



Yellow Kartell dining chairs are mixed with black ones

Cornish Cream!

Elaine Skinner is the founder and managing director of the high end interior design practice Camellia Interiors. In 2003, after studying for an MA in Interior Design at Falmouth University, Elaine formed the business that has continued to grow into a highly reputed practice.

The Camellia team are professional interior designers with particular expertise in luxury coastal homes and properties. They work alongside trusted suppliers and contractors to deliver on medium to large scale projects. As the only affiliated member of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and one of the few British Institute of Interior Design (BIID) qualified and accredited practices in Cornwall, Camellia are continually driven by the need to create and deliver to exacting industry standards.

The team have recently completed a full architectural and interior refurbishment on a stunning mid-Victorian terrace in St Ives, Cornwall for the Singapore-based Harvey family. The project was so successful that it was shortlisted in three categories of the prestigious International Design & Architecture 2014 Awards.

Of the shortlisting, Elaine Skinner explained that "Within Camellia, we know our design work is a success with our clients and these awards firmly reinforce that. It's great to see that our work on this particular St Ives property is shortlisted in so many categories."

The brief to Camellia from Mr and Mrs Harvey was to create a relaxed environment

with a luxury yet understated scheme – layering up different textures to give the home a lived-in and organic feel, as though a designer had never been involved!

The owners specifically asked for the house to feel homely and functional – a place where they could arrive at the coast on a ▼



Elaine Skinner

▲ Friday night and feel instantly at ease.

The initial inspiration for the project came from the Harveys' collection of artwork which encompasses a beautiful palette of soft greys, whites and acid yellows against black. The local coastal views were also an important influence on Elaine's design scheme. The family was fully appreciative of the town's charms and therefore asked the Camellia team to imbue their new home with flourishes of its artistic heritage, the fishing legacy and the mild sub-tropical climate.

As a result, Camellia embraced the 'iconic St Ives view', juxtaposing it with the modern art and an intentional mix of furniture accessorised with the key colours from the outlook. Elaine wanted the artwork to reference St Ives' pretty harbour without it being too typically 'seaside-y', and did so subtly by reflecting the coastal hues and tones in her contemporary design.

"The Harveys have a broad taste," said Elaine, "favouring a more unique and original approach to the design of their home."

They wanted to combine the traditional features of the property with bespoke, one-off pieces of furniture. The challenge was to fuse the old and new together effortlessly. The Camellia team spent a lot of time restoring the property's original elements which was "admittedly a painstaking process", explained Elaine, "but worth it as you are now able to clearly see the personality that has been injected back into it."

Elaine commissioned custom, handmade pieces of furniture to be made for the ▼



Camellia embraced the iconic St Ives view



A beautiful fireplace was reinstated in the bedroom

▲ Harveys and combined their gentle shapes and lines with muted Zoffany wallpapers and complementary yellow and grey accessories throughout the property – allowing a holistic sense of consistency and order to be juxtaposed with bringing classic-cool back to Cornwall.

The kitchen in particular acts as the hub of the house with a compelling design. With no coastal view, Elaine wanted the kitchen to be memorable and vibrant from the interior alone. State of the art fixtures and fittings were built into the polished charcoal-grey

units to ooze the quality and luxury the Harveys were looking for.

The “wow” factor was added with the use of a mix of contemporary furniture which followed the striking colour palette. Yellow Kartell dining chairs have been mixed with black ones to enhance the strength of the powerful personality of the kitchen’s scheme.

These colours contrast beautifully against the simple but stylish Bo Concept white dining table, and the modernity of these features

against the original open Cornish granite stone wall echo the mix of old and new perfectly.

The living area had the advantage of beautiful sea and harbour views and a big open plan space. The soft furnishings and accessories were strategically placed around the room and were all complementary of each other alongside the grand scale of the room’s proportions. Classic designs with contemporary pops of colour work to add that traditional-modern mix which was Elaine’s and the Harveys’ vision. ▼

▲ The fusion of classic and eclectic, state of the art and luxurious coastal elements within a Victorian structure now reflects the evolution of the property from its fishing village roots to a present day, contemporary, luxury holiday getaway for both the owners and holiday visitors.

With the property based in the narrow streets of St Ives, fully and effectively utilising the space in the house was of primary importance to Elaine. Originally, the master bedroom was much smaller with a large en-suite bathroom, but the team at Camellia reconfigured its proportions by

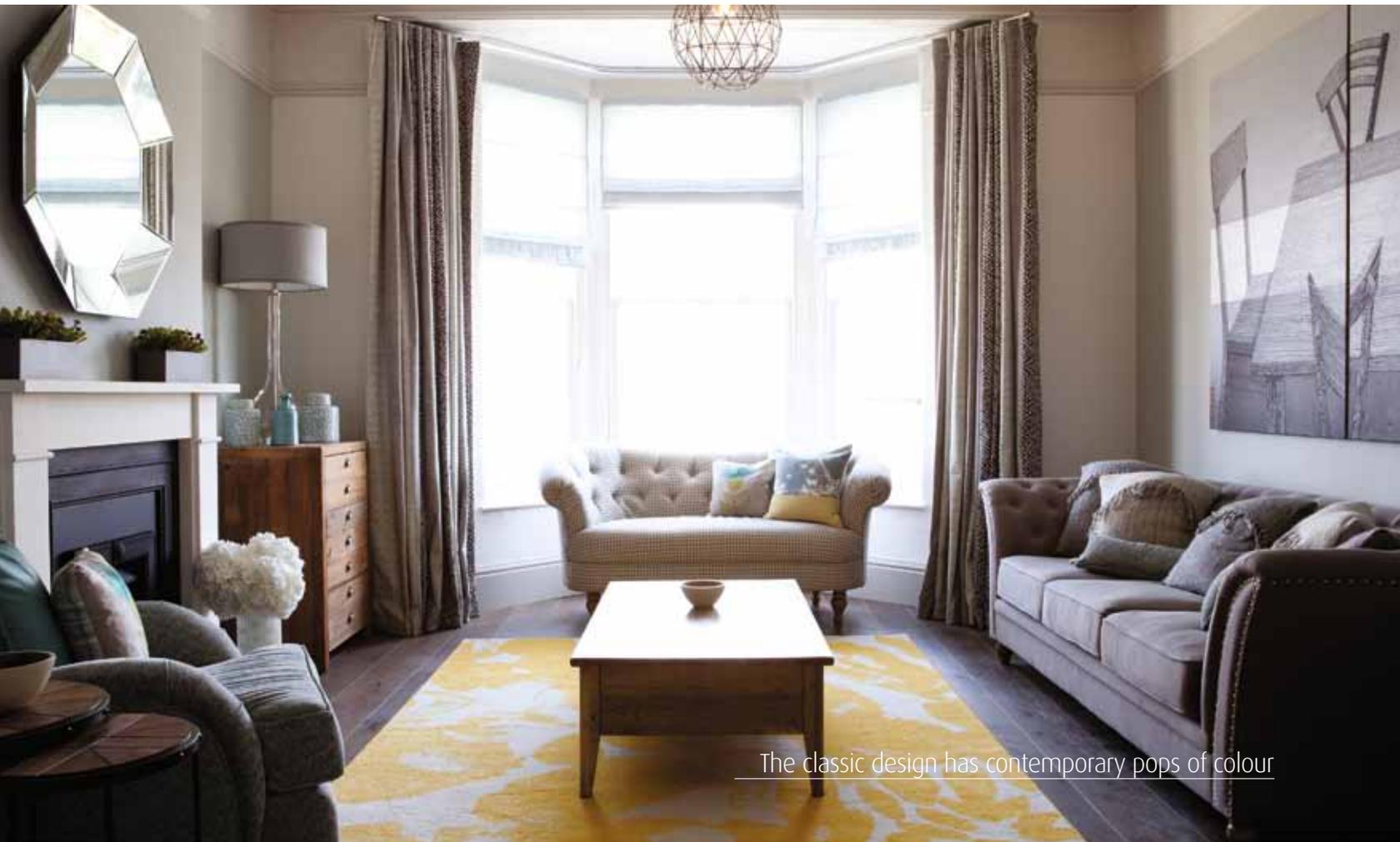
scaling it back and reinstating a beautiful fireplace in the bedroom.

Elaine also proposed to convert the dead space in the loft into a luxurious guest bedroom complete with an attic bath in which one can relax and luxuriate while enjoying the iconic views of St Ives.

Two more single bedrooms were also created. Although compact, these spaces were designed around the unusual architecture and have managed to create the sense of homely luxury and intimacy that the Harveys were looking for.

A surprise addition to the refurbishment of the house followed a chance discovery a third of the way through the project. As the team took up floorboards to lay pipes for the underfloor heating, an expanse of basement space was found!

Having previously had no idea of its existence, the decision was made to excavate backwards – creating extra space that now houses a media room, wine cellar and home office, with its own staircase and vibrant lighting system which can be changed to suit any mood or media experience. ▼



The classic design has contemporary pops of colour



The cosy guest bedroom is complete with an attic bath

▲ “The revelation of the basement had to be my favourite aspect of the project,” explained Elaine. “It was a great surprise – and a major challenge both structurally and logistically. The Camellia team reacted quickly and creatively to resolve it brilliantly, providing stylish and functional additional space.”

Rescheduling the building work and extra space has resulted in an increased return on investment for the owners.

The project was completed on schedule and in time for the Harvey family to come together and enjoy their 2014 summer holiday. Unsurprisingly, it has quickly become one of the top properties for leading lettings agency, Cornish Gems.

“St Ives is always in demand with our extensive database of clients and the Camellia work on this property makes it one of our major showcase properties,” explained Sarah Hemsley of Cornish Gems. “The combination of the practical flexibility

of the space mixed with the luxurious yet comfortable feel makes this an ideal holiday home.

“We really love how the Camellia team has combined Cornish storytelling via artwork and interior touches. Our bookings are well ahead of our initial expectations and it’s always great to work with an architectural and interior design practice who are so cohesively in tune with the needs of both the owner and the holiday guests.”