

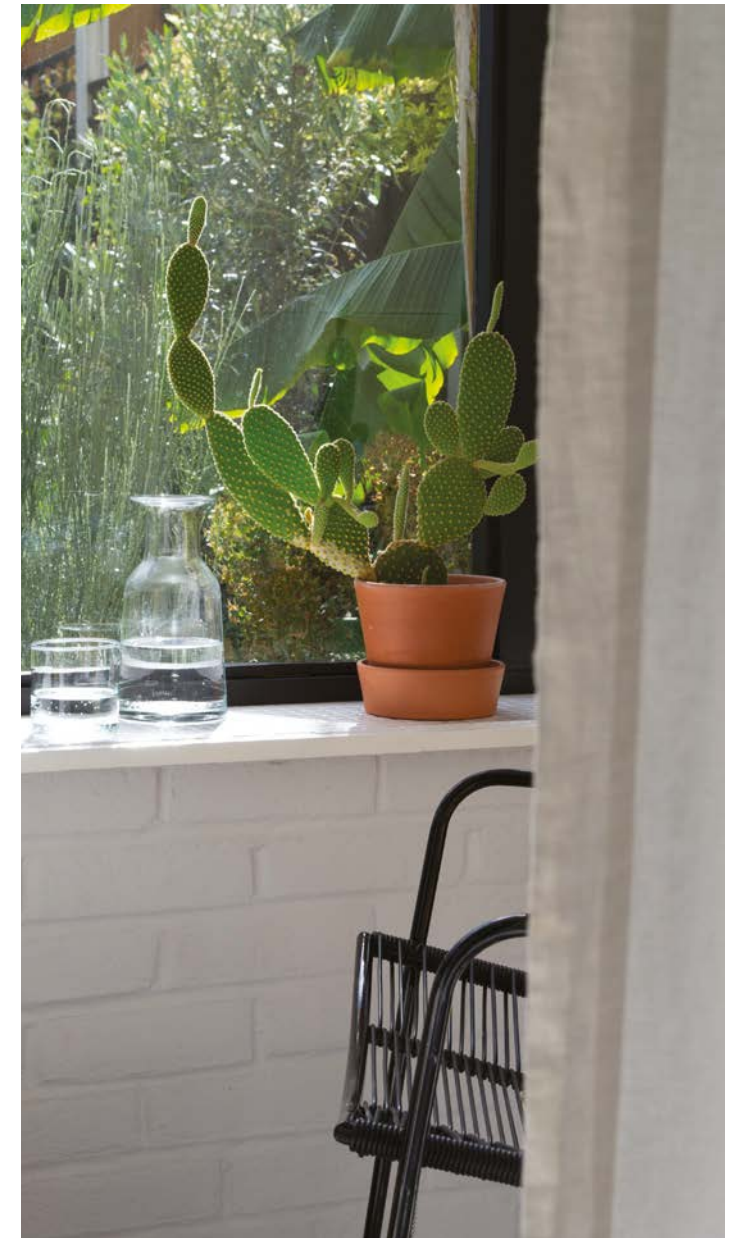
Tiffany Grant-Riley

HOME TOUR

Nordic-inspired style complements the period features of Tiffany Grant-Riley's tranquil, yet functional family home



Words Colette Earley | Photography: Tiffany Grant-Riley



"I feel like a lot of things conspired for us to have this house, as if it was meant to be," Tiffany Grant-Riley says of her historical red brick home, in Chatham, Medway. The area in the south of England is renowned for its rich heritage, with a Norman castle, dockyards, and a cathedral in Rochester. "Medway is awesome. You can't move for connections to Charles Dickens, who grew up in this area and based many of the locations in his novels on local places and characters," Tiff says.

Having previously lost a house midway through the buying process - meaning three years of consequential renting - it felt like an act of fate when Tiff and web-developer and musician husband, Rob, discovered this property four years ago. "We had been really heartbroken," she reveals. "Then this house came up on an email. I had a very strong feeling that it was meant for us. We saw it that evening and that was it. We fell in love."

As the couple both work from home, they had quite specific requirements when looking for a house, including separate workspaces and a good-sized garden for the kids. "Space for our rubber tree, too!" laughs Tiff. Luckily, they discovered a hidden gem; a place with character, barely touched by previous owners, with original features, a garden and a sunroom.

An interior stylist, photographer and blogger by trade, it's unsurprising that Tiff's home exudes a simple elegance. Her blog, Curate and Display, focuses mostly on minimal interiors and she often collaborates with brands on projects in her home. "Having such a multi-faceted job allows me to combine my skills as a stylist, photographer and writer, and bring them all together," she says. With her home an intrinsic part of her work, she has gathered quite a social following, keen to see the journey of her home renovation. "If I'm shooting products for a client, then the house becomes a live-in location, depending on the subject I'm working on."



Inspired by the way Nordic homes mix period features with a contemporary aesthetic, Tiff wanted her décor to be completely relaxed and liveable. "There are elements from various places which I try to translate in a way that works for our home. For example, Frama, a design studio in Copenhagen who are based in an 1800s former apothecary, are just so inspiring," she explains. "They've restored the floors and left the original plaster walls exposed, sometimes painted with limewash paint. The contrast between their own furniture, which is in many ways inspired by Japanese culture, shows you don't have to go all-out traditional in a period home."

With all this inspiration on board, Tiff had a clear idea of the look and feel she wanted to create. "We prefer neutral colours so that the house feels very calm and soothing - it's so important, given that we both work from home, and family life can be hectic," she says. Throughout her home, groups of much-loved houseplants are dotted around, most of which Tiff has been tending to for at least eight years. "They make a huge difference to the overall feel of tranquillity, and connect to our lush and leafy garden, too," she says.





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The kitchen is a favourite of Tiff's - a light-filled space which was created simply by stripping and whitewashing the floors, and painting the units and walls. "Everything we did to this kitchen was done using what was already here," she describes. "The only thing we replaced were the taps. The room gets a small window of light during the day, so aside from wanting to boost the sunlight, the aim was to embrace its moodiness too." Tiff used Hick's Blue from Little Greene to paint the existing units and back wall, as well as having custom plywood doorknobs made in the same colour, by Chocolate Creative. "I love seeing the kitchen down the hallway when I come through the front door, with the tiled arch above the cooker, which would've housed the old iron range," says Tiff. "I'm in this room a lot, cooking meals and making coffee first thing in the little coffee corner I carved out of dead worktop space. We do a lot of singing and dancing in this room, I absolutely love it."





Inspired by various stays in design hotels over the years, the couple's bedroom feels warm, cocooning and relaxing to spend time in. "We deliberately haven't filled it with furniture," says Tiff. A sense of serenity comes from Tiff's subtle design choices; grey engineered oak flooring from Havwood's was laid on top of the original boards, which felt too cold, and the colour of the walls is nuanced, changing according to the light throughout the day. "It took some time to find the right shade of beige in here as it's a north-east facing room, but we both settled on Larksong by Valspar. We painted all the walls and woodwork in the same colour, which gives it a contemporary feel." Tiff applied finishing touches with black metal handles from Dowsing and Reynolds to update the wardrobe and Rob tiled the hearth plate under the original fireplace with Claybrook Studio glass tiles.

"I'm still so fascinated by this house," says Tiff. "By the stories of the people who came before, and imagining what we might go on to do with it. I genuinely don't want to be anywhere else - it has the ability to make me feel completely content."

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