



# LIFE AT THE TOP

With the bedrooms down below and living space up above, Kate and Fraser's reconfigured mews house is both family friendly and strikingly contemporary

Photography/Paul Massey \* Production/Mary Weaver \* Words/Jenny Tucker



## LIVING AREA

'My husband somehow turned into Liberace overnight and picked this completely mad lamp!' says Kate.

**Get the look** This is the Ostrich Feather lamp from A Modern Grand Tour. The vintage leather armchairs are by Paco Rabanne from Valerie Wade. The patchwork rug is from The Rug Company. The Chinese artwork, sourced from 1stdibs.com, is a 19th-century charcoal rubbing on rice paper.



**A** glamorous Tardis. That's the lasting impression you get of Kate and Fraser Anderson's north London mews home. As you walk through its modest entrance hall, there's little more than a discreet stairway to entice you to explore further. But take those few steps upwards and a whole wealth of gorgeousness, plus a surprising amount of space, awaits.

The house is teeming with sharp ideas that maximise its appeal. For example, even though the master bedroom is naturally dark, it has metamorphosed into a sensual boudoir that's so inviting, you might never want to leave. And while the configuration of the house is upside down, with the living area on the top floor, the wall of windows boasts an incredible view of the skyline. And despite there being tons of stairs to deal with – and two small children scurrying around – there is an essential WC on every level. Now that *is* clever!

As Kate remembers, 'The house was a stark white box when we first moved in seven years ago. We loved it, but it was too austere. The most striking feature was the lightwell that ran through each floor at the back of the house and had this incredible living wall of plants. Amazing, but it was so much upkeep. It had to go.'

The couple lived in their home for four years before they even considered making major changes ('As a pair, we tend to think about things for a long time,' says Kate). They also had, as Kate calls it, The Big Stuff to experience – their wedding in 2010 and the arrival of their children. 'Once Niamh was born, we decided to go for it,' she says. 'We'd painted walls here and there, but we were nervous about making significant decisions that might be wrong.'

Kate had heard great things about interior designer Jo Berryman (whose latest home was in the March 2016 issue of *Livingetc*), so she made the call to her office. 'All I had was this funny old scrapbook of design ideas that I'd collected over the years,' says Kate, 'but immediately, Jo seemed to understand the kind of style we wanted. At that point, we'd moved into the empty house next door while the initial structural renovations were under way. I'd put Fergus and Niamh in the same bedroom and they'd never slept better. So I started thinking about converting our basement, which had two bedrooms and two en suites, into one big space for both children. That was the start of it all. But then we loved Jo's ideas so much, it seemed mad not to use her for the rest of the house. My husband was working really long hours, I'd just had a baby and the thought of spending our free Saturdays sourcing lamp shades was unbearable.'

Kate looks back on her 12-month revamp experience as 'the best fun'. Not many renovation veterans can say that. 'It was such a tight, efficient process,' she says. 'We'd be sent three photo choices on everything in order of preference and we'd either agree or ask for more options. Whether it was a paint colour or which bath we wanted, it was a clean, neat way of working.'

The only hiccup along the way occurred while sealing off the lightwell. 'We decided to block off each level with a two-metre insert of reinforced, dark-bronze glass,' says Kate. 'But it was such a precise fit, that as the kitchen section was being positioned into place, it shattered like a car windscreen. We had to wait two months for another piece to be made.'

Yet broken glass aside, what remains is a spectacularly beautiful home that's both comfortable and indulgent. 'When we were discussing ideas for my bedroom, Jo said it would be somewhere so glamorous, I'd want to sit there with a glass of champagne with my friends before going out,' Kate recalls. 'At the time, I'd just had Niamh, I looked like a potato and I thought I'd never go out again. But, you know, she was right. My sister is coming to stay tonight and I bet we'll be in there, on the sofa, having a glass of wine and catching up, while the kids play around us.'

See more of Jo Berryman's work at [joberryman.com](http://joberryman.com)



## HOME PROFILE

**THE OWNERS** Speech therapist Kate Anderson, her husband Fraser, a corporate financier, and their son, Fergus, four, and daughter Niamh, 20 months. **THE PROPERTY** A mews house in north London. In the basement is the children's bedroom, a guest bedroom, shower room and utility room. The upper-ground floor comprises the master bedroom suite. The kitchen-diner, study and another bathroom are on the first floor, while the living area is on the second floor. There's also a roof terrace.



### LIVING AREA

Kate purposely left the windows bare so she can watch the night sky. 'It's amazing seeing the planes fly by,' she says. 'It makes me think about where we might want to go next!' **Get the look** The reupholstered vintage armchair is from Niche.



### DINING AREA

The feature wallpaper is composed of ink blots dropped on to rice paper. **Get the look** This is Porter Teleo's Fluidity wallpaper. The Saarinen dining table and Saarinen Executive armless chairs are by Knoll.





← **LIVING AREA**  
 The huge black and white artwork and Arco floor lamp were left by the previous owners - 'I don't think they could get the painting out when they moved,' says Kate. **Get the look** The sofa is covered in House of Hackney's Palmeral velvet in Midnight/Azure and Midnight/Green. For a swivel glass door like this one, see *Ideas to Steal*.

## HOME TRUTHS

**What's your favourite thing about spring?** The lighter evenings - I love going with the kids to Hampstead Heath just to hang out.  
**And favourite thing to eat?** Chips. Fat ones. With salt and vinegar. On the beach in Scotland.  
**Any rituals that you particularly enjoy?** When we have people to stay, there's always an obligatory silly dance to silly music before bedtime and then a dipped egg in the local café for breakfast the next day.  
**Dog, cat or hamster?** Oh dog! I'm desperate for one. We want a brown cockapoo. That's definitely on the life planner.  
**What are you like first thing in the morning?** Brilliant. I get up really early to have space on my own and then enjoy some quality time with the children.  
**And your last cultural inspiration?** I read a book called *The Bees* by Laline Paull, which I'd thoroughly recommend. I read a lot... I love it.



**KITCHEN**  
 The original units and island were upcycled by respraying the cupboard doors and replacing the worktops with marble. 'This room feels really communal and welcoming,' says Kate. **Get the look** The cabinetry was spray-painted in Farrow & Ball's Oval Room Blue eggshell. The vintage stools are from Ormston Saint. The flagstone floor is by Stone Age.





### FERGUS AND NIAMH'S BEDROOM

The two youngsters share this light-filled space in the basement.

**Get the look** Find similar storage buckets at The Original Canvas Bucket Bag Company.



### MASTER BEDROOM

The wall is covered with a bespoke metallic finish by Jo Berryman Studio in collaboration with Marco Polo Decor.

**Get the look** This is CTO Lighting's Orb pendant. The Platner coffee table is by Warren Platner for Knoll. This is the Shear wall light by Bert Frank.



### MASTER BEDROOM DETAIL

'The signed labels are from wine bottles given to us by our wedding guests,' says Kate.

**Get the look** The glass dome is from London Taxidermy. The metal frame is by Cox & Cox.

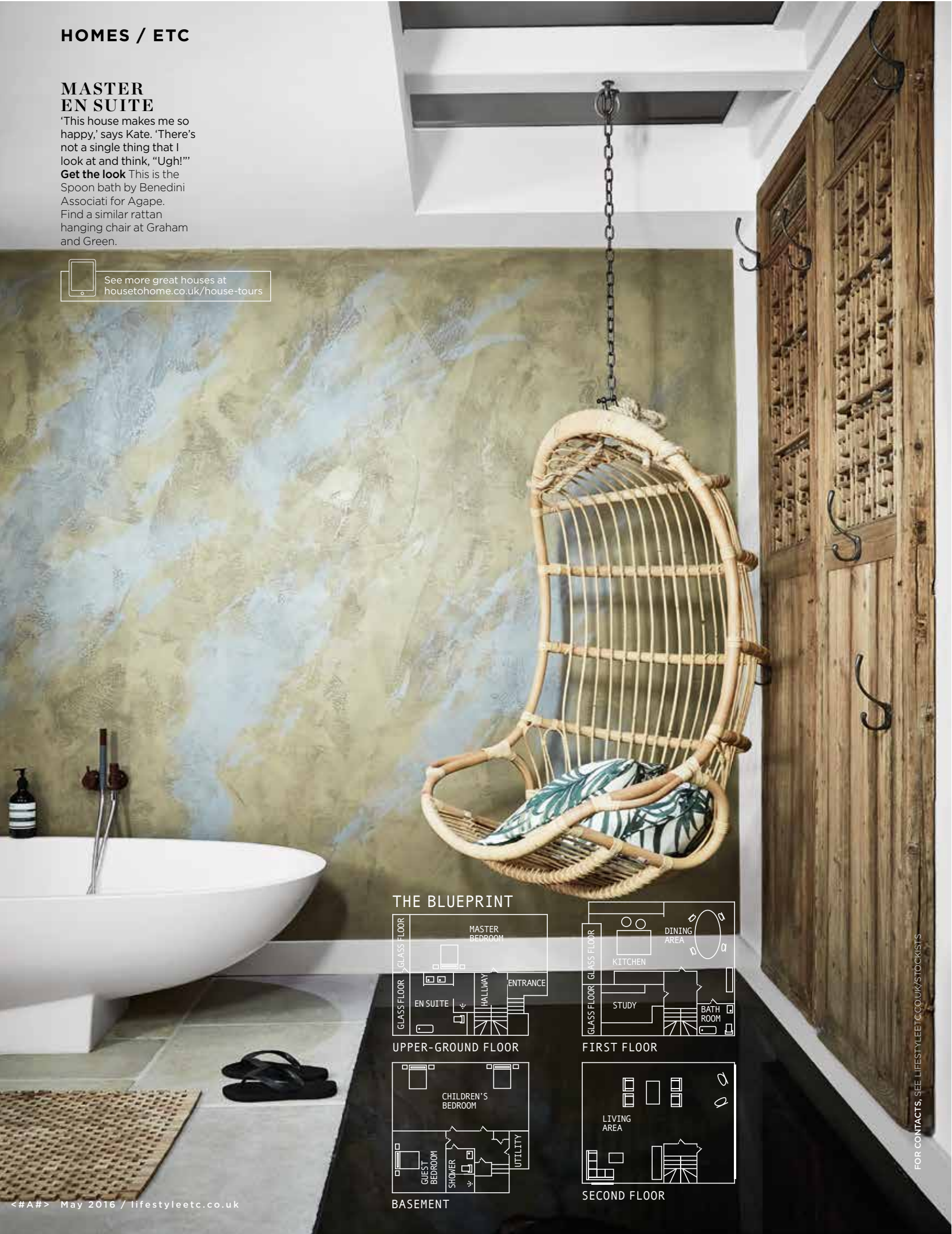


## MASTER EN SUITE

'This house makes me so happy,' says Kate. 'There's not a single thing that I look at and think, "Ugh!"'

**Get the look** This is the Spoon bath by Benedini Associati for Agape. Find a similar rattan hanging chair at Graham and Green.

See more great houses at [housetohome.co.uk/house-tours](http://housetohome.co.uk/house-tours)



### THE BLUEPRINT

