose Chairs by Ercol are similar, £410 each, Heal's

**SITTING ROOM**

'Dark walls and the grey velvet sofa make the room feel cosy,' says Nicola.

Walls in Mole's Breath modern emulsion, £49.95 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Small Crumpet sofa in Slate clever velvet is similar, £1,895, Loaf. Estelle nest of three tables are similar, £225, Oliver Bonas

**HOME TRUTHS****THE PROPERTY**

Victorian terrace

**LOCATION** South London

**ROOMS** Sitting room, kitchen-diner, two bedrooms, bathroom

**PURCHASED** 2015

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY** 'I moved here from a one-bedroom flat just a few miles away,' says Nicola.

When Nicola Casperson first laid eyes on a dated and cramped Victorian terrace, straightaway she could see herself living in a chic and contemporary open-planned home. 'I knew I could pull the downstairs rooms apart and create a bright kitchen-diner at the back opening onto the garden,' she says. 'For contrast, I planned double doors from here into a dark and cosy front sitting room.'

The boldest move was losing one of the three bedrooms to create a new bathroom. 'It made perfect sense,' she

adds. 'Upstairs seemed unbalanced as the ground floor isn't really big enough to sustain a three-bedroom house – and it meant I could have a lovely big bathroom.' Nicola, who works in brand marketing and also runs Nicola Casperson Interiors, had already renovated her previous home, a one-bed flat, and confidently sketched a new layout. The kitchen, dining room and hallway would become one, helped by building a small side extension in place of the old kitchen lean-to.

'I've now got an extra three square metres of space and with the roof

**LAST WORD**  
'My biggest achievement was making a modest space look and feel big without throwing lots of money at it'

windows, it's made a big difference to how the kitchen-diner feels,' she says. Her trusty builder, Adrian England, from England's Carpentry Services, worked methodically through the house in stages, including building three faux chimney breasts in the sitting room, hallway and Nicola's bedroom. 'It's likely these rooms would originally have had a fireplace each and they felt flat and featureless without them,' she says. 'Though the chimney breasts have taken up space, I've been able to create alcove storage, which strangely, makes the rooms feel bigger.'

With a sense of space at the forefront of Nicola's mind, she decorated the new open-plan room white, adding texture with brick slips on the side extension wall. A charcoal grey kitchen with mustard yellow chairs sets the industrial contemporary colour scheme for the whole house. 'The grey and mustard combination has a modern feel,' says Nicola, 'but still works well with the period features.'

Rooms now flow into one another with tonal grey walls switching between dark and light

shades, warmed with wood and touches of yellows and pinks in furnishings and artwork.

Nicola furnished her home with a mix of high-street names and designer brands – particularly in lighting, where she invested in Umage's Eos white feather ceiling pendants in the bedrooms and a funky pink Kartell FL/Y light in the bathroom. 'Lighting is far more successful here than my old flat. I'm finessing my ideas with each project,' says Nicola. 'The house feels bigger and balanced now – everything has its place.' 25

**LANDING**

The striking chandelier is a focal point.

Searchlight Sigma 6-light chandelier, £210, Lights2go

**BATHROOM**

'Matt-finish walls have a softer look than gloss,' says Nicola.

Verona large freestanding bath, £599.95; Crosswater Belgravia crosshead bath shower mixer in nickel, £443, both Victorian Plumbing. Eden Roc Pool print by Slim Aarons, £195 unframed, Artrepublic

**MASTER BEDROOM**

A bright pink print adds a pop of colour.

Umage Eos lampshade, £120, Nicola Casperson Interiors. Together Penguin art print, £220, King & McGaw. Walls in London Clay estate emulsion, £47.95 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball

