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NATURALLY HOMELY AND *Splendidly chic*

Layering thoughtful architectural details with carefully chosen materials and finishes, this London townhouse has been reimagined to support both the rhythm of family life and social gatherings. **Lou O'Bryan** discovers

Photography: **Guilf  de Peray**



Built in 2000 as part of an exclusive collection of luxury homes in one of London's most coveted neighbourhoods, this handsome townhouse had an imposing facade that immediately drew Jenna and Christopher Green as they searched for a centrally located home for their three children. Yet, despite its kerb appeal and enviable address, the interior told a different story – architecturally flat, disconnected, and far from the functional family haven they'd envisioned. "From the outset, the brief was to transform the house into a family home that could effortlessly accommodate the rhythms of everyday life, while also offering the sophistication and ease required for entertaining," says Caroline Milns, head of interior design at Zulufish, who was called on to mastermind the renovation. "The key priorities were to create light-filled, flexible spaces that had a cohesive flow and a better connection to the garden, while the interiors needed to be characterful and showcase the owners' growing art collection without overpowering the overall design."

Working closely with her in-house architectural design team, Caroline was able to blend her interior vision with the architectural details, creating a seamless experience for her clients. "In many design studios, these disciplines can be at odds," she explains, "but having both under one roof allowed for timely collaboration, thoughtful scenario-planning, and confident decision-making." For this family, getting the layout right was paramount, and the architectural team spent considerable time exploring multiple floor plans – thinking not only laterally across each level, but also vertically through the home. The result is a series of flexible, finely calibrated living zones and playful social areas. "Each space has been designed to support intimate family moments and elegant gatherings, ensuring that even within such a generously sized house, every square inch was used to its fullest potential," says Caroline.

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THE FACTS

Who Jenna and Christopher Green, their three children, Anabel, Mackensie, and Ryan, and their dog, Dutch

What The renovation of a

five-bedroom, six-bathroom,

semi-detached new build

spanning five floors

Where St John's Wood,

London

By Interior and

architectural design,

Zulufish; bespoke joinery,

Hux London

The most dramatic transformation occurred on the lower ground floor where a collection of dark, cramped storage areas and a garage have been reimagined as an expansive, open-plan family level. Thoughtfully zoned for modern living, it now comprises a generous family snug and cinema room with oversized sofas, alongside a sleek, contemporary kitchen with a breakfast island, a dedicated dining area, and a beautifully crafted home bar tucked beneath the staircase. At the end of the room, an entire glass wall opens, blurring the boundary between inside and out, and extending the living space onto the landscaped terrace. "We decided to dig down to create a three-metre-high ceiling and accentuate the feeling of light and space," explains Caroline. "Some of the original structural beams in the kitchen had to stay, so we made them part of the design, rather than dropping the ceiling height to cover them, creating an interesting silhouette."

Caroline and her team layered these architectural decisions with natural materials and refined detailing to create a warm, inviting ambience. "The homeowners were keen on a monochromatic kitchen, but we talked through a warmer palette, encouraging them to go for pale grey and dark wood veneer cabinetry that would still feel defined and crisp, but softer and less harsh," says Caroline. "We then paired rich chocolate parquet flooring with accents of brass, copper, and ochre to introduce further depth and warmth."

At the heart of the family living space, a waterfall island finished in high-performance porcelain and invitingly tactile tan leather bar stools, anchors the space with durability and sculptural impact. Making a real impression is the bespoke bar that is seamlessly integrated into the architecture, and features illuminated shelving that casts an atmospheric glow, an antique foxed mirror splashback, and bespoke rippled glass cabinetry to bring a sense of timeless elegance and textural depth. "This sophisticated yet relaxed setting creates an inviting space for mixing cocktails and entertaining with ease, elevating a once-transitional zone into a vibrant and convivial social hub," says Caroline.

The rich colours and luxurious textures of the ground-floor living room were chosen intentionally to echo the drama of the entrance hall, where a three-tiered coffered ceiling and a marble floor set an unforgettable tone; they create a cohesive visual story that promises a bold, artful welcome the moment you step inside. Meanwhile, the upper floors continue the architectural language established below, enhanced by layered detailing that brings in even more character and visual interest.

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opening page The expansive glass wall spans the full width of the kitchen, framing views of the garden and stepped landscaping. A dramatic charcoal dining table and forest green leather dining chairs are softened by the rich ochre rug and the *Visual Comfort* brass pendant. Dining furniture, *Camerich*.

previous page The modern Shaker cabinetry with fine detailing and dark wood veneer is paired with a porcelain worktop with copper-coloured veining to tie in with the brassware. The bespoke cabinetry, by *Hux London*, is painted in *Little Greene Ceviche*. Calacatta Hermitage porcelain worktop, *Infinity Surfaces*. Stools, *Restoration Hardware*.

right The staircase is a sculptural, monolithic centrepiece that rises throughout the core of the house, from the rejigged lower ground floor to the very top. The result is an entrance that feels distinct and almost gallery-like, while simultaneously opening sightlines and flooding the space with natural light.



"The children's rooms on the first floor are finished in a palette that echoes the rest of the home, but have also been designed with adaptability in mind, allowing them to evolve effortlessly as the kids grow," says Caroline. "We also introduced a laundry room on this level, ensuring the lower floors remain centred around entertaining. Its central placement offers both convenience and discretion, streamlining daily routines and removing the need to ferry laundry up and down the house."

Occupying the entire second floor, the expansive master suite has been conceived as a private sanctuary, offering an exceptional sense of scale and serenity. At its centre lies a generously proportioned bedroom, anchored by a full-width ochre velvet headboard that brings plush comfort and understated opulence. Enhancing this sense of indulgence are the separate his-and-her dressing rooms, each providing ample storage and effortless organisation, and the adjoining spa-like ensuite that features polished plaster walls and a sculptural freestanding bathtub. "The ambition with this project was deceptively simple – to craft spaces with true character, timeless design, and a naturally lived-in warmth," says Caroline. "It is this balance of architectural strength and understated elegance that transforms the property from a striking house into a truly welcoming home." &



top Marble-style rectangular tiles were cut into triangles to create a completely unique, bespoke floor that has a real wow factor without the expense. Avant Garde tiles, *Ca' Pietra*. Marble Honed tiles, *Domus Tiles*. Artwork, *Beside The Waters Edge*, 2023, by Mary West. Walls in *Slate II*, *Paint & Paper Library*. **above left** Positioned beside the kitchen, the family snug and cinema room offers a cosy haven with a sink-into sofa and jewel-coloured cushions by *Soho Home*. **above right** In the master suite, every element has been considered – from the full-width ochre velvet *Furl* headboard to the multi-coloured rug by *Jaipur Rug* and the bespoke, upholstered *Circus 25* ottoman. Cushions in *Arp* fabric, *Zinc*. **right** Polished plaster walls in soft tones set a calming backdrop for the sculptural freestanding bath by *Walton Bathrooms* and the luxurious fittings. Polished plaster, *Marmo Stucco*. *Nula* Vertical alabaster pendant, *Heathfield and Co*.

