

At home with design

Award-winning interior designer Kerrie Griffin offers a peek inside her five-bedroom country home before she moves on to her next property adventure

WORDS: Freya Millard

Kerrie Griffin, founder of The Interior Co, credits growing up with creative parents for having sparked her passion for all things artistic. In her early childhood, Kerrie's dad began renovating houses.

'I remember eating tea with brick dust around me. Mum would say "am I able to serve?" and dad would reply, "can I just knock this wall down?" Then there would be a cloud of dust and bricks falling around the dining table,' Kerrie laughs.

In her own beautiful five-bedroom farmhouse, Wood House Farm in Breaden Heath, Whitchurch, on the Cheshire-Shropshire border, which is currently on sale, for Kerrie, there have definitely been testing times, especially as a single mum of two.

'At one point, I had all of my bedrooms let as a B&B and my garage converted into a holiday let. I was doing shows all around the country, selling my work, painting and then cooking breakfast when I got back. Packing the car up for the next day to drive down to Kent to do another clothing show, and then designing somebody's lounge at the same time, on my own,' she says.

Kerrie sets a strong example for what it means to be self-sufficient: she can make things out of wood, plaster walls, put in RSJs, take a brick wall down, paint, upholster, make curtains, make clothes, cook and do a bit of plumping. 'I can ▶



Wood House Farm, near Whitchurch, has been lovingly and beautifully restored by interior designer Kerrie Griffin

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Kerrie rearranged the farmhouse layout, creating a hallway and moving the kitchen to the rear, to take full advantage of the light and views

E-House

basically do anything,' she says confidently.

When tackling a new project, Kerrie says she has some firm beliefs on how to start.

'I'm a big believer if you're going to spend something on your house, unless you're going to say to me, "I'm staying in it 20 years, money is no object," I always do it with the question in mind, "am I going to add value?" I'm doing a bathroom in an apartment within a rectory at the moment. The bathroom we want to do is £10,000-£15,000 and will probably add £10,000, but I know they want to move very soon.

'I've said to them, "let's go for a budget of £6,000-£8,000, and get it looking like a £10,000-£15,000 bathroom, and then keep some money back for when you buy the one downstairs. Then we can do the bathroom/kitchen, all singing all dancing because I know that is where you are going to stay."

From award-winning pubs to swimming pool murals, Kerrie's portfolio is as wide as it is impressive, but her favourite type



Kerrie's kitchen opens up into the breakfast room and is united by a complementary colour scheme of creams and grey

E+House

of project remains country homes, a passion she has brought to bear on her own beautiful property.

'This house has got so much going for it. It's got oak beams going down, across and around you. It's got steps down, steps up, little alcoves, cute little bedrooms; it's just so interesting.'

Over the course of 11 years living here, Kerrie estimates she has spent £250,000 on improvements. In this time, she has made many bold changes, such as swapping the hall and the kitchen around, which resulted in the exciting discovery of a beautiful oak cross-panel, hidden behind the old kitchen units.

Centre stage in her 500-year-old home, however, is the 32ft main lounge, brought to life by the lime-washed beams that enhance the space. 'It's very, very brave to paint beams,' Kerrie elaborates, 'I did it gently and slowly and in a bit where you couldn't see in case it didn't look right. But then as I went along, I was like, "my God, it adds so much to this room."'

The space is further complemented with a calm colour palette of greys and creams, alongside splashes of black and duck egg blue. On opening the door, the span of the room enters the field of vision. Your gaze is guided by the lightened beams towards the central long burner tucked inside an inglenook fireplace and surrounded by elegant soft furnishings and fabrics.

'Every lamp in the lounge I've got timers on, and they all click on at different times to create ambience. Then when you put the log burner on and you're watching a good drama and you're laid back on your comfy



sofa and the fire's flickering with your candles; there's just nothing quite like the homely, cosy room is there?'

The outdoor spaces are just as inviting with bay, box and topiary trees lining the space and providing a sense of direction to various seating areas. One style Kerrie enjoys playing with in her designs is transferring indoor and outdoor furniture to 'mess with the senses a little bit' and this is visible through elements of stone inside and soft furnishings outside.

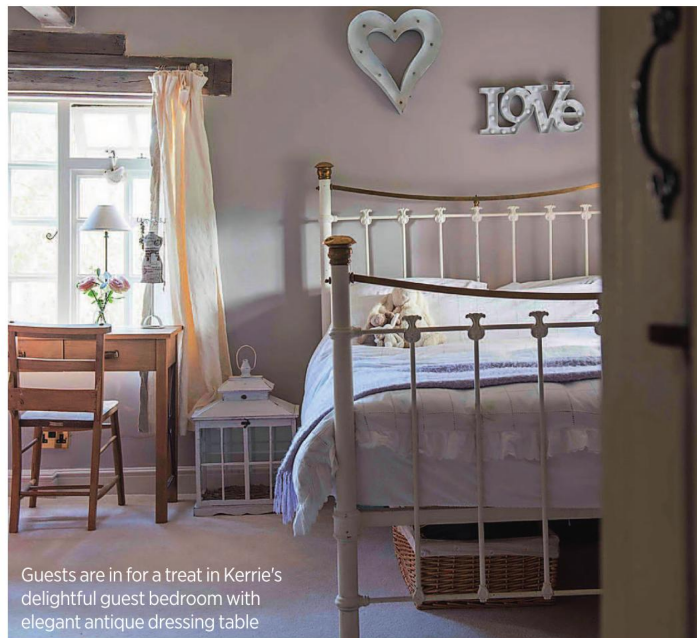
Among her many talents, Kerrie enjoys upcycling vintage and bespoke furniture for her clients and customers: 'I always paint the insides. I always take the doorknobs off, the door handles off, do it all properly, I even paint the back. I'm very fussy when I do something,' she admits.

A signature style across her furniture range is her playful mix of light and dark

Kerrie in her stylish kitchen, where she unites traditional farmhouse style with contemporary elegance



Jasmin Rogers



Guests are in for a treat in Kerrie's delightful guest bedroom with elegant antique dressing table

Jody Stewart Photography

colours. If there is a darker shade on the outside then she paints the inside lighter and vice-versa. Another example of Kerrie's creations is the 1920s gentlemen's chairs that sit in her lounge, which she says are her favourite upcycling project to date. 'I did the arms in leather and I did the seat in linen and then I piped it in leather. I did a female and a male version, where I used similar linen, but on the back of one it's a white check and the other is plain.'

Painting has been another muse for Kerrie, especially during lockdown, from floral arrangements to beach scenes, to a portrait of Johnny Depp. Every single piece of artwork on the walls of the farmhouse are her own originals and, without a doubt, Kerrie's greatest asset is her creative mind.

'If you said to me, "Kerrie, design 20 homes in the next two weeks," I could because I have got ideas coming out of every angle. I've just not got enough houses to do to get my ideas out there,' she laughs.

Working from the boundaries of her own home, surrounded by the spaces she has meticulously curated has clearly been a



A claw-foot bath with drapes is a pretty centrepiece to Kerrie's farmhouse bathroom

Kerrie Griffin-Rogers



Breakfast is served in the light-filled breakfast room, with green views across the gardens

Jody Stewart Photography



Farmhouse chic: the style may be rustic but the finish is luxurious

Jody Stewart Photography

source of inspiration for Kerrie during this last year. 'To be here, doing what I love, is insane. To get paid to do the thing you absolutely love is so rare.'

As she addresses the reality of leaving her stunning countryside home, Kerrie confides she will miss everything about the house.

She says: 'I've been here 11 years, I have cried in it, I've laughed in it, I've been happy in it, I've had parties in it, I've got divorced in it, I've brought my children up in it, I've had my horses here, I've started my business here, I've started painting here, I've written a book here (*From Shed to Chic: creating a money-making holiday let*); I've done absolutely everything here, but I am just itching to start a new project.'

Kerrie's home is for sale for £950,000 through Fine&Country ♦



Photo: Jody Stewart Photography

Kerrie's sitting room is a calming and serene place to relax, with toning colours and textures



Sink into the bliss of a deep-fill sofa
darlingsofchelsea.co.uk



Kerrie paints her wooden furniture to ensure a perfect match throughout, but you can find ready painted pieces,
kayhome.co.uk



Nothing says farmhouse chic like a pretty teacup
milysands.co.uk



Choose cushions that work as a set
jjtextile.co.uk

GET THE LOOK



A pretty jug for flowers or milk
sophieallport.com

Kerrie Griffin has taken the concept of farmhouse chic to the highest levels in her home by using soothing shades in a carefully curated colour palette. If you like the look, look here...



Accessorise in complementary colours
hudsonhome.co.uk



Add a pop of colour, but don't mix it up
jjtextile.co.uk



Scatter cushions add interest, texture and comfort
jjtextile.co.uk



Photo: E House

Soft shades of cream and grey throughout Kerrie's home offer comfort with timeless, traditional style