

## COLOUR MATCH

'Pink accessories, like the blind and rug, pick out the pink botanicals in the wallpaper print'



*'I've mixed in*

# JOYFUL COLOUR'

Finnish-born Anne blended a white interior with her love of vibrant decor to create an uplifting home that's a cheery take on Nordic style

## IDEA TO STEAL

'Bring a fresh look to the kitchen with a wipeable wallpaper as a splashback'

## COME ON IN!

**ABOUT ME** I'm Anne Tiainen-Harris (@nordiclivingincolor), 50, an interiors PR and business consultant. I live here with my husband Christian, 50, the MD of a digital marketing agency, and our daughters, Elsa, 16, and Hilda, 14.

**MY HOME** A six-bedroom 1920s house in the Chiltern Hills that we bought in November 2018.

**WHEN WE MOVED IN** The house was decorated white with wood flooring which had a grown-up and familiar Nordic look, but it lacked warmth.

**AND NOW** Colour and nature-inspired prints have made our home feel vibrant and playful with plenty of Nordic white space for balance.

**STYLE TIP** Pick two main colours for a room and add touches of a contrasting third with art, cushions and throws to energise the decor.

## STYLE UPDATE

'I get so much joy from the Borastapeter Rabarber wallpaper, which adds colour and a contemporary feel to the traditional Shaker kitchen'



**W**e outgrew our previous 1970s home and were keen to buy a bigger property in the nearby countryside but didn't want to take on a building project,' says Anne. 'This newly renovated property was in immaculate condition and since I'm from Finland, I was drawn to the white walls and hardwood floors, which instantly reminded me of the tranquillity I feel in houses back home.'

Although I love this minimalist look, I hadn't chosen the kitchen or the bathrooms and it felt too much like the previous owners' home. Christian and I are outgoing people and I felt strongly that I needed to express our personalities by using colours and prints without losing the sense of calm already here.

## Where to start

The house is bigger than our previous home so we didn't have enough furniture and it was a little overwhelming knowing where to start. I lived in the space before I made any changes – I'm quite a slow interiors decorator – and if the house hadn't already been painted white that's where I'd begin. It's much easier to see how the light works in rooms and gradually build up colour. For example, our living room is quite dark and I wasn't sure what to do at first.

I decided to embrace the cosiness by buying a pair of rich teal sofas arranged around the woodburner, which is a great contemporary colour, as I'm not keen on traditional styles. From here, my confidence with colour and pattern began to emerge.

## Design influences

I grew-up in a pared-back Finnish environment and spent my childhood >>

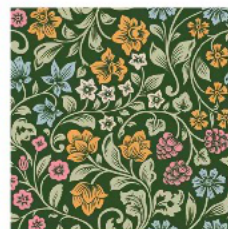


### 3 of the best BOTANICAL WALLPAPER

Energise your home with bold and colourful patterns



**BRIGHT AND LIGHT**  
Birdsong wallpaper in Jaipur, £98 a roll, Fiona Howard



**CLIMBING CLASSIC**  
Billie wallpaper in Arts & Crafts in Green, £69 a roll, Bobbi Beck



**VINTAGE FLORALS**  
She's a Wildflower wallpaper in Brights on Vintage Cream, £50 a roll, Lust Home

#### DARK MIX

'The black units against the dark Borastapeter Rabarber wallpaper suit the more formal dining area'

#### BALANCE OUT

'White space is important to harmonise with bold colours'



#### IDEA TO STEAL

'Choose a framed print in a design that's like looking through a window'

**'I LOVE COLOURFUL DESIGN BUT I'VE RETAINED MY LOVE OF NORDIC SIMPLICITY AND DON'T LIKE SO MUCH COLOUR THAT ROOMS FEEL CLAUSTROPHOBIC'**

» playing in the forest and by the lakes, so I love seeing greenery, flowers and wildlife in my home. Being surrounded by nature, even if only in prints and plants, is good for your mental health too. Living abroad had an impact on some of my decor decision-making. I left Finland in my early 20s to study and worked in Austria, Germany, France and the Netherlands for a

period of 10 years and flourished from these wonderful experiences. In particular, I connected with fashion and interiors in the Netherlands where design is colourful, quirky and full of joy, it's very refreshing. This was where I developed a genuine passion for bold interiors, which encouraged me to become brave in my own home. That said, I've retained my love

**NORDIC CALM**  
'I took soothing elements from biophilic design with Pine wallpaper by Sandberg, a Habitat rattan lampshade, plants and Desenio's forest artwork'

of Nordic simplicity and don't like so much colour that rooms feel claustrophobic. I achieved the balance with plenty of white empty space – not crowding the walls with too much art or putting wallpaper on all the walls so it's very calming.

#### Wallpaper choices

Lockdown became the catalyst for big changes. Without travel I needed some excitement in my life and bright wallpapers seemed to satisfy that need! I'd been struggling with making the »



**IDEA TO STEAL**

'Stain picture frames and wood lampshades to match existing flooring'

**DEFINED AREAS**

'A built-in bookcase zones the long room with a comfortable chair encouraging me to sit and read'

**'INTERIORS ARE MY PASSION AND MY DECISIONS HAVE BECOME BRAVER OVER TIME. IT GIVES ME PLEASURE TO CREATE A BEAUTIFUL HOME'**

» kitchen-diner come together, which is a big room and felt very bland. I wallpapered the kitchen first in a wonderful Swedish flower print on a white background to bring more personality into the room. This left the dining area looking a little disjointed – and then I had a brainwave. I used the same pattern on a dark

background, which felt more glamorous and appropriate for dining.

The wallpaper opened the creative floodgates for me as I now had a palette of colours to build the rest of the scheme. Greens and pinks appear in both wallpapers, picked out with plants, a chair and accessories. To balance out the bold pattern I added touches of

black, which also makes the Shaker-style kitchen look more modern. I was a bit unsure about doing the wallpapering myself so once restrictions had lifted, a decorator friend did this room, the living room and snug alcoves.

**Furnishing decisions**

I wanted each room to feel special and have its own character because they all have different purposes. What's common is the Nordic minimalist backbone of white space and »

**Do it! CREATE A NORDIC INTERIORS FEEL TO YOUR HOME**

- \* Nature-loving Nordics appreciate the biophilic design ethos of creating calm spaces with a connection to nature and fill their homes with light, houseplants and botanical themes.
- \* Painted walls in shades of white, muted greys and washed-out blues are important to create a feeling of openness and light
- \* White space is key to simplicity

- and calm, so don't clutter rooms with lots of bulky furniture, or fill walls with too much art.
- \* Replace heavy window dressings with blinds or lightweight curtain fabrics without linings to let in all-important light.
- \* Hardwood floors that can be swept are as important upstairs as downstairs; add rugs for colour and pattern.

**AFFORDABLE UPDATE**

'I didn't need to change the Maisons du Monde shelf or Ikea desk as the whole room was uplifted with Little Greene's Pleat 280, a gorgeous green'

**GO BOLD**

'The pink flower art from By The Horns appeals to my love of nature and contrasts with the Habitat love seat'

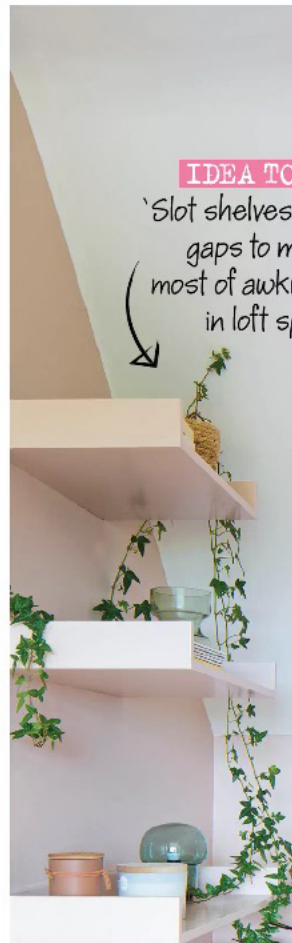


**DREAMY VIEW**

'A neat blind is perfect in a tight space – the pale blue echoes the colour of the sky outside'

**IDEA TO STEAL**

'Slot shelves into narrow gaps to make the most of awkward areas in loft spaces'

**DECO DETAIL**

'The Resplendent Woods wallpaper by Deus ex Gardenia is pricey so I used it sparingly'



» hardwood floors, which is an important calming foundation. I can't imagine ever having carpets – we use rugs in Finnish houses and have a special frame in the garden for beating the dust out of them!

When it came to choosing furniture, it was essential that any design changes worked around things we already owned, but there were pieces we needed to buy. I think carefully before I spend and I'm conscious about buying furniture that will last us forever as I don't like to throw things away.

**Finishing off**

This led to investing in the two new sofas, Housecosy's sideboard in the loft bedroom and Loaf's dining table. We chose this with consideration to the Arne Jacobsen dining chairs we'd been given as a wedding present 17 years ago. I like genuine Scandinavian designs – I'm the founder of Scandi design shop, Cloudberry Living – which might mean investing in a designer »

'FEELING SAFE AND PEACEFUL IS THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY IN OUR HOME. WE'VE RETAINED THE SENSE OF CALM ALREADY HERE'

**NATURE'S BEST**

'The botanical posters from Finland are a perfect reflection of Elsa's style'

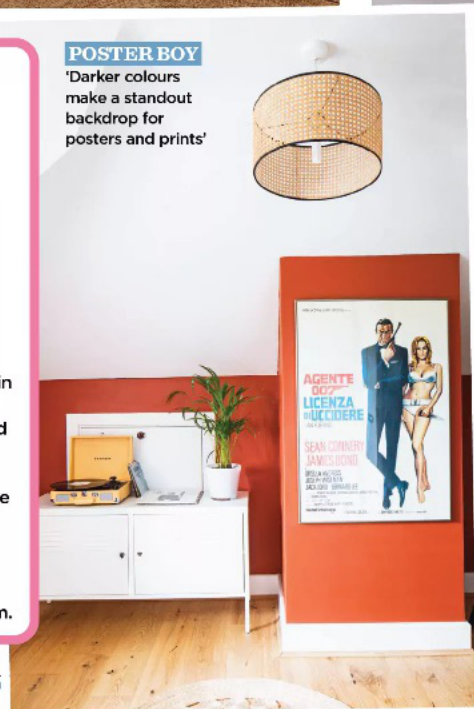
## Do it!

### TRY SCANDI WALLPAPER

- \* Think about themes that make you feel good and surround yourself in a pattern that reflects these ideas. For example, travel, gardening or art might prompt geometrics, botanicals, or a particular colour scheme.
- \* Take inspiration from your wardrobe – are you drawn to certain patterns or colour combinations?
- \* Accessorise with colours picked out from the wallpaper.
- \* Less is more – wallpaper one wall and see how this works before committing to a whole room.
- \* YouTube is a great place for step-by-step instructions on how to hang wallpaper – start with a small wall or space, like a cloakroom.

**POSTER BOY**

'Darker colours make a standout backdrop for posters and prints'

**RURAL SHADES**

'The colours reflect the countryside, with dusky pink walls from Finnish brand Tikkurila, rattan furniture and Bloomingville's mossy green throw'





**COLOUR CLASH**

'I like mixing up colours such as Farrow & Ball's Brinjal with the turquoise bed and orange cushions'

**'IT'S TAKEN FOUR YEARS TO GET TO THIS POINT BUT OUR HOUSE FINALLY REFLECTS OUR PERSONALITIES AND FEELS LIKE HOME'**

» piece like our Louis Poulsen light or buying from affordable Ikea.

It's taken four years to get to this point – this is what I mean about being a slow interiors decorator! – and I love all of it. Our house finally reflects our personalities and feels like our home. Wallpaper has made such a difference, it brings joy to the rooms and has been the biggest success.

But this isn't the end. When I change something in my home, I feel like I've been transported to a different place. I enjoy these projects, so there are definitely more ideas to come.'

**PLANT LIFE**

'Hanging greenery adds calming colour in bedroom corners'

**IDEA TO STEAL**

'Painting the beams white ensures a light, airy feel to the bedroom'

**SCANDI STAY**

'I wanted a light, airy Nordic look with luxury copper touches in the picture frame and planter for a luxurious boutique hotel feel'

**SMART STYLE**

'I carried the Nordic colours through with a copper tone splashback and blue-green tiles'

**Where to buy Anne's style**

★ **IKEA** Anne likes the genuine, modern Scandinavian products at affordable prices. She recommends the Gjøra solid birch bed frame and Pax wardrobes, which she's customised with Norwegian Noremax doors.

★ **HOMESENSE** A favourite for the treasure hunt of finding unexpected designs and low prices in cushions, lamps and small furniture.

★ **SHIDA PRESERVED FLOWERS** Sustainable natural

dried flowers that will last for up to a year and come in a variety of handmade bouquets, colours and sizes.

★ **LA REDOUTE** A French company bringing affordable European homeware in current and contemporary styles to UK customers.

★ **NORDIC BRANDS** Borastapeter for floral wallpaper, HK Living for statement cushions, H&M Home for rattan homeware, Iittala for glassware and Bloomingville for accessories.



# Anne's choice: KITCHEN WALLPAPER

Dreary kitchen in need of a pick-me-up? A splash of colourful wallpaper can make a huge difference



CHOOSE A VIBRANT PATTERN THAT STANDS OUT  
AGAINST NEUTRAL-STYLE KITCHEN CABINETS

**W**allpaper offers a great way of adding colour and pattern to a kitchen, bringing a soft contrast to all the straight lines and hard surfaces.

## Pick a practical finish

Kitchens can be humid, greasy and prone to spills and splatters, so choosing wallpaper might seem a high-risk option. While standard wallpapers aren't advised, vinyl or vinyl-coated designs are more durable, with a moisture-resistant finish that's wipeable – some even scrubbable.

## Try a clear cover-up

In areas that experience a lot of splashes, such as behind a cooker or around a sink,

wallpapers are best avoided unless a protective barrier is used. Consider fitting a clear glass or acrylic splashback on top of the wallpaper that will protect it while still allowing the design to be seen. Alternatively, try Polyvine Decorator's varnish which gives a protective, wipe-clean layer to wallpapers.

## Team with tiles

Keeping wallpaper out of the splash zone is the easiest way to protect it from damage. Using a bold patterned wallpaper above a tiled splashback will give the pop of pattern and colour needed, but with a practical wipe-clean finish below. Just

choose a wallpaper design that compliments the tile pattern and colour.

## Opt for a feature wall

Picking an area that is away from splash zones will allow you to get creative without fear of wallpaper being damaged. Go for a feature wall as the backdrop to a table and chairs or try inserts of patterned wallpaper inside a kitchen dresser.

## Stay steam-free

Humid conditions aren't advisable for wallpaper, so it's important that kitchens stay well-ventilated by using an extractor fan and opening windows and doors.

FEATURE LISA FAZZANI  
PHOTOGRAPH JAMES FRENCH

## 4 ways with... BOLD COLOUR

Give plain rooms a lift with an energising pop of colour



### 1 PAINT A HERO PIECE

Introducing bright colours into a room in small doses can have a surprisingly uplifting effect. Upcycling an ordinary item of furniture by painting it a bold shade can give it a new lease of life and transform it into a standout piece. Showcase it in a prominent place to give a plain room new focus.



### 2 TRY A FEATURE WALL

Using bright colours and bold patterns wall to wall can sometimes be too intense, especially in a bedroom. Focusing on a key area – such as the wall behind a bed or a sofa – can give the hit of colour required, without feeling too overpowering. Keep adjoining walls low-key in white or a plain colour.



### 3 TAKE COLOUR HALFWAY

Painting or wallpapering just the lower portion of wall is another way to bring in extra colour without it dominating the scheme. Using a bright or bolder shade on the bottom section of the wall helps to ground the scheme and gives a contrasting backdrop that will make furniture pop against it.



### 4 LINE A CABINET

A quick and easy way to get your colour fix is by using cheery wallpaper to cover the back panel of a kitchen dresser or open bookcase. Plain kitchenware or ceramics will stand out against a lively pattern or bright colour. Just cut the paper to size and secure in place using a strong grab adhesive.

FEATURE LISA FAZZANI  
PHOTOGRAPH JAMES FRENCH