



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Lower ground-floor flat in a Victorian terraced house
LOCATION North London
ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen-diner, two bedrooms, bathroom
PURCHASED 2017
PREVIOUS PROPERTY 'We moved here from a top-floor rental round the corner,' says Cat.

LIGHT TOUCH

Cool and bright with a tropical air, Cat Dal's London home reflects her Scandinavian heritage and time spent in the Far East

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



SITTING ROOM
 A mix of natural textures and rich patterns creates a relaxed feel. 'The chairs are so comfy to curl up in and the rug unites the scheme,' says Cat.
 Fenner armchairs in Orange velvet, £995 each, Layne pouffes, £95 each, all Habitat. Java floor lamp, £149, Made.com



The moment when Cat Dal's bespoke floor-to-ceiling sliding doors were cautiously fed through the front windows of her new flat is not one she will forget in a hurry. The nail-biting episode came after a patient 18-week wait from order to delivery. 'The doors, which now open onto our garden from the kitchen, were the linchpin of the renovation,' she says. 'Craning them into place wasn't an option, so we removed the front window frames and brought them in that way. Let's just say that there was zero room for error.'

Interior designer Cat, who runs Cat Dal Interiors, was heavily pregnant while fixing up the flat that she shares with husband Stuart and 10-month-old Jasper, but is used to dramatic moments such as this, having overseen several similar projects for clients. But perhaps her cool and collected approach is also down to her Scandinavian roots. 'That culture is an enormous part of my upbringing,' says Cat, whose father is Danish and mother is Norwegian. Her childhood was spent in Copenhagen, followed by stints in Malaysia, Singapore and the UK. Little surprise then that her own home is eclectic and colourful,

FAVOURITE ROOM *'The kitchen always lifts my mood. The texture of the pendants, the natural marble and the green hues make it a calming space'*



underpinned by a sense of Scandinavian calm. 'I like to create spaces that are both functional and playful,' she says. 'Colour, texture and materials are important to me.'

Finding this property was no easy task. Cat and Stuart were looking for a period conversion with room to start a family – a place that would need little work. But when they finally unearthed an unloved two-bedroom basement flat in a Victorian terrace, they knew they would have to roll up their sleeves. 'It was in a poor state but it had potential,' says Cat. 'The previous owners had secured planning

KITCHEN-DINER

Cat totally reworked this space at the rear, extending the original kitchen across the full width of the house. The smart navy finish and striking Arabescato marble are perfectly complemented by crisp white quartz worktops and brass accents for chic, modern style. 'As a Scandinavian interior designer, I believe that

space planning is vital and we took great care to ensure that this apartment works hard for us,' says Cat. Cabinetry painted in Plimsoll pure flat emulsion, £49.50 for £2.5L, Paint & Paper Library. Arabescato marble, from £200sq m, MGLW. Brass handles, from £5.50 each, Foundryman. Black rattan bar stools, £195 each, Rockett St George, are similar



DINING AREA
Natural textures and lush tropical hues are inspired by the courtyard garden. Edelweiss dining table, £399, Made.com. Tall Braided pendants in Green, €93 each, Ferm Living. Safavieh Valentin vintage-inspired rug, from £82.25, Only Home



permission for a bedroom alongside the kitchen, but we decided to use the side return for a kitchen-diner to run the width of the rear instead.'

Over the next eight months, the pair completely renovated the flat, leaving only the double doors leading to the garden from the master bedroom intact. The layout remains broadly similar except for a reconfigured hallway that incorporates storage, and an entirely reworked kitchen. 'The flat is southwest facing and we wanted to make the most of that,' says Cat. 'We opted for those huge glass doors and a tropically inspired garden because it was so important to bring the outside in.'

Another key consideration was storage. 'We were keen to avoid having any dead space,' says Cat. 'The bench in the dining area conceals space under the seat, we built large wardrobes in the hallway and we bought a mechanical-lift storage bed.'

While everything has its place, the decor is far from staid. The sitting room features an abundance of texture and colour, from the orange armchairs and striped stools to the mid-century Danish leather sofa and woven plant pots. Elsewhere, Cat's love of botanicals is seen in the House of Hackney Paradisa print on the headboard and bolster cushion. And

FAVOURITE ITEM *'I love our headboard, which is upholstered in my favourite House of Hackney fabric. Jasper likes looking at the birds on it every morning'*



the tactile, organic nature is most apparent in the kitchen, with its oversized woven pendants, smart brass taps and striking marble splashback. 'We always wanted a large, bright and happy kitchen,' says Cat. 'This space has plenty of room for the baby to play while I'm cooking and the large table is perfect for dinner parties.'

This summer, the family is looking forward to finally relaxing. 'We'll be enjoying every minute with Jasper,' says Cat. 'We can't wait to scribble his height onto the door frames as he grows – after all, those special touches are what makes a home.' 25

BATHROOM
Using herringbone tiles on the wall adds the wow factor to this functional room.

Hampton Bays herringbone mosaic wall tiles, £129.86sq, Fired Earth. Carrara honed marble hexagon mosaic floor tiles, £199.17sq m, Mandarin Stone. Aureole wall sconce, £79, Spark & Bell. Faux Living Wall (seen through window), price on request, Thames Hedging

GARDEN
Cat has created a cosy outdoor room with this tiled courtyard adjacent to the kitchen and dining area. 'We opted for an informal feel with an air of the tropics,' she says.

Cosmopolitan bistro set (with side table, not seen), £129.99, Alfresia. Green Basco tiles, £5 each, Bert & May. Smoki glass lanterns, from €48 each, Caravane



MASTER BEDROOM

'The striking botanical print makes our bedroom feel so personal to us,' says Cat.

Headboard and bolster in Paradisa in Off-White, £95m, House of Hackney. Bed with mechanical-lift storage, from £399, Bed Guru. Sinnerlig bamboo pendant lamp, £40, Ikea. Artwork, sourced from Society6