

Good Homes

THE COLOUR ISSUE

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‘I wanted to create a hideaway’

Set in a quaint Cornish hamlet, Sarah Stanley's bespoke two-bedroom cabin provides an oasis of calm with an Antipodean feel

Words **NATALIE OSBORN** Photographer **COLIN POOLE**

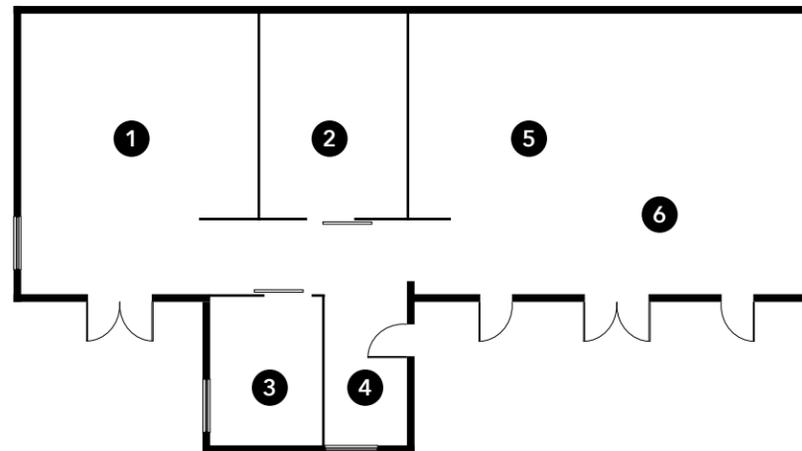
Living area 'While it's a really light-filled space during the day, I planned layers of subtle lighting so that after dark it feels cosy and cocooning,' Sarah says. Industrial-style wall lighting provides a softening base, accented by candlelight and the glowing logburner in the heart of the room





Take a tour...

- 1 Bedroom 2 Bathroom 3 Bedroom
4 Hallway 5 Kitchen 6 Dining-living area



Step inside...

Meet the owners

Sarah Stanley, founder of Unique Home Stays, and partner Andy Davey

House details

The Cotton Tree, a two-bedroom cabin used as a family bolthole and holiday let in Tresean

Facts & figures

The property was bought for £250,000, and the plot for the cabin cost £45,000. The cabin is now valued at £390,000

When Sarah Stanley and her partner Andy got the keys to a higgledy-piggledy cottage just a short stroll from the Cornish coastline, it was the expansive garden plot that captured their imagination. 'We wanted to build something that would be very different from our home, but still feel in-keeping with the surrounding hamlet,' recalls Sarah. 'It needed to be somewhere that could be rented out as a holiday let, but also a bolthole for us, too. Our house is adjacent to my office, whereas The Cotton Tree is around a 20-minute drive away; so heading there for a weekend allows me to leave work behind.'

Sarah lived in Australia while her three now grown-up children were toddlers, so she took a lot of inspiration for the design from the country's Queenslander-style >

> *Dining area* A large cable drum topped with a glass top makes the perfect small-space dining table for the open-plan living area of The Cotton Tree. French doors lead out to the veranda, which wraps around the cabin





▲ *Kitchen* Sitting in an L-shape, the kitchen doesn't impose into the living area and rather acts as a stunning showcase of bespoke furniture, from the timber cladding to the grey-washed cabinetry, that doubles as a workspace. 'I actually found the doors for the top cupboard at a reclamation yard for just £40,' says Sarah. 'They've turned out to be a real feature.'

► *Hallway* A peg rail provides ample storage to free floor space, as well as a showcase for characterful nautical finds

properties, with their large wrap-around verandas, corrugated iron roofs and sleek timber cladding. 'I wanted to encourage more indoor/outdoor living, which is typical of the Antipodean way of life, although obviously we're not as blessed with sunshine in this country as Australia is!' she says.

Painted crisp white and with a simple geometric design, its quiet style continues inside. 'We wanted the interior to feel very calm – a space that was pared-back and relaxing to be in, yet equally cosy in winter.' An Esse Lionheart woodburner is the central point to the open-plan kitchen-living-dining area, which soars through the double-height space and draws the eye up to the large picture window that steals a slice of the Cornish sky. An exposed stud wall creates display nooks for vintage trinkets, as well as disguising the TV behind clad doors. 'Building from scratch meant we could incorporate these little details that make all the difference, including underfloor heating, so we didn't have to worry about radiators and could really free the layout up.' 'I wanted to create light-filled spaces with a bohemian edge,' Sarah continues. 'Natural linens sit well alongside reclaimed wood and nautical-inspired finds that reflect the seaside location.' The kitchen is undoubtedly one of the showpieces of the design. ►



EASY PROJECT

Create a sense of cohesion in your kitchen by matching your worktop to your shelving. For a similar effect to quartz, look at Ikea's Lack designs, which can even be wrapped with adhesive vinyl (see B&Q) to match marble surfaces. Try to match the thickness of the worktop for a streamlined effect



featuring yet more wood – but with a washed grey tone that complements the warmer wall cladding. ‘I opted from reclaimed doors with a simple quartz worktop for a timeless look that’s also hardwearing,’ she explains.

Sarah’s carpenters had their work cut out, as in the main bedroom she called on their skills yet again. ‘The bed base is made from reclaimed wood and then we used bamboo to create a simple headboard, which I draped with fine linen.’ A vintage sliding door is a chic space-saving addition and reveals a wall of storage, stopping short of the ceiling to create a feature ledge.

In the bathroom, geometric tiles travel from floor to ceiling, and frame two traditional-style showers. ‘My thinking behind this room was that we needed somewhere to relax in after a day ▶

▶ *Bedroom* Texture comes to the fore with draped linens, woven cushions and a macramé wall hanging. ‘We opted for one striking piece of artwork so as not to clutter the space,’ says Sarah. Vintage lobster pots and buoys add visual interest



Hide roller blinds Conceal the functionality of a roller blind with draped fabric. Recreate Sarah’s look using a length of bamboo as a curtain rail, then hand-stitch ties onto linen squares before tying to the bamboo. Affording an informal look and feel, the linen is purely decorative.





‘After a day of stomping the coastal path, this bathroom is such a relaxing, indulgent space’

◀ *Roll-top bath* Instead of mounting the taps onto the timber-clad wall of the bathroom, which could get wet and rot, Sarah savvily chose to fit her taps to the inside of the bath instead

▼ *Reclaimed finds* Continuing the rustic nautical theme, a weathered porthole has been transformed into a vanity mirror, above a butler-style basin



► *Bathroom* Making the most of the large space, two vintage-style showers offer pared-back luxury, and clever use on one wall of geometric monochrome tiling from Mandarin Stone seamlessly flows into the flooring for a wet-room effect

of stomping the coastal path,’ she says. ‘The bath was a reclamation yard find, which we had re-enamelled, and pairs really well with the high-level toilet cistern and vintage taps. The cabinet in here was made on site by our very hard-working carpenters.’

After a two-year build, Sarah has one piece of advice to share with homeowners eyeing up their garden for a hideaway of their own: ‘Work with a team who understand that certain features will evolve as the build progresses,’ she says. ‘While the essence of the cabin didn’t migrate too broadly from the original design, lots of the finer details did. But I’m glad I made those tweaks, as I’m so happy with how it’s turned out. Saying that, more kitchen storage would be handy!’ 🍷

