



BRIGHTON, EAST SUSSEX

MY NEIGHBOURHOOD

KNITWEAR DESIGNER SALLY EVANS TAKES US AROUND HER FAVOURITE PLACES IN THE SEASIDE CITY, STARTING WITH HER LIGHT AND BREEZY HOME

Photography: **BRENT DARBY** Words: **CLARE GOGERTY**





Sally loves to lounge on her Lamino chair and footstool, bought at Viaduct, in the living room, made cosy with a Designers Guild rug and artworks including a Damien Hirst 'Valium' print and 'Diamond Dust Marilyn' by Peter Blake. Opposite, far left: recent addition to the skyline, the British Airways i360





“We wanted a crisp finish, so we’ve used a lot of white. I like the sharp shadows the sun throws on the white walls”

“My favourite place to sit,” says home accessories designer Sally Evans of her house in Brighton, “is in the chair in the bay window in the living room, with my feet up and a magazine to flick through. It might be because the rug is so thick, but it feels hushed. It makes me calm and relaxed.”

After 29 years in London, Sally and her husband Damian, a product designer, moved to Brighton driven by a desire for more space, the need for a change and an itch to be at the coast. “We wanted to live by the sea,” Sally says, “but still be able to get to London easily.”

They bought their Regency terraced house five years ago, despite it not being exactly what they

were after. “It was in a good location and had the right number of bedrooms, but it was very dark with heavy, swagged curtains,” says Sally. “And the floor was coated with orange varnish.”

On a mission to open the house up and create a light, calm and bright interior, they restructured the space, creating an open-plan kitchen/dining room on the ground floor, a living room/office from what was a bedroom and bathroom on the first, two guest bedrooms and bathroom in the basement and installing a light well above the staircase. Out went the heavy curtains and in came three new fireplaces (the originals had been jettisoned), an open banister and ‘floating’ cupboards. The original cornices and skirting boards that had been removed were replaced, hardboard panels were taken off doors to reveal wonderful originals, and »





NEST | HOME TOUR

White walls create a blank canvas on which to showcase treasured knick-knacks and art, such as the canoe paddle on the stairwell from Norquay and (opposite) a Buick print by Joseph. The Silence sign is by local neon artist Andy Doig and wooden dolls on the mantelpiece are by Alexander Girard from Vitra





"Marrocco's is an Italian restaurant on the seafront in Hove and we like to go there for an ice-cream. In the summer, there are queues all along the prom. All 24 flavours are homemade and delicious. My favourite is hazelnut."

marroccos.co.uk



"Edited, a homewares shop in Brighton Square, is full of desirable things. It sells things by well known names as well as local designers. It's also has a café and is a handy place to stop off for a coffee as it's so central." edited.co.uk





Brighton in a snapshot

With its handsome Regency architecture, miles of promenade, proximity to London, and general fun-loving nature, Brighton has been popular with visitors since its early days as a sea-bathing resort. These days, shops and restaurants in the Lanes, a busy café culture on the seafront and a thriving creative community (check out Artists Open Houses in May, aoh.org.uk) keep the visitors coming and the residents happy.



"I love the understated, pared-down aesthetic of Workshop on Prince Albert Street. It prides itself on selling 'simple, uncomplicated' home and lifestyle products. Alongside Japanese ceramic plates and mugs, you can find concrete planters and wooden bread boards."

workshopliving.co.uk



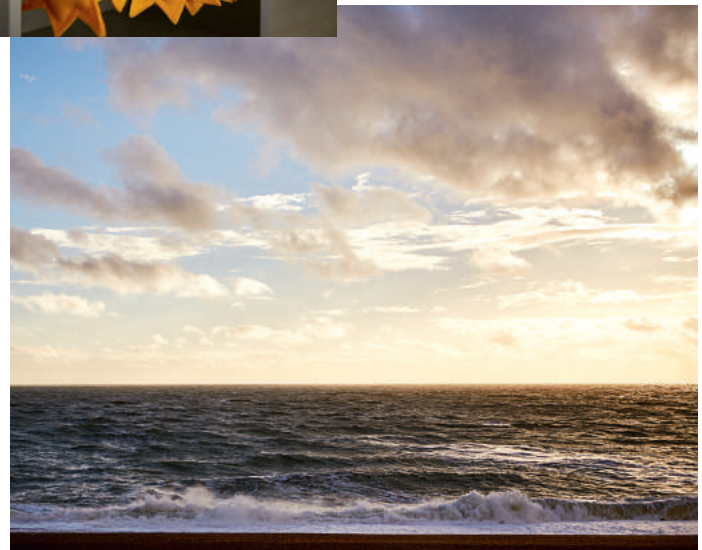
"Small Batch Coffee is just down the road from our house, on Norfolk Square, so I often pop down for a cortado. There are also other branches in Brighton. The building used to be a bank and is light and airy and you can sit on a stool and read the papers. They roast their own coffee and it is very good."

smallbatchcoffee.co.uk





In the dining area (far left), a Montis dining table and Wishbone chairs by Hans Wegner at Viaduct. Left: Oscar's Friends, one of Sally's creations



"I only have to walk to the end of the road to be beside the sea. Brighton and Hove has a great promenade to stroll along. It is popular with dog walkers, runners, cyclists and artists who are inspired by the ever-changing view."


Damian stripped the floor and painted it white.

You can't help but notice that white is the predominant colour throughout the house – "We wanted a crisp finish," says Sally – but the doors on each floor are a different shade of Farrow & Ball green, darkening progressively as you go up. Colour is also introduced with numerous prints and artwork collected over the years from RCA degree shows, galleries and art fairs, as well as Sally's own cushions and throws.

The move to Brighton enabled Sally to develop her knitted home accessories business, From Brighton With Love. "After decades spent working in the London design industry, I thought it was time to get back to being creative myself," she says. With a degree in fashion and textiles behind her, she had a head start, although she had to re-teach herself how to use the knitting machine. "The first thing I made was incredibly complicated.

I've simplified many of the designs now."

Weekdays now find her busily producing pouffes, cushions, throws and soft toys from her studio in Kemptown, a suburb of Brighton. The influence of her surroundings is evident in everything she makes: her Horizon line of cushions was inspired by the view from the front doorstep – "I love the light cream band where the sky meets the sea" – and seaside colours and themes are evident throughout, from bags with deckchair stripes to her line of seagulls, Oscars's Friends, with their dangling, stripy legs.

If any doubts remain about the move to Brighton, Sally's daily commute along the seafront from her home to her studio banishes them. "It's lovely to stroll along the prom," she says, "and breathe an invigorating gust of sea air. It gives me heaps of ideas and really sets me up for the day."  frombrightonwithlove.com





The master bedroom sticks to the crisp white colour scheme, although a feature wall (reflected in mirror) introduces colour with scrap wood wallpaper by Piet Hein Eek. The Charcoal throw is by From Brighton With Love, one of Sally's designs

