

PLAIN SAILING

Fulfilling his dream of living by the water, David Rothman found a riverside cottage and refreshed the interior with a nod to the nautical



Dining room

An antique model boat is one of David's treasured pieces bought locally. Batela Giftware sells **model boats**. **Lamps**, John Lewis & Partners. **Console table**, Oka

Hall

From the hall, the door opens to wonderful views of the river. Oak **console table**; **lamp**; **umbrella basket**, all Oka. Checked flatweave **rug**, Rugs Direct



Kitchen

An all-white scheme provides a serene backdrop for artwork.

Cabinetry, Neptune.
Butler sink, Butler & Rose



AT HOME WITH

Owners David Rothman, an engineer, and his partner Lesley Hepher, a personal trainer, and their two golden labrador retrievers, Henry and Archie.

House A 19th-century, three-bedroom fisherman's cottage. They bought the house in 2014.

This is a magical spot where you can relax and lose all sense of time,' says David Rothman as he leans over the half stable door of his fisherman's cottage to chat to passing neighbours and watch the boats sail by. 'The Yealm estuary in Devon has always been a desirable haven for artists, yachtsmen and families escaping the city in search of boating holidays.'

David was brought up in Plymouth and his love affair with this area goes back as far as his childhood. 'As a boy, I tried to get my parents to move here but unfortunately only I made it,' he says.

When David, a keen kayaker, first saw this riverside gem, with its private mooring and garden sloping down to the water's edge, he realised he had found the escape he had always wanted. Creating a true connection between the cottage and its waterside setting was a priority, so the back garden was first on David's agenda. By carving flat areas into the slope, he created three terraces on different levels, one for sunbathing and the others for eating outdoors.

The previous owner had already extended the cottage kitchen at the rear, adding a bedroom above. Her additions were executed to an impeccably high standard but the style was too stark for David's liking. He contacted Paul Hervey, a local interior designer. 'I >

“ PAINTINGS, CUSHIONS, QUIRKY VINTAGE FINDS AND MARINE ACCESSORIES POP WITH COLOUR AGAINST ALL-WHITE WALLS ”



Dining room

Natural wood furniture introduces a traditional look and matches the natural oak floor. Sennin table, Sustainable Furniture. For similar spindle-back dining chairs, try La Redoute



Living room

Paintings of seascapes add to the room's breezy seaside character. Navy Provence rug; Cobalt diamond blanket both Weaver Green



Living room

Driftwood planks add natural texture and robust character to this wall. For distressed oak finish planks, try Victorian Plumbing. Blue blanket, Weaver Green. Patterned ikat cushions, Rosanna Lonsdale

rang him when one of the bathrooms sprung a leak and suddenly there was a new bathroom to design and a lot more besides,' he says.

David's brief to Paul was for restful yet characterful interiors brought alive with paintings, textiles and vintage pieces. 'As the cottage sits on the water I felt tempted to invest in one or two antique model boats,' David says, recalling happy days browsing antiques shops around Plymouth. Unique pieces of coral, found in an art gallery, make an impact in the hall, while old oars discovered languishing in a local boatyard now hang in one of the guest bedrooms.

'We were careful to edit our choice of marine accessories,' says David. 'It's easy to get carried away and buy endless models of lighthouses or seagulls. However, I've always been a fan of blue and white as a colour combination - it's fresh and timeless.'

In David's opinion, lining one of the walls in the living room with horizontal driftwood planks was one of Paul's most inspired design decisions. 'It set the natural tone for the rest of the house, echoed in our choice of wooden furniture and floors,' he says. 'It's a tried-and-tested way to give a house that robust rural quality that we felt would be akin to the original style of the fisherman's cottage.'

The same planks have been used to line the walls on the inside of the old boathouse sited in the lower >



Living room

The built-in bay window seat is a perfect place to sit and dream. Folding table stool, Chic Teak. Curtain fabric, William Yeoward. Cushions covered in Ian Mankin striped fabric.

Guest bedroom

American-style flag cushions and blue bedspreads echo the blue-and-white marine theme. **Bedside lamps;** Blue **bedspread**, both Ralph Lauren



ON OUR DOORSTEP

Visit... 'Coleton Fishacre (nationaltrust.org.uk) is a National Trust house known for its 1920s Art Deco style interiors. It has intimate proportions with a lovely garden stretching down to its own private beach.'

Shop at... 'The General Store (01548 853145) in Kingsbridge is famous for beautiful unique homeware, organic body washes, biscuit tins and hand-poured scented candles, and is a great place to find unusual presents.'

Go for a meal at... 'The Ship Inn (nossmayo.com) at Noss Mayo serves the best food in the area (roast lamb is a speciality) and it is irresistibly sited right on the waterfront.'

garden. Filled with old gardening tools and junk, Paul took this room in hand, turning it into a snug/party space. The walls were painted in an off-white wash, which allows the texture of the wood grain to show through, as well as lightening the space.' Furnished with rattan armchairs and wicker tables it has 'an iconic, timeless beach style synonymous with the Bahamas and cafes in the South of France,' says Paul. 'It's a look that David likes. This room is a favourite place to sit and relax, chat and listen to music.'

With a plethora of artists living and working locally, the cottage is not short of artwork. 'David was adamant about not wanting any stark empty walls,' says Paul. 'It was part of his brief to me. I think we chose well but nothing rivals the actual river view, which is a work of art in its own right.' And that is why the built-in window seats were so crucial to the enjoyment of the cottage. 'Friends and visitors spend a lot of time daydreaming, watching passing boats and water activities,' says Paul. 'It is a tonic for those in need of relaxation.'

'I wish I could add a funny story about getting stuck in the mud in a kayak at low tide but it never happens,' says David. 'This is one of those rare places where everything runs smoothly. It is the nearest thing to heaven on earth.'

The cottage is available to rent through uniquehomestays.com under the name Beauport.

Exterior

The cottage is divided from the riverside front garden by a wide path. The tongue-and-groove front door was painted in Portland Stone, Little Greene



VIRGINIA
COTTAGE



Hall

A console table makes a focal point. Oak console table, lamp, both Oka. Letters, Graham Sweet Studios

“LIVING BY THE WATER IS LIKE LIVING IN FRONT OF A MOVING PAINTING”

Twin guest room

A pair of old oars help create a feature wall. Leather cabin trunk, Trouva. Checked blankets, Ralph Lauren. Headboards, PHI Concepts

