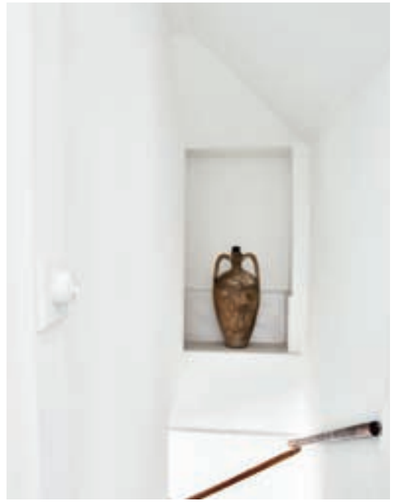
RPS2161 Calm - Final Text



RELAXED LIVING

Nestled quietly among the bustling streets of St Ives, you'd be forgiven for walking straight past this little oasis of a cottage. The owners, Paula and Iain Craigen, have managed to create a retreat that is the epitome of relaxed living, where deep, squashy linen sofas, rustic wooden furniture, bare floorboards, tonal fabrics and whitewashed walls all come together to create a bright yet calm interior. There's nothing here that clamours for attention. Instead, the simplicity of the interior allows your eye to glide from one side of the room to the other with restful ease.

Built from granite and cob, the house was once three fishermen's cottages with a pink-painted facade. 'The Pink House', as it's affectionately known by locals, is a prominent feature of Porthmeor Beach in St Ives, Cornwall.

IW RPS2161 CALM 162-169 Alba CaseStudy.indd 162 16/06/2021 13:45

IW RPS2161 CALM 162-169 Alba CaseStudy.indd 163 16/06/2021 13:46

'Around 1840, a Mr Edward Harry had an old bakehouse demolished to build 10 fishermen's cottages set around a central courtyard. The house remained in the same ownership for more than 60 years until we bought it,' explains Paula Craigen.

The layout has been kept intrinsically as it was, but Paula and Iain removed a wall between the kitchen and sitting room to ensure that there was a sea view from (almost) every room in the house. 'We designed the interiors alongside Jess Clark from Unique Homestays, working with the bones of the original cottages,' says Paula. 'We retained as much of the character and charm as possible, embracing the old floorboards, sloping walls and irregular alcoves. We further enhanced the rustic feel with reclaimed finds and furniture to give the property an eclectic artist's studio edge.'

The Craigens painted the interior chalky white throughout, then added natural hues, lots of linen and accents of chalky green inspired by the dining-room

PEACEFUL HAVEN

The house is a little oasis hidden among the busy streets of St Ives, Cornwall. Paula and Iain kept as many of the original features of the cottage as possible, including the beams, floorboards and fitted cabinetry. To this, they added mix-and-match antique and vintage furniture, interesting reclaimed bits and pieces and utility-style lighting. A palette of pale neutrals keeps the mood tranquil and relaxed, as do the two deep, squashy Howard-style linen sofas (*pages 162–163, this page and opposite*).

floorboards. But really this cottage is all about the setting. 'We wanted guests to be immersed in the ever-changing seascape of Porthmeor Beach, without a scheme that was shouting for their attention inside. The rooms are light-filled and calming, with lots of interesting objects,' says Paula. Much of the furniture was sourced from reclamation yards, and these pieces are mixed with vintage nauticalia that's rich in patina and texture.

'It was a full renovation,' Paula explains. 'My husband carried out the majority of the work over a six-month period. We restored the original sash windows, sanded the floorboards, built a bespoke kitchen from reclaimed wood, replumbed and rewired and created an open-plan feel through from the kitchen to ensure that pretty much every room made the most of the views. We added a downstairs toilet and created a Jack and Jill bathroom in addition to the family bathroom upstairs. We also installed a bathtub in one of the bedrooms, from which the most amazing sunsets can be enjoyed. Iain dedicated six months to the renovation and personally crafted many of the elements that make the house unique. Throughout the property, we feature art created by a close friend of ours that is inspired by St Ives.'

Paula says the house makes her feel 'as if I've escaped the everyday. There's little downtime when we're at home, with a large family and busy work lives. When we are here, we have the chance to properly take a breath and relax. I can sit for hours watching the water. The sunsets are amazing and storm watching even more so. And I'll never tire of falling asleep to the sound of the sea. It's a sociable

house too, and I like the informality of the spaces that we've created. It's such a comfortable, liveable space; ideal for family time after a day at the beach.'

Each room has a window seat for wave watching, while the tonal colour scheme brings a tranquil feel to the spaces. 'When we stay in the winter, there's a cosy feeling inside – we light the wood burner and listen to the waves roaring,' Paula explains. 'The neutral decor combined with soft lighting and the ever-changing view is very relaxing. It's a retreat from our everyday lives that allows us to spend quality time together.'

BRINGING ORDER

'Every single item should be there for a reason: the books that you choose, the crockery that you feature,' says Paula. The kitchen, which was made from repurposed wood, feels as if it's always been there. Ceramics and kitchen accessories from Nkuku and Kitchenalia are stacked neatly onto open shelves – a place for everything, and everything in its place (*opposite and above*).

IW RPS2161 CALM 162-169 Alba CaseStudy.indd 166 16/06/2021 13:46

IW RPS2161 CALM 162-169 Alba CaseStudy.indd 167 16/06/2021 13:46

WHITE AND BRIGHT

The interior has been whitewashed from top to bottom, allowing all the natural elements to sing out from a clean white canvas. The main bathroom is simple, with a few contrasting touches in the form of artwork, mirrors and accessories (*above*). The bedrooms, too, are understated, with wooden shutters, neutral bedlinen, a scattering of interesting artworks and industrial-style lighting (*above right and right*).

IW RPS2161 CALM 162-169 Alba CaseStudy.indd 168 16/06/2021 13:46

RPS2161 Calm - Final Text

SOAK AND SLEEP

The house is filled with appealing textures – bare, scuffed floorboards, wooden beams and intriguing nooks and crannies. In one of the bedrooms, the linen bedding is from Piglet in Bed and the wooden bedside cabinet and woven Lloyd Loom-style chair are vintage, while framed seaweed prints give a nod to the house's coastal location.

IW RPS2161 CALM 162-169 Alba CaseStudy.indd 169 16/06/2021 13:46