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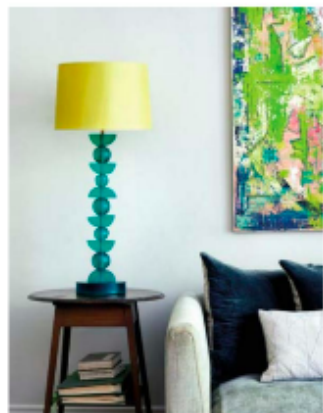
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BACK *to* LIFE

Imbued with nature and popping with colour, this season's interiors are designed to lift the mood and bring joy to the home, writes **Alexandra Goss**



SPRING REFRESH Below, left to right: Striking silhouette lamp by Margit Wittig at Liberty; floor tiles from Bert & May; antiques mix with modern furniture in a Kitesgrove designed room **Overleaf:** Emerald forest velvet sofa and Wanderlust Tea Story wallpaper by Clarke & Clarke



Spring is a time of awakenings, of new beginnings and of hope – and we need all this now more than ever. The finest interiors this season are a joyous riot of botanical prints, pastel colours, light and warmth. They make us feel elated and energised, allowing us to imagine for a moment that we are in a country meadow, even if really, we are in the city in the midst of an April shower.

“Whatever else is going on in the world, plants are sprouting, flowers are blooming and animals are coming out of hibernation,” says Ed O’Donnell, co-founder of the interior design studio Angel O’Donnell (angelodonnell.com). “So now is a great time to embrace botanical motifs, fresh warm hues and the layering of natural materials.”

The Floribunda prints in Liberty Fabrics’ The Modern Collector collection are inspired by the intricate beauty of Victorian botanical illustrations, while the firm’s Tree of Life designs reimagine this ancient arboreal symbol of growth and rebirth. The new Cornubia collection created by the architect and interior designer Ben Pentreath for the fabric and the famed wallpaper brand Morris & Co (morrisandco.sandersondesigngroup.com) is a bright, sunny celebration of the Cornish landscape of Pentreath’s childhood as it bursts into bloom in springtime. >>



COLOUR POPS

From right: A scallop-edged pendant light from David Hunt Lighting; Chelsea townhouse designed by Angel O'Donnell, Ben Pentreath Marigold wallpaper; Cheskie copper pitcher; Jarrita parrot jug, £550; Ben Pentreath's Morris-inspired yellow wallpaper



"I began with... tangerine, lemon yellow, primrose, soft pinks, blues and bright apple greens – the colours of spring and summer," Pentreath says of his design process. "As we translated these new combinations into the historic [Morris & Co] patterns, there was a visible thrill in seeing how new and happy everything looked and felt."

Pastels also speak to the cheerful nature of spring, encapsulated in the beautiful new Loire homeware collection created by Birdie Fortescue (birdiefortescue.co.uk). This is a cheerful, feminine mix of blues, greens and pinks that evoke a simpler, pastoral past and can work well as the seasons begin to change too, Fortescue says. "Offset florals with small-scale geometrics for a modern twist and incorporate lots of airy textures for an easy transition into summer," she advises.

Sunny yellow also works well as the days get longer, says the interior designer Emma Sims Hilditch (simshilditch.com). "Yellow lampshades, cushions, curtains and even upholstery can thread accents of sunshine throughout the room," she explains. Yellow is used to maximum effect in the newly launched three-bedroom apartment in The Bryanston.



With interiors designed by David Collins Studio, whose previous work includes the Connaught Hotel, primrose yellow dining chairs and touches of yellow in the living area and kitchen breakfast bar bring a note of spring to this lavish property overlooking Hyde Park. With extraordinary views across London, it is on the market for £19m through Wetherell (wetherell.co.uk).

Indeed, designers say imbuing your interiors with pops of spring can work wonders – allowing the space to feel refreshed without it looking out of place as the seasons change. The pretty scallop hand-painted pendant lights from David Hunt Lighting (davidhuntlighting.co.uk), which launched at London Design Week in March, are a case in point, >>>



SUNSHINE YELLOW Clockwise from left: Haymarket No. 47 mustard-yellow paint by Mylands; interiors at The Bryanston; Hongwu pot in emerald, £95 and Apadana armless chair in Tarsia Blue, £995 by OKA; A Joanna Wood green leaves cushion, £120

while table settings can be instantly updated with the linen napkins and table runners purchased from the interiors brand CHESKIE (cheskie.co.uk), which are hand-woven on a loom by artisans in India and have bright jaunty tassels.

Even maximalist, dark florals on velvet fabrics can refresh a space for the new season while maintaining a sumptuous, luxurious feel in your home, says Bertie Clayton, managing director of the wallpaper and fabrics brand Jane Clayton & Company (janeclayton.co.uk). Mirrors

help to emphasise and reflect natural light, while now is also a good time to revitalise your home desk, says Sue Jones, co-founder and creative director of OKA (oka.com). "Choose a calming colour to accessorise the room with, such as a cool blue," she advises. "There is nothing like a spring refresh to inspire creativity."

Giving your home a spring in its step is all about those little touches as well. The designer Joanna Wood swears by freshly picked flowers, and switching up your accessories. "Swap your chocolate brown

faux fur throw for a reversible merino or baby alpaca blanket in shades of apple green or soft aqua," Wood says. And don't forget about engaging all the senses, says Rosie Ward, creative director at the design firm Ward & Co (wardandco.com), who recommends a home fragrance with fresh floral or citrus undertones. "These are evocative of a spring garden and can be a real mood lifter," she explains.

If you're considering repainting in spring-like tones, Dominic Myland, managing director of the London

VINTAGE APPEAL **Top:** Henriette Von Stockhausen from VSP Interiors advises mixing antiques and modern art **Below:** Tonal wool throw, £140, panel cushion, £70, square velvet trellis cushion, £75, and scalloped bamboo headboard from £400, all by Birdie Fortescue

paint firm Mylands (mylands.com), advises pairing them with deeper shades to add depth. "If, for example, a room is painted in a vibrant green, choose accents in darker greys and off-white to keep the room feeling bright and warm throughout the whole year," he says.

And while spring is the celebration of the new, it doesn't mean we should forget the old – especially as sustainability has never been more important. Henriette von Stockhausen, the creative director of the interior design brand VSP Interiors (vspinteriors.com), advises combining spring colours and contemporary art with antiques and vintage pieces of furniture. "Often, it is the clever juxtaposition of old and new that creates that certain special energy," she says.

Clara Ewart, head of design at the interiors studio Kitesgrove (kitesgrove.co.uk), says antiques such as a vase, a side table or a light work well as accent pieces. "These little details will make your home feel as if it has organically come together over time," she explains. "Don't be afraid to upcycle, either: a lick of paint can transform old wooden furniture, giving it a renewed energy and continuing the life of an item which may otherwise have been long discarded." ■

