



Wallpaper by Cole & Son, Bird artwork
by Leila Jeffreys and throw by Missoni

CALIFORNIA



DREAMING

Danielle Hodson-Michael speaks to interior designer Bhavin Taylor, who helped transform his friend's Crouch End apartment into an eclectic Palm Springs-inspired oasis

Photography: David Giles Photography

WORKING WITH FRIENDS CAN go either way; an absolute joy or the downfall of your once wonderful relationship. So when one of Bhavin Taylor’s friend approached him to help modernise his two bedroom flat in Crouch End, understandably, the award-winning designer was a little apprehensive. “It can be quite daunting working on a friend’s place,” he says, “because refurb can ruin a relationship, and I didn’t want to create tension with a really good mate.”

Luckily for the pair, that didn’t happen, even though initially they had different ideas about the interior scheme. “My friend wanted a grey colour scheme but I felt we could design something that reflected his personality more,” Bhavin explains.

“Thankfully he was open to ideas, which made things a lot easier.”

Bhavin’s friend is a big fan of Palm Springs, so together the pair decided that the Californian oasis would be the starting point for the design. Retaining the traditional hallmarks of the red-brick building, Bhavin created a cheerful interior, reminiscent of the flamboyant and stylish desert town. “I wanted to bring Palm Springs to Crouch End,” he smiles. “London’s a fantastic place to live but it can be pretty grey a lot of the time. My aim was to make the flat feel warm and colourful, even when the city is not.”

In the spacious and high-ceilinged master bedroom, which is flooded with natural light, the friends used a palm-patterned wallpaper by Cole & Son, to



Bhavin took inspiration from the warmth and flair of Palm Springs, California



The sofa and armchairs are by Heals, lighting by Tom Dixon, throw by Missoni and tables from Furniture Village



A wall separating the kitchen and living room was knocked down to create a light-filled open-planned space

bring the space to life.

“Larger, brighter rooms allow you to inject bolder colours and patterns without it becoming overbearing, although in the main bedroom I was mindful of the fact it needed to be a restful space so used a wallpaper in a calmer tone,” he explains.

The guest bedroom provided the opportunity to go darker, as it’s only used occasionally.

However, Bhavin adds: “You still have to remember it is a place to sleep, plus you don’t want the space to feel depressing, so the darkness of the walls have been balanced using white furniture and accents of mustard. It’s all about getting the correct balance of light and dark.”

As for the living room a more neutral colour was chosen for the walls, which were elevated by furniture and accessories in strong accents of colour and pattern, including art from Jealous Gallery in Crouch End.

“My friend likes to change things around, so we chose a neutral base in this space to give him the freedom to

do this.”

A wall that separated the living room and the kitchen was also removed. While the living room was bright and airy the kitchen lacked natural light, not helped by the fact a fridge blocked a window. By taking down the wall the rooms became one big open-planned space and light now floods into the kitchen.

A kitchen island was added to help break up the space, and provide a spot to eat breakfast, while the two areas are tied together with plants and various art works.

“Combining the living room and kitchen means conversations and atmospheres don’t need to be broken if you have people round,” says Bhavin. “It’s nice to still have that interaction.”

Asked if he’s been invited round to dinner himself since their co-working experience, Bhavin smiles: “Of course I have! My friend loves his home. The best part is that working with my friend has definitely brought us closer and made our friendship stronger.” ♦

bhavintaylor.com



Hallway wallpaper is by Osborne & Little



Wallpaper from Cole & Son, furniture from West Elm and throw from Jonathan Adler



Bhavin has a range of furnishings, based on his Indian heritage, some of which he used in the apartment



The lips artwork is from Jealous Gallery