



**SITTING ROOM DETAIL**  
The glass jug and pair of glass candlesticks add vintage charm. Similar glass candlestick, £39, Susie Watson Designs

# Restful retreat

A traditional colour palette and a mix of well-loved furniture gave Sarah Laming's seaside cottage a relaxed holiday feel

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**SITTING ROOM**

The red vintage floor lamp brings a touch of bold colour to the muted scheme.

West German red floor lamp, £100, eBay. Nanda wicker chair is similar, £239.99, Wayfair. Botanical fern cushion is similar, £13, Sass and Belle



**HOME TRUTHS**

**THE PROPERTY**

Four-storey Georgian cottage

**LOCATION**

Broadstairs, Kent

**ROOMS** Sitting room, kitchen-diner/living area, four bedrooms, two bathrooms

**PURCHASED** 2016

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'Our main home is an Arts & Crafts house in London,' says Sarah.

Sarah Laming wanted her seaside holiday cottage to feel like a relaxed extension of home, sourcing vintage furniture and finds to instantly cloak rooms in a loved and lived-in mood. From the start, she had a picture in her mind. 'I imagined catching a glimpse of a worn and well-loved desk through the doorway of my daughter's room with a painting propped up against the wall and a low hanging light,' she says. 'I liked the idea that someone was in the middle of something and had just popped out of the room, so the minute we arrived here on holiday, we'd feel comfortable and at home.'

Sarah, an interior designer, and her husband, Guy Murphy, a CEO of a boutique marketing consultancy, know the seaside town of Broadstairs well. They've visited friends on many occasions and returned for holidays with children, Polly, 15, and Billy, 18. 'We were really keen to buy a fisherman's cottage, but there aren't many here compared to other seaside towns,' she says. 'Ours is a captain's cottage, typically Georgian with one room at the front and one room at the back on each of the four floors.'

Sarah began the project by reconfiguring the layout. She created two bathrooms using space from bedrooms: a large bathroom became a fourth bedroom; and she opened the lower ground floor into a kitchen-dining/living area. After decorating in a restful grey-white, she layered fabrics, furniture and art in sage

green, blue-greys and dusky pink. 'The colours reflect traditional Georgian decoration and worked with my need to create a sense of history and calmness throughout,' she says. 'Textures are important, too. I love rustic, chipped and scuffed furniture that would have been loved once upon a time – pieces with soul, which have lived their own history.'

As an avid Instagram user (@ahometomakeyou smile) Sarah took inspiration from favourite designers, Ben Pentreath, Daniel Slowik and Jasper Conran, liking their flair for styling rooms by layering books and art, textures and textiles. 'I love how they bring out stories with carefully chosen antiques,' she says. 'I took note of that, hunting out lamps, rugs, throws and original paintings to decorate our cottage.'

Despite the seaside location, Sarah steered away from obvious nautical themes, with the exception of a French oil seascape hanging in the sitting room and a sailboat in the kitchen. 'I would have bought these things anyway,' she says. 'Especially the oil painting, as I only ever buy real art because I know the artist has put love into their work. I don't spend a lot, mostly the paintings come from eBay or car boot sales. What's important is that the art is authentic as that adds to making the cottage feel like a home rather than a generic holiday house.'

Although decorated and fully furnished, the cottage continues to evolve. Sarah always has an eye out for a pretty painting, adding to the joy that comes from their family holidays here. 'I love that the cottage has been created by us, for us,' she says. 'Everything I've bought, I've chosen with care, and that's what makes being here feel so special. Every time we arrive here and walk inside, we relax and switch straight into holiday mode.' 🏡

**DINING AREA**

The rustic French table reflects Sarah's love of relaxed and lived-in decoration.

French table, £180, Fabulous Vintage Finds. Walls in Dover Cliffs eggshell, £60 for 2.5ltr, Fired Earth. Raga basket is similar, £30, La Redoute

**BATHROOM**

'I wanted a hint of colour and a pink vintage basin is perfect,' says Sarah.

For a modern option, try Edwardian basin in Confetti Pink, £279, Luxury Bathroom Solutions

**POLLY'S BEDROOM**

'I had an image in my mind of the desk, mirror and light before we'd even started,' says Sarah. 'This is my favourite room.'

Mid-century desk, £320; mirror, £60, both Fabulous Vintage Finds. Wesoko Palm Leaf pendant is similar, £99, La Redoute



**MAIN BEDROOM**

French antique shutters make an eye-catching headboard.

Vintage French shutters, £240, Fabulous Vintage Finds. Bolster cushions, £98 each, Anthropologie. Milton concrete stool, £300 for a set of two with outdoor table, Habitat