

THE ART OF SURPRISE



STEEL-FRAMED DOUBLE DOORS IN THE HALLWAY OPEN UP THE SPACE AND CREATE A BOLD ENTRANCE TO THE LIVING AREA. THE LA VOLIERE PENDANT LIGHT (CHALLIERES.COM) ADDS A FUN ELEMENT



SCAFFOLDING BOARDS ON THE CEILING GIVE THE DINING ROOM TEXTURE. THE TABLE IS FROM CONRANSHOP.CO.UK, THE CHAIRS FROM HABITAT.CO.UK AND THE CHANDELIER FROM ROCKETTSTGEORGE.CO.UK

From an olive tree in the kitchen to flamingos in the cloakroom, Not On The High Street co-founder Holly Tucker's ideas are as big at home as they are in business

WORDS: EMMA J PAGE PHOTOGRAPHS: MEGAN TAYLOR

There can't be many house renovations that begin with a vast, 300kg faux olive tree, but that's exactly what kick-started the transformation of Holly Tucker's Victorian home in Southwest London.

Co-founder of online gifts company Not On The High Street and founder of business advice service Holly & Co, Holly's always had an eye for the unusual. Inspired by a giant tree she saw in a hotel lobby, she knew it was a look that could translate to a domestic setting, even though it took eight people to haul into place just as the finishing touches were being put to her kitchen. But it's a symbol of everything home means to her. 'I love the

connotations of the proverbial olive branch,' she says. 'To me, it represents family and sharing. There's barely a week that goes by when the tree isn't being decorated with pompoms, baubles or even paper flowers from my wedding day.'

The former schoolhouse, which she shares with husband Frank, teenage son Harry and border terrier Mr Mudley, was treated to a considered renovation a few years ago. Out went a series of partition walls on the ground floor and in came a largely open-plan living space, accessed by generous Crittall framed doors. An adjoining garage was turned into a kitchen, its original attic quarters knocked out to create a light-channelling apex roof. Bathrooms and bedrooms were

IN HOLLY'S OFFICE, BESPOKE MAP WALLPAPER REFLECTS HER LOVE OF TRAVEL. FRAMED PRINTS PROVIDE INSPIRATION AND A MID-CENTURY STYLE DESK FROM STUDIOFIBRE.COM FEATURING COLOURFUL DRAWER STORAGE ADDS A PLAYFUL NOTE



'I LIKE TO ADD AN ELEMENT OF SURPRISE TO EVERY ROOM,' SAYS HOLLY. THE FAMILY'S KITCHEN IS NO EXCEPTION, WITH A VAST FAUX OLIVE TREE SEEMINGLY TAKING ROOT THROUGH THE CORIAN ISLAND. THE METAL STOOLS ARE FROM THEOLDCINEMA.CO.UK

refreshed and, crucially, Holly commandeered two upstairs rooms to store her ever-rotating stock of one-off finds.

'Supporting independent makers has given me the confidence to express myself,' says Holly. 'Whether that's through an office wall clad in Spanish tiles, or a cloakroom with eye-catching flamingo wallpaper.' Her interiors are also a testing ground for new pieces, from the hand-decorated breadboards that sit atop her kitchen counters to the colourful artwork featured throughout. 'I'm a magpie for typography, whether stitched, painted or embossed,' she says. 'As long as our schemes surprise and delight, I'm happy.'

Future house plans include 'doing something creative' with chalkboards to reference the property's schoolhouse origins and lining the staircase with 600 suspended 3D butterflies. All ideas that are inventive, imaginative and a bit left field – just like Holly's approach to life.

Holly's new book *Do What You Love, Love What You Do: The Empowering Secrets to Turn Your Passion into Profit* will be published by Ebury on 6 May, price £14.99*. For more information visit holly.co



'I LOVE FLAMINGOS, SO I WENT ALL OUT IN THE CLOAKROOM,' SAYS HOLLY OF HER WALLPAPER FROM OSBORNEANDLITTLE.COM. THE MIRROR IS FROM ROCKETTSTGEORGE.CO.UK



NATURAL ELEMENTS, INCLUDING A HEADBOARD CREATED FROM SCAFFOLDING BOARDS, DELIVER RUSTIC APPEAL IN THE MAIN BEDROOM, WHILE YELLOW BEDDING BRINGS A POP OF COLOUR TO THE SPACE