

HOME PROFILE

WHO LIVES HERE

Annette Pisani, an interior designer, and her partner Claire Winchester, a landscape and garden designer

THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom detached 1920s bungalow in Brighton

PRICE £580,000

in February 2017

MONEY SPENT £141,000

WHAT IT'S WORTH NOW

About £900,000

LIVING AREA

An understated open-plan layout and a pared-back coastal palette ensure there are no distractions from the spectacular sea views. Painted grey to complement the window frames, exposed steel support beams mean the ceilings are high and the space feels airy

Coastal LOVE AFFAIR

A stylish facelift and an open-plan design have turned a dated chalet bungalow into a cool and contemporary seaside home

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EXTERIOR

The once-dated chalet bungalow now makes a striking statement with modern floor-to-ceiling windows

LIVING ROOM

A cool colour palette is warmed up with natural finishes, including the vintage rattan peacock chair, a pebble coffee table from Ligne Roset, and the TV display panel made from reclaimed sea groynes. The cat artwork was done by Annette

DINING AREA

A Wiro pendant from Wever & Ducre hangs above the dining table and chairs, which were bought at Ligne Roset. To maximise the views, floor-to-ceiling windows are simply dressed with translucent linen curtains



At the start of Annette and Claire's house-hunting journey, a home with a sea view seemed like an impossible dream as they wanted to stay close to Brighton's city centre. After months of looking, they were delighted to find a dated chalet bungalow that ticked the boxes.

'Set on a road that runs across the clifftops, nothing obscured the sea views – the outlook was amazing,' recalls Annette. 'It felt a bit like being in Cornwall, yet Brighton is only an eight-minute drive away.'

Frustratingly, the couple's offer was refused and they continued their search, losing the buyer for their own house in the process. Then a few months later, they noticed the property still hadn't sold. 'We knocked on the door and asked the owners if they were still interested in selling – and they were,' says Claire. 'The timing was uncanny as later that afternoon we received an offer on our home.'

Annette and Claire moved in and hunkered down for a year, putting up with the faded carpets and dated bathrooms, desperately keen to open up the downstairs rooms. A major flaw in the bungalow's design was the living room extension. 'The add-on to the front had a porch slap bang in the middle that blocked the outlook, meaning we had to look left and right to see the sea from the living room.'

The couple are veteran renovators – Annette's an interior designer and Claire had been a property developer before becoming a →

‘Our home is *INSPIRED* by the colours of *PEBBLE BEACHES* and the hues of the *SEA* and *SKY*’



CHILL OUT ZONE

Knocking down a wall in the hallway increased the size of the kitchen and created a nook for listening to music and displaying records. The painted shelves are from the Futon Company



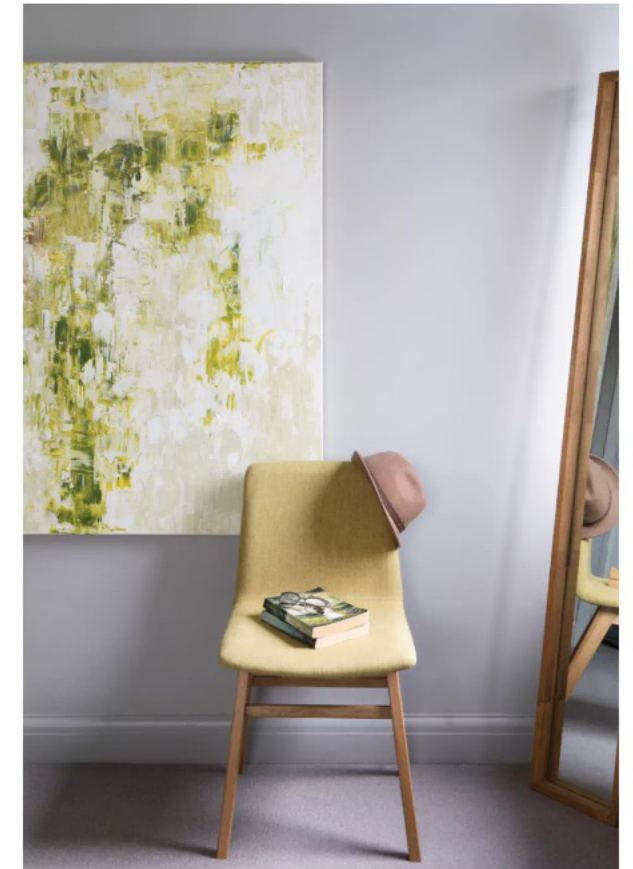
KITCHEN

Annette re-drew the plans for this space when she discovered an ex-display kitchen with tall, dark wood cupboards and high-end appliances, that was ideal for concealed storage. Fixing lightweight vinyl floor tiles to the back of the peninsula makes a stylish focal point in the open-plan room. A pair

of bar stools from Cox & Cox have metal legs that pick out the black in the graphic monochrome tile pattern, while woven baskets that came from Cape Town bring a natural touch

GUEST ROOM

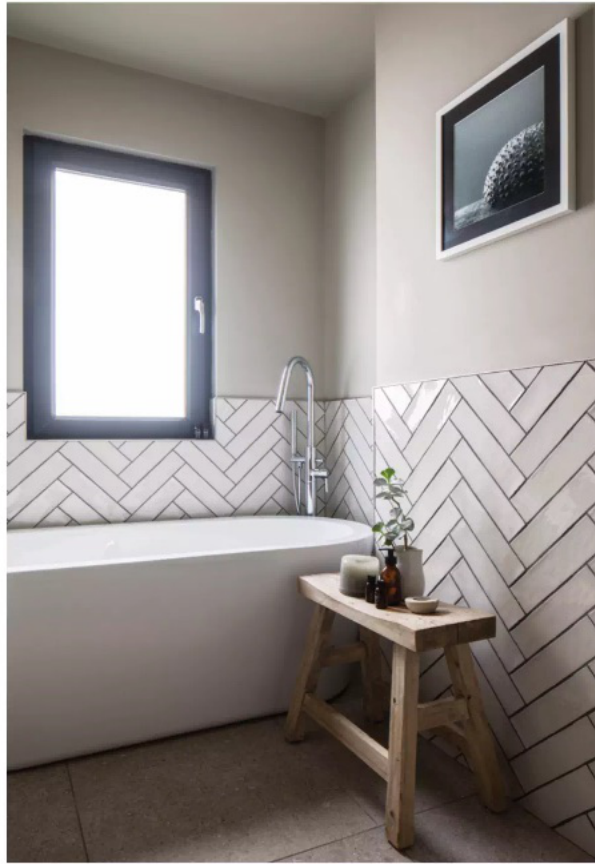
One of Annette's own abstract paintings hangs behind a yellow chair



landscape and garden designer – together they'd transformed their previous home, so they started saving and planning their changes.

Annette's big idea was to open up the kitchen, living room and family room and, controversially, she proposed demolishing the extension. Claire wasn't sure at first. 'I couldn't get my head around why removing space would be a good idea,' she says. 'But when I saw Annette's sketch of the open-plan room with floor-to-ceiling windows, it all made sense, as we'd still have plenty of room inside and more room for parking outside.' Annette went through every room on the floorplan, tweaking walls here and there to improve function and flow. She approached the project as she would with a client, finessing details on where the main pieces of furniture would go – sofa, dining table, beds – and planning the lighting and plug sockets accordingly.

'I worked in hotel design for a while, so our lighting is inspired by that experience,' says Annette. 'We didn't overdo it; we've gone for comfort rather than lots of spots or pendants, which can be overwhelming.' Claire managed the project, bringing in trusted companies: Brighton Property Solutions, bathroom fitter Kevin Wallace and later, Miss P&D Decorators. 'We only wanted to work with tradespeople who take pride in their work and all of these companies do,' says Annette. 'I had →



MAIN BEDROOM

A low headboard wall allows the bed to sit comfortably in the middle of the room. Farrow & Ball's Worsted has been painted on both the walls and ceiling to create a cocooning effect

BATHROOM

Inspired by the ancient tiles they saw at the Alhambra in Spain, Annette and Claire chose a design with an aged and textured finish from Master Tiles

drawings and documents ready so everyone knew exactly what was required – details like where we wanted a light, which product to install and the location to turn that light on. It sounds like a lot of effort, but it saved us money in the long run as we avoided costly mistakes.'

The couple moved into a flat they own while the work got underway, and continued planning the interiors. Inspired by the coastal location, they settled on a light touch of blue greys and wood textures. 'We didn't want the decoration to fight with the view and light,' Annette explains. 'Our aim was to create a calm home inspired by the colours of the pebble beaches and the hues we see in the sea and sky each day.'

A corner sofa has been recovered in an inky Romo fabric and curtains at the tall windows are a pale cream in a relaxed linen. Fossils embed the stone bathroom floor tiles and sandy tones dapple the grey kitchen worktop. Wood textures add warmth and soften the straight lines of the architectural elements – dark wood kitchen cupboards contrast with the low-level pale grey doors, and reclaimed sea groynes have been fashioned into a rustic display panel for the TV.

After the couple moved back into their newly renovated home, Claire got stuck into the garden, taking cues from the coastal location in the planting and use of weathered oak sleepers and rusted Corten steel. 'We love the garden and are pleased with all the decisions we've made in our home,' says Annette. 'It was well worth spending a year planning it all. We feel like we're living in a brand new house that really makes the most of the location and the amazing sea views.'



ANNETTE'S SON'S ROOM

The bold abstract canvas, was painted by Annette and the round side table came from the Futon Company

GARDEN

Claire created a coastal garden using rustic textures, wild flowers and grasses. Weathered oak sleepers were used to build an elevated deck, which emulates the feel of sitting on a jetty

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