

## COLOUR IT BRIGHT: YELLOW

Yellow is a warm and welcoming colour. Although usually associated with summer, it works really well in winter, as it brightens and lifts a room. Here, Mirka added yellow silk cushions to work this trend, and included warm, spicy hues for an exotic look.

**STYLE TIP** The quickest and easiest way to update any room is to change the colour of your soft furnishings, such as cushions and throws.

# My on-trend HOME

Be inspired to make a change – see how Mirka McNeill Farmer has incorporated this season's latest trends into her own home, making them work for her



Mirka was born and brought up in Warsaw, where she studied anthropology. Fifteen years ago, she came to London to improve her English, met and married an Englishman and became

a successful web designer. Then, about three years ago, she felt it was time for a change. "I'd always been interested in interior design, so decided to study for some professional qualifications." Mirka, who lives in southwest London, enrolled on a modular interiors course run by the highly regarded KLC School of Design in Chelsea Harbour.

"Ian owned this house when I met him and, after we married, I suggested that we make a few changes," recalls Mirka. The house is a typical Victorian terrace with a double reception room and a kitchen opening on to the west-facing garden. "My first project was extending the kitchen, using the side passage." Although the extension added just a metre and a half to the overall width, it made a huge difference to the feel of the room. "Suddenly, we had room to move >>



Bold wallpaper with a nature theme combines two trends in one

## BE BOLD WITH WALLPAPER

Mirka was so inspired by one wallpaper design that she used it as a decorative theme, linking the living area, kitchen and bedroom. "It was a Fornasetti design by Cole & Son, based on a tree motif, which I ordered in different colours to create different moods in the various rooms."

**STYLE TIP** If you feel daunted by papering a whole room, just do a feature wall – it will still totally transform the feel.

## TRY AN ECLECTIC COMBINATION

Mixing different furniture styles can work well when the pieces don't clash. Mirka's colonial-style wooden bench and shutters, modernist Eames-style chair and mirrored-letters coffee table are mixed with Bourgie lamps from Kartell and a zebra-print rug in a room that comes together brilliantly.

**STYLE TIP** Don't shy away from adding modern elements alongside period pieces.

The eclectic trend works well here with Mirka's neutral colour palette

The separate dining room is becoming redundant as open-plan kitchen-diners soar in popularity



## THE SOCIAL KITCHEN

"Making the best use of space is so important, especially in a kitchen, where people tend to spend most of their time." Mirka wanted her kitchen to be the heart of the home, as this is where they entertain, so she extended the kitchen, creating a spacious social area for dining and cooking. **STYLE TIP** Keep your look relaxed, making entertaining a painless task.

## NATURE INSPIRED

"I love raw wood and try to keep it, where possible, in the floors, doors, shutters and furniture." Mirka used a lot of nature-inspired items. A giraffe print updated the antique Polish bench, while the antique dining table incorporates pieces of Indian carving, and is teamed with leather armchairs. **STYLE TIP** Use leather, wicker, hides and wood to work this look. >>

freely. It was after completing the kitchen that I started seriously thinking about becoming an interior designer.

"Ian works from home, so major building work was out of the question and, in any case, the layout of the house works well. It was more a question of updating the look without ripping the place apart." The idea of recycling architecture is what Mirka finds fascinating. "I like to retain the proportions and detail of period buildings, but update them using modern technology and design." Existing features, such as wooden shutters, were retained, as were the linen-covered sofas. "Along with the wallpaper, it was the mirrored tables and lamps that transformed the look. Light was reflected in interesting ways, and the whole area immediately looked brighter and more welcoming."

Mirka McNeill Interiors, [mirkamcneill.com](http://mirkamcneill.com)

Mixing natural materials and nature-inspired prints brings this trend home

