

**HAPPY DAYS** For homeowners Laura, Nic and their sons Lucas, Alfie and Rafferty, this house ticks all the boxes. "Our home has all the space we need for three busy boys and visiting family and friends. I sensed a happy environment the moment I set foot in it and knew we would make lasting memories as a family," says Laura. The generous veranda, that runs the length of the house, can be opened or enclosed with stacking glass doors making it an additional all-weather living space. >

## FABRIC OF LIFE

A CAPE TOWN FAMILY HOME CHANNELS ENGLISH CHARM THROUGH RICH MATERIALITY AND AN ABUNDANT USE OF COLOUR

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STORY COURTESY OF GA INTERIORS



**G**o bold – no-one remembers the grey wall,” advises Laura whose affinity for colour is palpable in her Constantia home in Cape Town, South Africa, which brims with soul. Here, where pattern is revered and tradition respected, rooms spill over with an eclectic and hearty aesthetic. It was on a 2021 holiday that she and her husband Nic half-heartedly viewed a property in a bucolic corner of Constantia and discovered the home they would leave England for. The six-bedroom abode with its large garden and peaceful aura was the epitome of wholesome family living and would serve as a happy base from which to raise their three young boys – Lucas, Alfie and Rafferty.

“You could see that it held amazing memories; all it needed was aligning to my own style,” she recalls. And by that, she means a profusion of traditional patterned textiles and lashings of colour, which make for a spirited marriage. In addition, Laura opted for built-in joinery with decorative profiles, updating the bathrooms and kitchen and generally injecting her trademark soulfulness into the interior. This is a home that embraces you from the get-go, dialling up on comfort, personality and whimsy and nodding to Laura’s British heritage. “Were it not for my husband’s reservations, I’d happily go for top-to-toe chintz,” she quips.

A walk through her home reveals sun-drenched yellow, soft pink, air force blue and apple green. Smuggled over in her shipping container among upholstered antiques, sumptuous sofas and beloved fabrics was a stash of paint tins from the likes of specialists Edward Bulmer and Farrow & Ball. These, she supplemented with bespoke paints from a local paintersmith.

On the ground floor, the main bedroom surveys the lush garden. Over the wall, a verdant greenbelt appears to creep in, the landscaping on their side cleverly blurring the boundary between the two. “It feels like our very own private wine farm,” says Laura. Having come from the countryside in England, the family has succeeded in maintaining a connection to nature. In the living room, Edward Bulmer Invisible Green enlivens the walls and bookshelf. Here, Laura’s treasured skirted sofa – covered in Linwood’s ‘Ashfield’ linen – is paired with a set of Malawi cane tables, resulting in a look that’s unassuming and rich with personality. One of her most cherished pieces of furniture – an antique library chair – reupholstered in a vivacious yellow linen, gets progressively better with age. Flanked by the kitchen on one side and the deep, covered verandah on the other, this axis is a lung for family living, where kids run back and forth from the pool and friends gather for meals on the long verandah.

Traditional English wall and table lamps feature throughout the home, most of them handcrafted by The Little Haus, Laura’s lampshade business. Some marbled, others carefully pleated with vibrant prints and edged with bold colour trims, each one injects a little magic into the space it inhabits, echoing her brand motto of “sparking little moments of joy”. >

**LIBRARY NOOK** Laura turned an awkward nook leading off the living area into a library with the addition of a built-in bookcase. “I am obsessed with green so much so that I have to stop myself from painting everything in various shades of it ... I love how it brings the lush vibrancy of the garden into the house,” says Laura. For a similar pendant light, try the ‘Moravian’ star pendant from The Montauk Lighting Co.





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"I always have my eye out for a good buy ... I recognise the potential for something to take on a new lease of life with a bit of creativity and TLC," says Laura, who upscaled the kitchen's existing chandelier with shades from The Little Haus, [thelittlehaus.co.za](http://thelittlehaus.co.za).

Visit [lawsons.com.au](http://lawsons.com.au) and [dirtyjanes.com](http://dirtyjanes.com) for potential pieces to restyle and refresh.

**KITCHEN** With its gorgeous combination of patterns and colours, the kitchen is a perfect example of Laura's style. Her tip for getting the look is to make bold choices. "I find that the less things match, the more exciting and visually engaging a space is. Create cohesion with the subtle repetition of a unifying element like colour," says Laura. The artworks hanging above the bench seat near the window are a mix of works inherited by Laura from her grandmother and prints found at markets and reframed. For similar island bench seating, try the 'Cayman' rattan counter stool from Living Styles. >

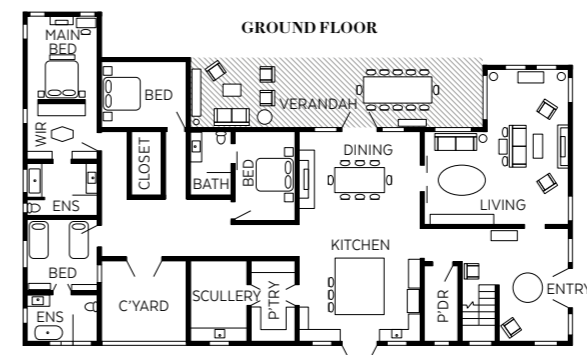


ARTWORKS UNKNOWN ARTS





FLOOR PLAN



ARTWORKS UNKNOWN ARTISTS

**DINING** A view from the dining space (opposite) into the library area of the living room captures a pleasing corner featuring shades of green, including one of Laura's lampshades made from a vintage sari sourced in Jaipur, India. **LIBRARY** The library wall lights (above left) showcase Laura's ever-expanding range of petite lampshades. **LIVING ROOM** "Spending time in the living area brings me so much joy," says Laura of this special room (above right). "It contains all my favourite furniture, which I have collected over the years and, in winter, it's the cosiest spot in our house." >





**ALFIE'S BATHROOM** A lively shade of green paint was chosen for Alfie's bathroom (top left). **BEDROOM** For many of the bedrooms (top right), Laura chose natural floor coverings for durability and texture. **MAIN BEDROOM** Laura is planning to replace the existing curtains in the main bedroom (above left) with ones in Penny Morrison 'Vine Flower' fabric. **GUEST BATHROOM** The tiles chosen for the guest bathroom were inspired by the handpainted tiles found in Portugal. For similar tiles, see the selection at Aeria Country Floors. **ALFIE'S BEDROOM** "I had such fun playing with pattern and colour in each of my sons' bedrooms. When I found this gorgeous red-and-white gingham, I just knew I had to paint the walls a shade of green," says Laura of Alfie's bedroom (opposite). The print of a *Tintin* book cover was a housewarming gift from a friend. >



ARTWORK: UNKNOWN ARTIST





**Source book**

*Booking details:* The home is available for holiday stays twice a year. See Villa Badgenore on Cape Concierge, [capeconcierge.co.za](http://capeconcierge.co.za).

**VERANDAH** "I used a lot of rattan pieces to put an earthy, African spin on my traditional English style," says Laura. "We use the verandah throughout the year as a family and when we entertain." For similar chairs, try the 'Evora' outdoor setting from Domayne.



**INSIDE STORY**  
*Laura & Nic's home*

**Who lives here?**

Laura, founder of The Little Haus, a handcrafted lamps business, her husband Nic, who works for a surf brand, and their children Lucas, 9, Alfie, 6, and Rafferty, 3; plus Marnie, the cavapoo.

**Best decorating decision?**

Laura: "Renovating the kitchen. We opened the space up ... and anchored it with a massive island that we love coming together around as a family when we cook."

**Kitchen must-haves?**

"I couldn't live without my Thermomix."

**Any lighting tips?**

"I love using lamps in a kitchen to soften the overhead lighting. Just one lamp can make the difference between the kitchen feeling like an ice rink or a warm and welcoming space."



1. Laura designed the headboard in Rafferty's room, which is upholstered in Ottoline 'Improvisation 1' fabric.
2. Laura outside her stunning home.
3. The butler's sink is dressed with a charming floral fabric skirt.
4. "Painting large rooms in strong colours can be so daunting but I have personally never regretted it," says Laura, of the living room wall colour.
5. An inviting bench makes for a pretty pause area in a corner of the kitchen.
6. The garden offers spectacular views of Table Mountain.
7. The dining area illustrates Laura's penchant for combining textures, furniture styles and pattern.

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