



Country charm

Nicola Casperson drew inspiration from boutique hotels to turn her characterless cottage into a charismatic and relaxing abode

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN | PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES FRENCH | STYLING MARISHA TAYLOR



KITCHEN
The new pitched roof adds volume and a sense of space, flooding the room with light. Zinc-topped dining table, £500, Quirky Interiors. Dexter leather school chairs, £54 each, Cult Furniture



GARDEN
Slate tiles extend out from the kitchen into the sociable garden that's planted with wild flowers and grasses. Alexander Rose Old England grey-painted table is similar, £425. Garden Furniture 4U



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY
1800s stone cottage
LOCATION Cornwall
ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen-diner, two bedrooms and a bathroom
PURCHASED 2017
PREVIOUS PROPERTY
'I lived in a Victorian terrace I'd renovated in south London,' says Nicola.



DECORATING TIP 'Tongue-and-groove panelling is a timeless look and brings instant character'

SITTING ROOM
The country look feels contemporary with black and leather accents.
Gower sofa, £999, DFS. Vintage French leather armchair, £550, Long Barn. Tubu brass wall lights, £175, Nkuku



CLOAKROOM
Tongue-and-groove panels and a bench seat add a rustic touch to this compact space. Red stripe linen cushion cover, £24, Maison Brocante

At the heart of Nicola Casperson's 1800s cottage are the original thick stone walls, exposed beams and slate floor. But to make the most of the property, she's given these authentic features an update with soothing grey decoration and smart tactile fabrics that evoke the laid-back luxury of a boutique hotel.

'While renovating the cottage, I had an old French farmhouse in mind, inspired by Soho Farmhouse and the Artist

Residence hotels,' explains Nicola, who runs Nicola Casperson Interiors (nicolacaspersoninteriors.co.uk). 'I love a rustic-luxury look that blends comfortable living with a sense of pampering.'

After 17 years of living in London, Nicola decided to look for a place in Cornwall to retreat to at weekends. Her parents had owned a holiday house in north Cornwall and she had happy memories of the area.

'I only looked at properties in five villages, which were places we used to visit

and I knew well,' she explains. 'The coast was expensive and can be quite bleak in winter and I didn't want to be too remote, so I went looking for somewhere with a community.'

Nicola spent two years househunting and this property needed creative vision. 'The cottage was quite the ugly duckling – a pebble dash extension with a flat roof, uPVC windows, magnolia decoration,' she recalls. 'But the village location was perfect, plus there were good connections to Exeter and Newquay so I could travel back to London.'



BEDROOM
Neutrals are given an injection of colour with pinks inspired by the framed art. Together Penguin Books framed art print (above), £140, King & McGaw



**MAIN
BEDROOM**
The different
textures and
patterns add a
wonderful cosiness.
Paradisa linen cushion
is similar, £120, Liberty

Despite the lack of character, the condition of the cottage was bearable for Nicola's visits and she spent the first couple of years saving up for the renovation. During the project, she re-introduced the character you'd expect to see in a Cornish cottage – wood-panelled internal doors with mortice and tenon joints, casement windows, a lovely front door and exposed original roof rafters.

Keen to encourage space, light and unity, Nicola decorated in Farrow & Ball's

Cornforth White and Strong White throughout, and chose neutral linens and cottons for blinds and cushions. 'I wanted the cottage to look traditional and feel relaxed with a refined elegance,' says Nicola.

Black metal wall lights dot the sitting room and metal factory pendants hang in the bedrooms. The kitchen has a concrete worktop, distressed wood cupboards and a zinc-topped dining table. Lighting design was thought about early on. 'I've layered lighting, and as the bedrooms are limited on space,

it made sense to mount wall lights. I think tasteful lighting with good functionality gives a stylish room that extra polish.'

As the project came to an end, Nicola realised that she didn't want to split her time between here and London, so she's moved here full-time with her partner and two dogs. 'The cottage is lovely, especially in summer when the doors are open to the garden, it's like having another room,' she says. 'It's been a wonderful move and I love living here.' **5** Maypoll Cottage is available to rent on Airbnb



BATHROOM
A mix of tiles
brings vibrancy.
Antique Bronze
fixed shower head
is similar, £99.99,
House of Enki

