

SURFACE MATTERS

An industrial-Scandi aesthetic is expressed through clean lines and tactile materials in Nicole and Lester Leviton's home

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HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

A detached 1950s house

LOCATION Hertfordshire

ROOMS Sitting room, family room, kitchen-diner, utility room, study, cloakroom, four bedrooms (two en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2015

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a smaller house in the same area,' says Nicole.

KITCHEN-DINER
'We like to entertain so this was an important space,' says Nicole. Kitchen, price on request, Neil Lerner. Kartell Charles Ghost bar stools, £183 each, Amara. Flask ball pendant lights in Smoke, £220 each, Tom Dixon

Nicole and Lester Leviton played the long game to buy their house after earmarking specific roads in Bushey where they wanted to live with their children, Lili, 16, and Louie, 13. The couple, both born and bred here, liked the look of the wide, detached properties in the area and leapt into action when, after several years of waiting, this one came on the market in late 2015. They weren't remotely fazed by the 1970s decor, lack of kitchen space and poky floor plan.

'Our primary goal was to build a double-storey extension and my dream was to have a big kitchen-dining space as I love to cook,' says Nicole. 'Upstairs we wanted four double bedrooms – two with en suites – so that my sister and her family, who live abroad, could comfortably stay with us.' To achieve the ultimate open-plan kitchen without obstructive pillars, a nine-metre horizontal steel beam was installed and the room finished with a polished concrete floor.

INDUSTRIAL INSPIRATION

'We both love concrete floors and I wanted a massive island with stainless-steel worktops so the combination worked very well,' says Nicole. 'These materials then influenced the shade of grey we chose for the Neil Lerner kitchen cupboards and set the tone for the modern look in the rest of the house.'

When the building work came to an end, rooms were decorated white to begin with while Nicole and Lester, who

runs a property company, settled into their new home. Neither were in a hurry to finish the interiors, deciding to save up for high-end designer pieces that would last. 'We wanted to invest in good furniture and make the right decisions,' says Nicole. 'We bought a Hay sofa for the sitting room and I've had the dining table and Kartell chairs for years. I still love them so I bought the bar stools to match.'

A HELPING HAND

Faced with the challenge of working with the large dimensions of the kitchen-diner Nicole asked interior designer Nicola Harvey to help her draw her ideas together. 'The walls looked bare and I liked the idea of decoration that added texture and pattern rather than too much colour,' says Nicole. 'Nicola suggested the String shelf desk unit and Microcement polished plaster walls – they totally changed the pace of the room.'

Texture and pattern continue through the house: crocodile wallpaper in the cloakroom; a distressed wallpaper finish in the hallway; tactile fabrics and leafy pot plants. 'I'm not set on one idea – we have touches of industrial softened with Scandi elements,' says Nicole. 'I just go with what I like.'

It took a few years for Nicole and Lester to get the house looking as they wanted and Nicole says even now, she still has things on her list to buy. 'We need some art, but we're happy to wait until the right pieces come along. Our house was worth the wait,' says Nicole. 'We love coming home every day.' 25

SITTING ROOM

The black wall adds drama to the pale tones, while the accents of yellow bring life to the scheme.

Wall in Off-Black estate emulsion, £47.95 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Hay Mags sofa, £4,255, Nest. Hay Mags ottoman, £525, Clippings. Yellow and grey throw, £40, West Elm



CLOAKROOM
A textured crocodile print is teamed with zingy yellow accessories. Élitis Big Croco wallpaper in Colour 31, £159.80 a roll, Jane Clayton. Try Aimee yellow mirror, £80, Habitat

EN SUITE

The bath fits neatly beneath the window, offering a view of the stars in the evening. Harrogate bath, £1,158, Claygate. Kadirli hammam towel, £19, Urbanara, has a similar look



MASTER BEDROOM

'The tall shelves aren't conventional bedside tables but are the right proportions for a big room,' says Nicole.

Industrial-style ladder shelf with two drawers, £390, Rockett St George. Alphabet cushion, £20, Marks & Spencer



HALLWAY
Nicole loves the wallpaper's 3D look. Feathr Safari wallpaper by Kiki Slaughter, £129 a roll, Rockett St George