



#### SITTING ROOM

Painting the walls and woodwork in one colour lends a sophisticated feel.

Walls in Long Acre marble matt emulsion, £51 for 2.5ltr, Mylands. Mobile chandelier, £399, West Elm. Bailey leather sofa in Luster Cappuccino, £1,849; storage stool unit, £325, both John Lewis & Partners. Cabinetry by Carpentera. *One Point Perspective* print by Simon C Page, from £130, King & McGaw

#### KITCHEN

The blue and white scheme is fresh and inviting and the charcoal coloured handles and sockets add depth.

Cabinets and work surfaces supplied by Schmidt Kitchens. Coastal Glaze Dew Pond tiles, £65sq m, Claybrook

# JUST THE RIGHT TONE

*Designer Bhavin Taylor achieved a beautiful balance of colour and light in this once tired top-floor flat*

FEATURE JULIET BENNING | PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS SNOOK





**F**ive years after he bought it, Bhavin Taylor's client was finally ready to change up a gear and renovate his neglected top floor flat in south London. 'I wanted my own space and liked the idea of buying something that required work; both to save money and to make it the way I wanted. I didn't expect it to take five years to start the project,' he says. 'I wanted

someone who could turn my unstructured thoughts into a coherent vision and design. I have strong opinions about what I like, but don't have the design ability or time to create them myself,' he adds.

The owner was familiar with Bhavin's design style ([bhavintaylordesign.com](http://bhavintaylordesign.com)) through the office renovation of the company he worked for, and was confident

their tastes would align. 'When I first saw the property, my initial reaction was that it was tired and missing the love and attention it deserved,' Bhavin recalls. 'The floors were uneven, there were damp patches in the ceiling and the kitchen was falling apart.'

Knowing that a significant proportion of the budget was set aside for building work, Bhavin planned a cost-effective interior



## DINING AREA

Attention to detail – like coordinating the colour of the pendants, chair legs and frames – results in a considered look.

Kyoto wide pendant lights, £246 each, Heal's. Rustic dining table with reclaimed steel legs, £319.16, Etsy. Whistler dining chairs in Dusty Grey, £99 each, House by John Lewis & Partners. Vase, from £17.99, H&M Home. London and Paris street carving maps, £124 each, Street Carving



## HOME TRUTHS

### THE PROPERTY

Top-floor flat

**LOCATION** South London

**ROOMS** Sitting/dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom

**PURCHASED** 2015

### PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I was living in a rented flat with friends not too far from Oval,' says the owner.

## DESIGN TIP *'It's the practical touches, like blackout*

scheme that would make a strong impact. 'My business is all about colour and pattern and I knew that injecting these into the flat would be a starting point from which I could achieve the best value for money. I wanted to create a strong colour block theme throughout with all the skirting boards and doors painted in the same colour as the walls,' he explains. His client also requested a clean, minimal maintenance property but with a lived-in feel and some industrial elements. 'I had to restrict my use of wallpaper, which

as a designer who loves wallpaper came as quite a sacrifice,' Bhavin concedes.

The owner had already bought some key furnishings, including the dining room table, sofa and armchair, so Bhavin took his cues from these. As the furniture was quite big and he wanted to make the room feel spacious, he took a while to figure out the right layout. He was also keen to keep the kitchen and main living space separate as he knew knocking through would be a problem for furniture placement.





**MAIN BEDROOM**  
This dark blue scheme creates a cocoon-like feel while the mint throw lifts the look. Walls in Mayfair Dark marble matt emulsion, £51 for 2.5ltr, Mylands. Boyd pendant light, £60, Habitat. Kantha-Stitched quilt, £148, Anthropologie



## *blinds and the placement of sockets, that really enhance the living experience'*

The vigorous use of solid block colour throughout the flat echoes Bhavin's identity as a designer. 'As a British-born Indian, a lot of my inspiration comes from my Indian heritage, growing up living and breathing lots of festivals and weddings that are so colourful and full of pattern. Here we don't live in the sunniest country in the world but if your surroundings are full of life and colour, then you can feel happy all year round.'

In addition to the upbeat and vibrant tones, Bhavin has considered every angle

of space-saving convenience, much to his client's delight. 'Of course I love the look and feel of the flat, but to me the most successful elements of the project are the very practical touches that really enhance the living experience – from the blackout blinds and the placement of the sockets to kitchen storage that is actually fit for purpose and the steam-proof bathroom mirror. They're all small details that add so much to my day-to-day life,' says the owner. 25

### **BEDROOM**

**The neat cabinetry and upholstered headboard bring a hotel-like luxury.**

Walls in Soho House marble matt emulsion, £51 for 2.5ltr, Mylands. Amalfi bed, from £649, Danetti. Cotton linen and velvet Corners cushion cover in Pink Stone, from £29, West Elm

### **BATHROOM**

**Black accents give this practical scheme a chic, contemporary twist.**

Marvel Gloss Timber Wolf Pale Grey wall tiles, £22.95sq m, Walls and Floors. Duravit vanity cabinet, £1,704, C.P. Hart