

EASY ELEGANCE

A living space in a 1940s home now feels fresh and bright but also sophisticated – perfect for relaxing and entertaining

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PROJECT DETAILS

DESIGNER

Bynn Esmond
of Bynn Esmond
Designs
(esmond.com)

PROPERTY

A 1940s house

WORK

Architectural
changes/new decor

LOCATION

California

Designer Bynn Esmond was enlisted to create a functional layout and a contemporary style while respecting this home's period architecture. 'In this room, this meant balancing a fresh look with a new fireplace, windows and doors,' she says.

1 GETTING STARTED

A vaulted ceiling imbued character but old windows, a narrow patio door and walls clad in heavy grey stone had to go. 'Despite its size, the sitting room felt dark and confined,' says Bynn. 'The clients wanted a beautiful setting for entertaining and a comfortable evening space with an improved connection to the garden.'

2 FOCAL POINTS

Removing the stone cladding created the opportunity to redesign the fireplace. Bynn introduced curves and an integral mantelpiece, all finished in a textured lime plaster. A trio of windows was added, their height drawing the eye up to the pitched ceiling. 'There's more light and a sense of space,' she says. 'The arched shape also softens the room's straight lines and new French doors allow easy access to the garden.'

3 COLOUR AND TEXTURE

A refined black framework and colour-drenching in a grey white with warm undertones follow the monochromatic scheme seen throughout the rest of the house. A contemporary corner sofa in neutral velvet links to the palette with interest added via colourful cushions, the red brick hearth and a tan leather ottoman. 'The homeowners love texture,' says Bynn. 'The lime plaster fireplace is a beautiful contrast with the crisp, smooth walls and gives the room depth and sophistication.'

4 FINAL OUTCOME

Layered lighting creates a low-key evening ambience and white oak flooring completes the seamless flow from other rooms. 'Now the sitting room is used every day as a place for the adults to unwind or to entertain guests,' says Bynn. 'It's been rewarding to deliver their vision.'

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

'We created an inviting space the homeowners are proud to show off when entertaining, but which is also ideal for relaxed evenings spent on their own,' says Bynn.

Walls and ceiling in Vanilla Milkshake, Benjamin Moore. **Cuddlemuffin corner sofa** in Pudding Spoon Clever Velvet, Loaf, is similar. Try Hemingway brown leather **ottoman**, Barker and Stonehouse. Habitat x Morris & Co Blackthorn **cushion**, Habitat, would work here. Duck Egg Blue velvet **cushion**, McAlister Textiles, has this look. Try Pacific Laurence **table lamp** and LSA International Flower Grand Bouquet **vase**, both John Lewis