



COASTAL *Charm*

A former sailmaker's cottage provides the perfect backdrop for Janie Tennant's passion for decorating with antique textiles

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Buckley Cottage in Devon, which is available to rent through sunrisecottages.co.uk/buckley, sits on a lane in the pretty village of Batson. It's just 10 minutes from the centre of Salcombe. All the external woodwork is painted in Farrow & Ball's Hague Blue.

BELOW The antique apothecary drawers are from an antiques shop in London.



Antique textiles specialist Janie Tennant has been immersed in antiques and vintage since she was a child. She grew up in a Georgian house surrounded by her parents'

collections, and her first job was in the textile department at Bonhams. Today, she is one half of antique sourcing business Covelli Tennant, and divides her time between period properties in the Yorkshire Dales, London, and a pretty 17th-century Devonshire cottage that she bought with her husband, Jeremy Woolfenden.

Rather poignantly, Buckley Cottage in Batson, a former fishing hamlet, was owned by a sailmaker in the 1900s. 'It's a lovely coincidence that there's a link to textiles embedded in the history of the cottage,' says Janie. 'We also have a link to Jeremy's childhood holidays - next door is where he used to stay with his family.'

When the couple began looking for a coastal retreat some five years ago, they thought, on paper, the cottage might not be big enough for visiting family and friends - Janie has a 10-year-old daughter, Tallulah, and sometimes Jeremy's three ▶



adult sons, Jake, Buster and Douglas come to stay. 'When we walked into the big living room with its inglenook fireplace and had a look upstairs, we realised the cottage was actually a bit of a Tardis and would make a perfect holiday home,' says Janie. 'Our bedroom here is bigger than our bedroom in London.'

The cottage needed a little love and attention. Janie upgraded the heating and fitted a new log burner into the fireplace, and painted all the orange pine white to make the rooms feel lighter and larger. 'The biggest expense was replacing the kitchen,' she says. 'Although the thick stone walls were very lovely, they weren't



TOP Buckley Cottage was owned by a sailmaker in the 1900s. **ABOVE** The burnt coral and blue kilim rug – from Bayfield Hall Antiques & Interiors in Norfolk – gives the room a vibrancy and colour that Janie loves. The dining table is made from reclaimed wood planks and some of the chairs came from Janie's grandmother. On the wall, the mirror is made from an old window frame.



'Traditional fabrics are so diverse in colour and pattern, and I love that they form an important part of women's cultural history across the whole world'

straight, so we had all the cupboards custom-made.'

It wasn't long before the cottage was ready to be furnished – naturally, with antique and vintage textiles and furniture. 'Very little is new in the cottage,' says Janie. 'My passion for antique textiles was inspired by working at Bonhams all those years ago. Traditional fabrics and cloth are so diverse in colour and pattern, and I love that they form an important part of women's cultural history across the whole world.'

One of the first pieces of furniture Janie bought for the cottage was a second-hand Chesterfield she had upholstered with a 1920s French linen

grain sack. 'Antique furniture was made to last,' she says. 'The bones of this Victorian sofa are much sturdier than most new sofas you'd buy today, and it's a green and sustainable way to shop.' A thread of red and blue in the grain sack inspired a subtle nautical colour scheme, though Janie was careful not to fall into a seaside cliché.

'I love vibrant colours and so the red, white and blue repeats in all the rooms,' she says. 'Vintage British motifs appear here and there, like the cushions made out of coronation bunting and the red RNLI letters from a vintage flag.'

Upstairs, floors are carpeted with seagrass, and seaside paintings ►

ABOVE A warm welcome greets those who come through the front door into the living room, helped by the log burner in the ancient fireplace. A holiday in Laos inspired Janie to buy antique blue fabric, which she used to upholster the ottoman. The French wicker basket is from Ardingly Antiques fair and would originally have been used for drying grapes.

RIGHT Janie loves to host friends and family.





Steps up from the living room separate the kitchen, with its traditional butler's sink and shaker cupboards. The reclaimed wooden shelves are supported by iron brackets from Baileys Home.

'The beauty of antique textiles is that they are an accessible entry point for collecting,' Janie says

by local artist and Jeremy's brother, Jon Woolfenden, appear in bedrooms. Janie sourced 1930s Clarice Cliff shell wall sconces for the bathroom, and a model wooden galleon sits proudly on the 19th-century apothecary drawers in the living room.

It's difficult to separate the Covelli Tennant ethos of creating one-of-a-kind pieces made from carefully sourced antique textiles, and Janie's own style. Inevitably the two are intrinsically linked. The Chesterfield is one example, and the Edwardian fireside chair another. They demonstrate the bespoke designs Janie and her business partner, Sara Covelli, create, made special by the rarity of the antique fabrics. 'I'm drawn to the detail and work that's gone into international fabrics, whether it is 18th-century Turkish embroidery or a vintage kilim rug,' she says. 'On this particular chair, we've used a blue Howe linen with a back panel of Mexican Otomi ▶



Corner seating gives the family a casual place to eat breakfast. The Coral cushion fabric is by Molly Mahon and nods to the coastal setting, as does the decorative yacht from eBay. The teak cockpit table is intended for a boat. **LEFT** little areas of the cottage aren't forgotten, with the space under the stairs filled with an 18th-century cockpit table from local shop Mo Logan Antiques, and a table lamp with a shade by Matilda Good.



In the guest bedroom, the seabird prints were taken from a 19th-century book and framed. The pretty blue lampshade from Fenella Interior Design is made from Indian silk fabric. The lamp base was made by Covelli Tennant from a wooden pineapple balustrade. Janie made the cushions from a striped French ticking. **BELOW** Janie rejuvenated the bathroom with a nautical bulkhead wall light from Trinity Marine.





embroidery, and Eastern European fabric down the sides. The colours work really well in here.'

As well as being a regular customer at Tennants auctioneers in Harrogate and Sunbury and Ardingly antiques fairs, Janie likes to pick up decorative finds on holiday. The tiles in the bathroom are from the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul, and the ottoman in front of the fireplace is upholstered in an antique textile from Laos. 'The beauty of antique textiles is that they are an accessible entry point for collecting,' she says. 'You might discover an unusual piece on holiday, inherit linen or a piece of couture from the Sixties.'

As a dealer, collecting antique textiles is clearly part of Janie's daily life, but when it comes to the cottage, she says it's less about the formality of collections and more about 'accidental' design. 'Nothing really matches - I might buy a lamp or a rug or a piece of vintage fabric that catches my eye and then I throw everything together and hope for the best!' she says. 'I think my haphazard approach has given the cottage a homely and relaxed feel, which reflects our desire to unwind when we visit. Everyone else seems to enjoy being here, too - we've always got a house full of friends and family when we stay.' ■



ABOVE In the master bedroom, Janie made the cushion from antique Kuba cloth sourced on holiday in South Africa, along with the handwoven Binga baskets displayed on the wall. The table lamp bases are string-wrapped glass flagons. **TOP** Janie bought the early 19th-century French console table and mirror from Sara Covell. Jan Woollenden painted the oil painting of Batson Creek.



Hague Blue Exterior Eggshell, £71 per 2.5l, Farrow & Ball.

Napoleonic Blue Chalk Paint, £21.95 per litre, Annie Sloan. **ABOVE** Scallop wall light in Old Ivory, £94.40, Jim Lawrence.



Kemplon mirror, £245, loaf.

BELOW Vintage French cotton ticking cushion, £60, Covell Tennant. Vintage Zhuang cushion, £120, Covell Tennant.



RIGHT Signature scalloped lampshade in raffia with red trim, £162, Monika Good. Baba glass lamp, from £79.95, Nikku.

Get the Look

COSY & CLASSIC

Traditional textiles, layered textures and practical pieces make Janie's house a welcoming haven

BELOW English 19th-century bank of spice drawers, £470, Miles Griffiths Antiques at Decorative Collective.



ABOVE Iznik tiles, £11.29 for four, CeramesEU at Eby. Single 1900s French chair, £275, James Worrall. **RIGHT** Khathiwa wall basket, £33, The Basket Room. Early 19th-century leather fire bucket, £325, Arabesque Antiques at Decorative Collective.



ABOVE Elie Persian Qashqai kilim, £400, Lila Rugs.