

NORWEGIAN WOULD...

Taking her homeland as inspiration, Cathrine Tjore has brought warm, Nordic style to the 1970s former bungalow she lives in with husband Simon Keeley.

Living room

Reclaimed scaffolding boards clad the walls where light pours into the room through a roof window. Leather Chesterfield **sofa**, John Lewis & Partners. Ottawa chevron **coffee table**, Cult Furniture, is similar. **Rug**, iRugs. Green **blanket**, NORSK

Dining area

Extending the back of the house with a sunken dining room and large-scale glazing reflects the origins of the 1970s bungalow. The window seat was made by Eclipse Building Contracts to Cathrine's design

**Dining area**

The couple have owned the dresser for years and Cathrine freshened it with paint to match the walls and to draw attention to the classic white china. Dining table, Pinefinders. Oak stools, Pinch. Brass LP lamps, NORSK



“AS A NORWEGIAN, BEING CONNECTED TO THE OUTSIDE IS IMPORTANT TO ME”

**AT HOME WITH**

Owners Cathrine Tjore and her husband Simon Keeley run NORSK, a Scandi-inspired café and lifestyle store in Haddenham complemented by an online shop, norskilifestyle.com. They also own the Little Italy Espresso Bars in a number of railway stations.

House An extended and renovated four-bedroom house, formerly a two-bedroom bungalow built in the 1970s.

It's not often you can say a house is inspired by great coffee, or that a 1970s bungalow has been redesigned for Nordic living, but that's the case for Cathrine Tjore and her husband, Simon Keeley. Founders of Little Italy Espresso Bars and NORSK Lifestyle, a café and homeware shop, the couple's home is a true expression of their passions.

'Simon's precious about the coffee and the interiors are 100 per cent me,' says Cathrine, who's from Norway. 'We like classic clean Scandi lines, but not complete perfection, so I've mixed new designs with vintage to create a relaxing warmth.'

The couple's home was originally built as a bungalow in the 1970s. Over the years Cathrine and Simon have extended, introducing colour and texture with raw materials such as wood and metal, drawing on their rural village location. 'We can walk across fields and down to the river and often we don't see another soul,' says Cathrine. 'We take cinnamon swirls from the café and a little stove so Simon can brew our coffee, which sounds completely mad, but is totally worth it.'

The couple bought the property after renting in Haddenham for five years, where they began selling coffee to commuters from their Vespa van, back in 2004. 'We found the area to be very friendly - people looked you in the eye and said good morning. We were delighted when we chanced upon the bungalow in a >

Kitchen

The new side extension has a double-height ceiling with a roof window to draw light into the kitchen. **Shelves**, TK Maxx. For similar **lighting**, try The Vintage Light Bulb Company



Kitchen

The exposed brick wall became a feature while the plaster was being removed. **Antique floorboards**, Oakley Wood Timber



Kitchen

Reclaimed scaffolding board cladding appears in the kitchen. **Cupboards**, made by the builder and painted in Farrow & Ball's Stiffkey Blue. **Imo bar stools**, Pinch



“I LOOK FOR PIECES WITH STANDOUT DESIGN AND I LOVE VINTAGE IMPERFECTIONS AS MUCH AS CRISP SCANDI LINES”

Kitchen

The internal window was made locally with lead and antique glass, and separates the main kitchen from the work area and entrance hall. Barazza Lab sunken **hob**, Arredatutto



Living room

The armchair was reupholstered in a plaid fabric blending Norwegian and British styles. Abraham Moon's Classic Skye Check **fabric** in Cocoa is similar. **Floor lamp**, Holloways of Ludlow



nearby village,' says Cathrine. The big attraction was the huge loft space and big windows. 'As a Norwegian being connected to outside is important to me, and also to Simon,' says Cathrine. 'We loved the spacious rooms and amazing light - the previous owners had put a light well in the living room ceiling. I was also astonished to see their Norwegian log burner, exactly like the one in my parents' home. It felt like a sign!'

The couple decorated everywhere white to begin with, and then put their energy into growing the business. A few years on, their first project evolved from a straightforward guest bedroom above the garage, into a mini house for visiting guests.

'We love having family and friends to stay and it suddenly dawned on me, why not design the garage like a traditional Norwegian summer house?' says Cathrine. 'We used weatherboarding and painted the inside wood cladding white, then decorated in layered neutrals to encourage light and space.'

Later, with a desire to add bedrooms in the bungalow loft and improve the downstairs layout, the couple extended to the side. The changes made space for a staircase, a new front entrance hall, a bigger kitchen and more light from a roof window in the double-height ceiling.

'We removed the downstairs doors too, creating a more open-plan feel, although rooms retain their >





Guest bedroom
This is one of the original downstairs rooms and the first to be decorated a bold colour. Cathrine picked Farrow & Ball's India Yellow for the walls. **Blanket, NORSK. Wardrobe, Willis & Gambier**



“ WE FOUND THE AREA TO BE VERY FRIENDLY - PEOPLE LOOKED YOU IN THE EYE AND SAID GOOD MORNING ”

ON OUR DOORSTEP

Visit... 'Waddesdon Manor (waddesdon.org.uk), a 19th-century National Trust property, where I like to walk around the huge grounds to clear my head. There's an outdoor aviary and often art and sculpture exhibitions held within the gardens.

Shop at... 'From (fromthame.com) in the market town of Thame, a treasure trove of art, jewellery, homewares - every item is made by a local artisan or creative. I love the concept of a local independent supporting local talent.'

Go for a meal at... 'The Hundred (thehundred.co.uk) in the little village of Ashendon is a cut above the rest, the menu is condensed but incredible and I love the rustic interiors.'

Main bedroom
Painting the ceilings and walls in Little Greene's Juniper Ash gives the bedroom a nurturing feel. **Nordland Bunad blanket and cushions, Really Well Made**



Wet room
In the new side extension, an old school desk and basin from Ebay have been repurposed into a wash stand. The **Quadrato basin, Lusso Stone**, is similar



Guest bedroom
Reclaimed scaffolding board cladding brings texture to the room, along with the oak and glass cabinet from **NORSK**



Landing

A love of coffee table books inspired shelves on the landing to display the covers like a gallery of art. The open balustrade was made by a local blacksmith



Guest bedroom

Converting the roof space and installing a window created usable space for another bedroom. Metal industrial cabinet, Ardingly Antiques Fair. Anglepoise Original 1227 desk lamp, Inspyer Lighting, is similar



Summerhouse exterior

The garage was designed like a traditional Norwegian summer house, with weatherboarding painted white. It's perfect for having family and friends to stay

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Bathroom

Classic metro tiles in taupe add warmth to the scheme. Anney Mink tiles from Victoria Plum would work here. Bath rack, Bailey's Home. Meraki toiletries, NORSK



Office

A generous dormer gives height to the landing, allowing space for an open-plan workspace where customised vintage school desks fit the nook. White wood panelling is a nod to Cathrine's Norwegian roots

distinct space,' says Cathrine. 'We extended again, creating a sunken sun room on the back with floor-to-ceiling glazing, which hints at 1960s and 1970s architectural style like the original bungalow.'

Wood textures and tones layer rooms with depth and warmth. 'I grew up spending holidays in our island summer house, which was rustic and basic, the complete opposite to our family home decorated in Laura Ashley prints,' says Cathrine. 'I love the textural look of raw materials, which is also what I look for when I'm buying homeware for NORSK. I'd never choose anything I wouldn't want to have in my own home.'

Furniture and lighting are largely classic vintage, delivering the loved and lived-in look that Cathrine values, but she has been careful to balance them with new pieces that impart the same artisan qualities. 'I look for timeless pieces with stand-out design and quality craftsmanship,' she says. 'I love vintage imperfections as much as crisp Scandi lines.'

Simon's black and white photographic collection of iconic British artists gives each room a personal touch and makes a striking impact against walls decorated in earthy greens, taupes, golden yellow - and Little Greene's Juniper Ash. 'I love the warmth in the blue-grey tone so I decorated NORSK the same colour to give customers the relaxed experience we enjoy at home,' says Cathrine. 'Simon and I absolutely love living here.'

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN STYLING MARISHA TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHS JAMES FRENCH

