



SITTING ROOM
‘This wall paint is my go-to and never fails,’ says Athina. ‘The yellow and grey undertones create a gorgeous creamy stone colour.’ Walls in Portland Stone Pale absolute emulsion, £54.50 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. Lovett boucle chair (opposite), £795, Soho Home. Try Simply metal shelf unit, £432, Maisons du Monde

Calm & COLLECTED

Cohesive schemes in shades of cream, beige and green have given Athina Bluff the soothing sanctuary she craves at the end of a hectic working day

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN | PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD KIELY



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY
Victorian ground-floor flat

ROOMS Sitting room/kitchen, office, bedroom, bathroom

LOCATION South London

'BEIGE HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING BLAND AND BORING BUT I LOVE THE VARIETY OF SHADES AND WARM TONES'



As an interior designer and founder of Topology Interiors, Athina Bluff (@topologyinteriors) is immersed in myriad ideas on a daily basis, which set her a challenge for choosing the scheme for her own home. 'I'm good at focusing on what a client wants, but in my own projects I'm always changing things up,' says Athina. 'One constant in both work and home is my love of muted, earthy, relaxed neutrals. This has been a great base for the calming soft greens I chose here and my love of mixing vintage and contemporary looks.'

Athina's flat, which she bought with her partner, Theo McInnes, a photographer, is the first place she has owned. An upside to not being able to go out during lockdown was that the couple were able to make the

final push to save money for a deposit. A one-bedroom flat in a converted Victorian house, set in a quiet residential area in London, caught their attention.

'The property had been rented out and inside was mouldy and disgusting but I could visualise a beautiful home with high ceilings and gorgeous period features,' Athina recalls. 'Luckily I was able to call on my build team who spent six months on the renovations, fitting in my project around work for my clients.'

As well as resolving a major damp problem in the bedroom, replacing the kitchen and bathroom, and redoing the electrics, Athina decided to knock down the wall between the sitting room and kitchen. 'I instantly knew the open-plan space would be a good way to add value,' she says. 'We were also able to convert the lean-to

KITCHEN

Brick slips bring rustic style to the plain wall while a shelf provides a decorative display space for plants and vintage finds.
Cabinets in Beige 04 eggshell, £42 for 2.5ltr, Lick. The Brooklyn glass dome wall light, £89, Industville, is similar

OFFICE

Smart wood panelling behind the desk adds interest.
The opal glass globe wall light, £190, Industville, is a good alternative. Kimpel desk chair, £182.99, Wayfair



with its plastic roof into a proper home office. Now it has an amazing glass roof and leads onto our patio garden.'

Athina had been pinning ideas and inspiration to her 'Dream Home' Pinterest board for years. She found herself gravitating towards neutral colours in a variety of textures and materials – velvet, linen, jute, marble, metal, rustic wood, reeded glass. 'The combination gives pared-back schemes a dynamic look,' she says, 'with natural plants for instant greenery.' Athina was also able to make purchases from a list of must-have products she had been coveting for some time. 'I bought a bed from Loaf with a gorgeous minty blue velvet headboard, beautiful glossy green tiles for the bathroom and a stylish armchair from Soho Home,' she explains. 'Each room is decorated in creamy stone tones – I can't live

with strong colours – so I started with a statement piece, and then built the scheme up from there.'

The new open-plan kitchen-living area needed a cohesive look, which was achieved with the same wall paint colour, ceiling lights and flooring. Athina toyed with painting the kitchen green but decided the shade might be too much with the green sofa and settled on beige instead. When the couple moved into their flat six months later, Athina added finishing touches with smaller furniture and furnishings.

'It's been such a privilege to do this project and know that the flat is all ours,' explains Athina. 'I still really love it and I don't feel the need to paint the walls or swap furniture out like I might have done in my previous home. I feel very settled here.' 25

BATHROOM

'I've been waiting for a chance to use these glossy green tiles, which look glam with the black fixtures,' says Athina.

Zellica tiles in Forest Green, £1.28 a tile, Topps Tiles. Arezzo hinged shower screen, £239.95, Victorian Plumbing, is similar

MAIN BEDROOM

'The rooms at The Hoxton hotels inspired the velvet headboard, wood panelling and vintage furniture,' says Athina.

Dazzler headboard in Beach Ball clever velvet, £1,495, Loaf. Panelling in Baluster intelligent eggshell, £75.50 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene

