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**SITTING ROOM**

Although there are many beautiful and intriguing items in this room, it is the fabulous Spiridon chandelier, which Heddy sells in her shop, that commands attention. "I've had people knock on the door to ask about it after admiring it through the window," she says.



VICTORIAN TERRACE

# Thoughts of HOME

*The history and culture of Egypt come to life in this elegant and highly personal London house*

WORDS NATALIE WAIN PHOTOGRAPHS JONATHAN GOOCH





#### SITTING ROOM

The wallpaper (left) was chosen for its textural quality, and also for practical reasons. "It's vinyl so we can wash it, which is vital as our daughter Alia is going through a phase of drawing on the walls at the moment," says Heddy. The evocative artwork is by Egyptian artist Hassan Soliman.

Interior design, Eklego Design, eklegodesign.com. Intarsia Vinyls wallpaper, £75 a roll, Osborne & Little, 020 8812 3123, osborneandlittle.com. Orbit sofa, from £2,475 plus fabric, Designers Guild, 020 7351 5775, designersguild.com.

#### FAMILY ROOM

An impressive sofa from Roche Bobois is a favourite spot for the couple's three daughters. Its proportions are matched by a striking metallic floor lamp on a similarly bold scale.

Voyage Immobile modular sofa, from £1,730 for an armless module, Roche Bobois, 020 7751 4030, roche-bobois.com. Similar floor lamp, Giant George Carwardine Style adjustable angular floor lamp, £90, Iconic Lights, 0161 837 6092, iconiclights.co.uk. Rana Chalabi Dancers paintings, ranachalabiart.com.





#### DINING ROOM

This painting, incorporating sand, depicts the Egyptian feast known as Sham el-Nessim, which has ancient roots. "It translates as 'Smelling of the breeze,'" Heddy explains. "Family and friends get together to enjoy picnics and celebrate spring." For Omar El Nagdi artworks, try Almasar Gallery, 002 2 2736 8537, [almasargallery.com](http://almasargallery.com). **Artisan Invito extending table**, from £3,250, Nina's House, 020 7751 5827, [ninashouse.com](http://ninashouse.com).





## KITCHEN

Comfort, style and ergonomics combine in this room (also right), with its woodburning stove opposite the neat island. "My husband loves cooking and the girls like to bake cakes so a functional, family-friendly kitchen was essential," says Heddy.

**Bespoke kitchen.** Harvey Jones Kitchens. 0800 389 6938, harveyjones.com. **Noor Collection pendant lights,** £295 each, Jam

Space, 07903 820655, jamspace.uk. **Joe Oak bar stool,** £195, Habitat, 0344 499 1111, habitat.co.uk.

## DRINKS CABINET

Originally a store cupboard, this is now where Heddy and Elwy keep the glassware (below right) they have collected on their travels around the Middle East, Scandinavia, Italy and Africa. "It's a bar full of memories," says Heddy.







“I do miss Cairo,” muses interior and product designer Heddy Taymour. Sitting in her light-filled dining room in west London, beneath an artwork depicting an ancient Egyptian feast that is still celebrated in the country today, Heddy’s affection for her homeland is as unmistakable as it is captivating. References to Egypt abound in a pleasing mix of traditional and contemporary forms: the porch light, for example, is encased in a laser-cut shade depicting Tahrir Square, a key location in the 2011 revolution, while in the sitting room the mighty River Nile glistens in the treasured oil painting by Mahmoud Said that hangs above the fireplace. “I love being surrounded by reminders of Egypt,” says Heddy.

Nevertheless, she has also embraced London – where she lives with her husband, Elwy, and their daughters, Gigi, aged nine, Mymy, seven, and Alia, three – with characteristic enthusiasm and creative fervour. “This house is a passion,” says Heddy. “It’s a blend of East meets West, a mix of everything I love. For me, a home is not so much designed as curated.”

#### INSTANT ATTRACTION

Following a sojourn in Chelsea, having moved to London for Elwy’s work, the Taymours began looking for a spacious, family-oriented home. “I fell in love with this house the moment the estate agent opened the door; it has a wonderful soul,” Heddy exclaims. “We’d seen larger properties, but this immediately felt like home.”

High ceilings and quirky architectural details, including the distinctive Victorian terracotta lions that are perched on gables, echo Cairo’s mid-century splendour and provide a reassuring sense of familiarity, while a few minor tweaks here







and there have enhanced the interior's sense of flow. "We squared off a curved archway linking the kitchen and dining room and reinstalled skirting boards to create a more harmonious effect," explains Heddy.

Turning pockets of previously wasted space in the kitchen into an open-fronted drinks cabinet, a tile-backed fireplace and a log store, and laying whitewashed oak throughout the ground floor have brought a timeless, easy-living appeal that Heddy adores. "The flooring is also very practical and ages well, so it's perfect with three boisterous little girls running around."

### THE PERFECT BLEND

At the front of the house, two rooms have been knocked into one and Heddy has given each end of the space a distinct style to provide a relaxed family area for watching television and a more formal sitting room for entertaining. The latter is decorated with a sophisticated mixture of Middle Eastern and Western furnishings in a gently muted palette. Intricately carved, weathered wooden doors salvaged from a dilapidated home in the Egyptian countryside sit serenely alongside a sorbet-green Designers Guild sofa, while overhead a dazzling beaded crystal chandelier adds an elegant note to the scheme.

In the family area, a striking black-and-white ink portrait of Heddy's grandmother, the celebrated feminist Doria Shafik, takes pride of place. Doria was an inspirational woman who lived by her own rules, and Heddy, through her skilful yet ultimately intuitive sense of style, follows suit. Contemporary dove-grey Roche Bobois modular seating is scattered with plump, textured cushions made from fragments of hand-woven fabrics, while a

richly coloured carpet-covered bench in the hall is a beautiful reminder of distant Turkish heritage.

"I'm not really influenced by trends," says Heddy. "My home is full of one-off and special pieces that are immensely personal to me. I find beauty comes from being inspired."

### TELLING TALES

As we wander through her home, Heddy frequently pauses to expand on the provenance of the many eye-catching pieces, whether furniture, fabric or decorative object. "In many ways, the house is a melting pot and everything has a story," she explains. "How and why something has been created is just as, if not more, important to me than the finished article. Everything I have is used and loved; this is not a show home."

It is a philosophy that Heddy extends to her furniture and accessories store, Jam Space, and interiors business, Eklego Design. "I find the design process incredibly enriching, from sketching out an initial idea for a piece of furniture to selecting upholstery. It's what makes something special." Heddy becomes more animated as she examines a delicate vase by ceramicist Janet Stahelin. "She uses antique lace designed by her grandfather, whose clients included Queen Elizabeth, to create the pattern. You can almost feel the history," she says.

Back in the kitchen, Heddy shows her eldest daughter Gigi how to prepare dukkah – a blend of sesame seeds and herbs – to accompany the ful medames. "Don't forget, drizzle olive oil over the beans before serving them," she urges. It is a small, seemingly insignificant detail but, as with Heddy's approach to style, one that will ultimately enhance the overall experience. □





#### MAIN BEDROOM

"The attic had already been converted into a bedroom when we bought the house," Heddy says of this space (opposite page), which is alive with colour thanks to the handmade bedspread.

**Similar table lamp.** Galway Living Crystal "Jazz" table lamp, £149, Debenhams, 0844 800 8877, debenhams.com. **For a similar patchwork bedspread,** try Not on the High Street, 0345 259 1359, notonthehighstreet.com.

#### MAIN BATHROOM

Made for two, this luxurious bathroom features a double vanity unit and twin showers. **New Yorker Smoke Metro tiles,** £60sq m, European Heritage, 020 7381 6063, europeanheritage.co.uk. **Large roll-top basin with stainless-steel stand,** £598, Clearwater Baths, 0845 539 0055, clearwaterbaths.com.

#### ALIA'S BEDROOM

"The girls had a big say in the style of their rooms," says Heddy of this scheme, where a cleverly designed bespoke bed offers desk space and somewhere for overnight guests.

**Similar bed.** Bright White Darwin bunk bed, £599, Great Little Trading Co, 0344 848 6000, gltc.co.uk.

