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THE ART OF LIVING

Alicia and Robert Chapman's London home provides the perfect setting for family life and a discreet backdrop for their collection of Oriental art

WORDS JUDITH WILSON | PHOTOGRAPHS WINFRIED HENZE

DRAWING ROOM

Alicia had already purchased the Christian Liaigre furniture, so interior designer Juliette Byrne's task was to make it work in the new scheme. Soft leather upholstery adds an unusual texture in the tranquil setting.

Mousson sofa, from £5,310 (plus 15m of fabric), Christian Liaigre, 020 7584 5840, christian-liaigre.co.uk
Covered in Murgus wool, P93.80m, Sacco, 020 7352 6160, saccohaslein.com. **Lamp** and **wenge coffee table** with bronze panel, both made to order, Interiors Bis, 020 7351 7571, interiorsbis.com. **Perspex display case**, designed by Keith Wrightson and made by Quentin Houlder through Juliette Byrne Associates, 020 7352 7553, juliettebyrne.com. **Fibre-optic lighting in display case**, Light IQ, 020 8740 9900, lightiq.com

DRAWING ROOM

Because the house is Grade II listed, no architectural changes were possible. The original door, still in place, is cleverly concealed behind bespoke bookshelves.*

Wenge bookshelves Julietta Byrne at Julietta Byrne Associates, 020 7352 1553, juliettebyrne.com.

Fitted with specialist LED lighting Light IQ, 020 8749 1900, lightiq.com.

Coffee table with kid leather stitched top, from £2,900, Allegra Hicks, 020 7235 8989, allograhicks.com.





Chapman has achieved. In 2005, having seen 50 houses to find the perfect family home

finding and buying an architectural gem is one thing; making the property suitable for modern-day living without damaging its inherent beauty is more tricky – and a delicate balancing act. That, however, is precisely what Alicia

for herself, her husband, Robert, and their three children, she decided on this Grade II*-listed John Nash house close to London's Regent's Park. "It is within walking distance of the shops and an easy commute for Robert," she says. "I loved its history and the original architectural detailing."

The house had been refurbished by a property developer but Alicia, who is South American and has a confident sense of style, wanted the help of an interior designer to make the rooms individual to her. She chose Juliette Byrne because "her personality was

DINING ROOM

Corporate entertaining at home is part and parcel of Alicia and Robert's life so the dining room needed to feel formal, yet stylish. Creamy tones act as a foil for the brilliant yellow in the Chinese robe.

Abyssa dining table from £5,380; Christien L'aigne, 020 7584 5848, christien@aigne.co.uk;
Sedra dining chairs 9617, from £436 each; Apla collection of B&B Italia, 020 7591 5111, bebitalia.com.



BREAKFAST ROOM

Alicia and 20-month-old Alexander in the breakfast room, a bright, comfortable space which is used for everyday living.

Anna table and chairs in beige spray lacquer, Crossweir at Juliette Byrne Associates, 020 7352 4553, juliettebyrne.com. **Lumino light fittings**, Prandina at Mint, 020 7224 4406, mintshop.co.uk. **Banquette**, designed by Juliette and covered in Brasilia in Petunia 4563-04, viscose/linen mix, E45m, Manuel Canovas, 020 7244 7477, manuelcanovas.com.



KITCHEN

The small but modern kitchen was designed as a functional, hard-working space.

Hacker kitchen units with stainless-steel worktop and brushed stainless-steel splashbacks, from £25,000. Alternative Plans, 020 7220 6460, alternative-plans.co.uk

the best fit", she says, adding that she liked her classic-contemporary style and her eye for detail. "She was the right designer to help me achieve the grandeur of a classic mood, mixed with modern pieces and our Chinese art." Robert is a serious collector of 19th-century Chinese emperor dragon robes, Tang and Ming dynasty pottery and Chinese rank badges, so the brief was to showcase the collections, while creating a family home.

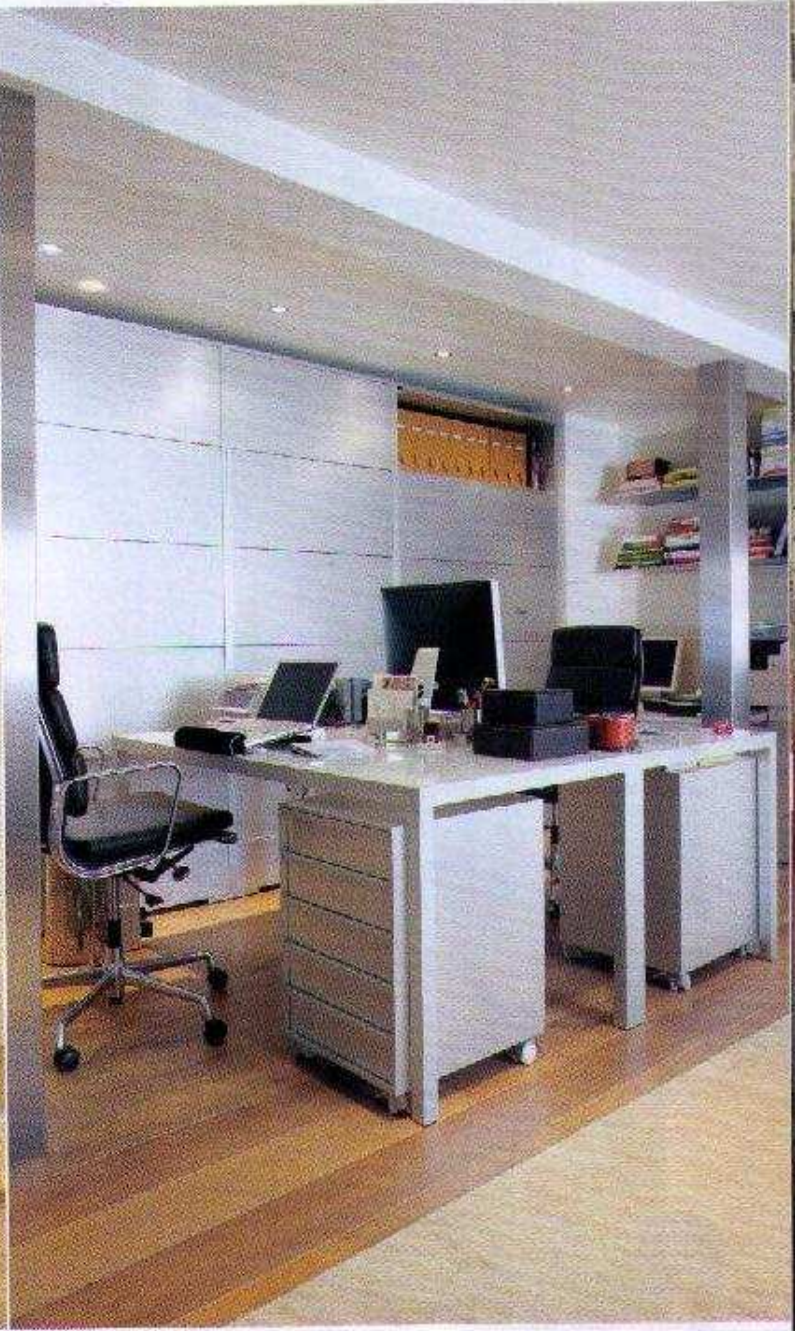
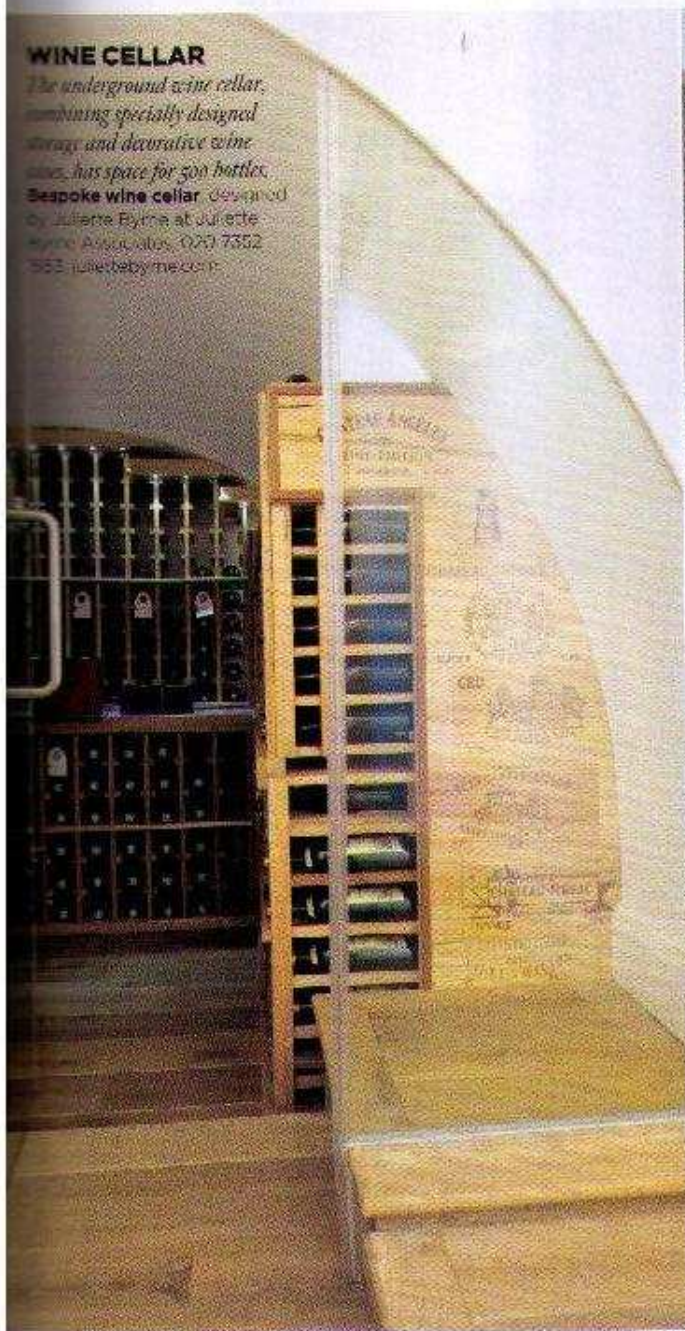
The house sprawls over five floors but has very little space outside, so Juliette called in a garden designer at a very early

stage, to create a roof terrace that would take advantage of the stunning views of Regent's Park. "We use it constantly for entertaining in the summer," says Alicia.

Thereafter, owner and interior designer turned their attention to the rooms. One of the first decisions was to paint all the walls a soft beige. "The artwork and textiles are so beautiful we wanted a scheme that would complement, not dominate them," explains Juliette. The colour helps to create a sense of tranquil uniformity, but it also plays up the luminous quality of the light that fills the

WINE CELLAR

The underground wine cellar, combining specially designed storage and decorative wine racks, has space for 500 bottles. Bespoke wine cellar, designed by Juliette Byrne at Juliette Byrne Associates, 020 7352 5533 juliettebyrne.co.uk



house. Tones of lipstick pink, ochre and aubergine have been used as accent colours throughout, to help give the decorative scheme a young and fun feel.

After creating the right backdrop, Juliette turned her attention to the stylish but secure display demanded by Alicia and Robert's art collection. She answered this need by placing the Tang horses on sleek bronze stands, illuminated by a fibre optic lighting system that keeps heat to a minimum, and hanging the robes in perspex wall cases that show the textiles off to best

effect. "There are light-diffusing muslin roller blinds throughout to prevent direct sunlight damaging the antique textiles," says Juliette.

Alicia is a self-confessed perfectionist, particularly where storage is concerned, so when Juliette commissioned twin armoires for the dining room, Alicia counted and measured every single plate and glass to ensure a perfect fit. "Robert wanted the same architectural signature throughout, so the storage is similar in every room," she adds. To counterbalance the symmetry, there are bold lighting choices: in the dining room, for

HOME OFFICE

Located in the basement, this room was designed to be utilitarian and sleek, with wall-to-wall storage to conceal clutter and a twin desk.

Aluminium-finish twin desk, from £1,777, and **filing cabinets**, from £1,173, all Bruno Fattorini; **Newcase modular storage system**, from £4,063 for six units, F. Bertoni and B. Fattorini; all MDF Italia at Viaduct, 020 7278 8456, viaduct.co.uk.

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MAIN BATHROOM

Built-in storage below the double-width vanity unit maximises space.

Taps and basins, price on application, Philippe Starck at West One Bathrooms, 020 7720 9333, westonebathrooms.co.uk. **Towels and leather boxes,** Cult at Harvey Nichols, 020 7235 5000, harveynichols.com.



GIRL'S BEDROOM

A custom-made desk and shelving cater for teenage paraphernalia, while deep pinks are invigorating yet feminine.

Catifa chair, price on application, Byron Associates, 020 7232 1511, byronbyrne.com.

example, a giant modern chandelier hovers over the table. "The house is listed, so we couldn't install downlights," says Juliette. Instead, chandeliers, wall lights and LED lighting in bookcases illuminate the spaces.

As well as precision and continuity, this is a house in which each floor has its own personality. The first-floor main bedroom and bathroom, with their sleek storage and vintage Louis Vuitton trunks, are personal

spaces for Alicia and Robert. By contrast, the basement home office is where everyone can work and the children can watch television. With Alicia expecting a new baby, Juliette has been commissioned to create a basement extension of two bedrooms and bathrooms for the teenage girls. "We've transformed this house with a view to staying a very long time," Alicia says with a smile. As well she might - the results are perfect. ■

MAIN BEDROOM

With its neutral colours and tactile surfaces, Alicia and Robert's bedroom (above) is a grown-up retreat. Cashmere throws, plus leather, wool and linen accessories play up the textural story.

Maxalto bed, from £4,450; **footstool,** from £668, both Apt4 at B&B Italia, 020 7591 8111, bebitalia.com. **Similar cushions** are available at The Monogrammed Linen Shop, 020 7589 4033, monogrammedlinenshop.com.

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