

Living room
Jessica has conjured
up a relaxed yet
sophisticated festive
feel. Lampshade,
fooky, Lamp base,
India Jane. Coffee
table, console,
rug, all Oka.



Room to breathe

JESSICA HENDERSON HAS GIVEN AN UNLOVED RECTORY A NEW LEASE OF LIFE AS THE PERFECT HOME FOR HER GROWING YOUNG FAMILY



Living room A roaring
fire welcomes guests
at Christmas. Fender,
similar from Acres Farm;
Basket, similar from
Katie Jane Home. >



House An orange-studded wreath adorns the front door. Christmas wreath, The Garden Room.



Jessica enjoys the Christmas preparations with Farleigh and Phoenix.



AT HOME WITH...

Owners Jewellery designer Jessica Henderson (jessicanaylorforleyland.com) and her entrepreneur husband Charlie. They live here with their two children, Farleigh, three, and Phoenix, one.

House Six-bedroom Regency rectory, built in 1829. The family have owned it since 2016.

Kent, the garden of England, is magical in wintertime. Hedgerows sparkle with an icy glaze and the low sun skims the frosty fields. It's easy to understand why the Hendersons fell under its spell: Jessica grew up in rural France, then lived in London for years, but always yearned for a return to the country.

'In January 2016, my husband Charlie spotted a former rectory in the Kent countryside on a property website,' says Jessica. 'We drove down as soon as we could and fell in love with the feel of it. I had been longing for a more outdoor lifestyle for the children, to be able to just open the back door and let them roam without having to walk to a park.'

The house ticked all the boxes, with its large garden complete with woodland and orchard. What's more, it's only a short drive to the high-speed London train link at Ashford, meaning that Charlie could easily commute. 'We went and had lunch in the cosy local pub and put an offer in on our way back to London.'

Fast forward two months, when son Phoenix was just four weeks old and daughter Farleigh was 18 months, and the family upped sticks from their small west London flat and moved into their new home, which required an overhaul. 'It had been on the market for a while, but no one else wanted to take on such a big decorating project,' says Jessica. She and Charlie realised that a large amount of work would be necessary to restore it to »



What we love most about living here...
 'The conservatory, which is a magical place to sit with the trees all around'

Conservatory This light-filled space is perfect for a big family Christmas lunch. Table, Eastburn Country Furniture. Chairs, Hicks & Hicks.

Kitchen Jessica opted for a country vibe, with an antique pine dresser and traditional cupboards. **Units, Wren Kitchens. Wicker pendants, Maisons du Monde.**



What makes this house a home...

'We have so much more room to breathe than we did in London, and I've really been able to put my stamp on the house'



Kitchen A native American headdress makes a striking focal point. **Headdress, Jessie Western.**



Hallway The house's wonderful proportions are evident immediately on entering. **Wallpaper, Lewis & Wood. Rug, 18 The High Street.**

its former glory, so the couple enlisted the help of local tradesmen to redecorate the house entirely, the lion's share of which was completed by husband-and-wife team Me & Mrs Jones.

Jessica opted for a classic scheme with a twist. The muted and calm wall tones show off the architectural details while colour has been added with jewel-bright rugs in blues and reds covering the wooden floors, as well as patterned wallpapers and fabrics. The huge windows allow light to flood in, offering views of the verdant surroundings. Jessica has sourced vintage pieces from bric-a-brac stores and markets, and the result is utterly charming.

Living in the house while the work was done was certainly tough at times, but the hardship was worthwhile and the children are now relishing their new life in the country. What's more, the property's generous proportions are soon to prove particularly useful because Jessica is expecting twins to join Farleigh and Phoenix. 'It's going to be the biggest challenge yet!'

The house is also perfect for a traditional Christmas. Jessica has gathered some beautiful decorations from her travels, including colourful baubles from Guatemala and pewter ones from Bruges. 'I love the build-up to Christmas Day,' she says. 'Farleigh enjoys going through my cookbooks sitting at the island while Phoenix watches me cook. We also make a little Advent tree, hanging sweets on twigs arranged in a flower pot. The only trouble is, Charlie always pinches one on his way out in the morning!' »



Bathroom Jessica had the original cast-iron bath re-enamelled and the floor underneath it reinforced. **Bath, similar from Drummonds. Rug, Weaver Green. Mirror, The White Company.**

Guest bedroom Mirrored accessories and an inviting velvet upholstered bed give this room an elegant and welcoming feel. **Bed**, Graham & Green. **Side table**, similar from Alexander & Pearl. **Lamp**, Pooky.



ON OUR DOORSTEP...

Visit... 'The Rare Breeds Centre (01233 861493, rarebreeds.org.uk), an animal farm in Woodchurch. The children absolutely love it.'
Shop at... 'Silcocks Farm Shop (01580 763351, silcocksfarm-organics.co.uk) in

Tenterden. It's a shop and café with wonderful fresh and local produce.'
Go for a meal at... 'The Woolpack (01233 732900, woolpackinnwarehouse.com) in Warehorne. It's the perfect place for a frosty day - delicious food and roaring log fires.'

FEATURE: AMY MARYLENE

Be inspired by Jessica's living room

Place this small but impressive character on your coffee table for a touch of rustic festive charm. **Standing stag**, H21xW17cm, £8, Sainsbury's.



Celebrate the beauty of handwoven imperfections with this Burmese-made textile. **Nini cushion cover**, 50cm sq, £50, Kalinko.



Jessica's style secret

Breathe new life into a classic scheme with calming wall tones offset by colour-pop patterns on accessories and soft furnishings.



Define a large area by laying a feature rug with relaxed stripes in an uplifting, chalky sky-blue hue.



Decisions, decisions... Maybe 'Maybe Maggie' is just the warm, neutral tone you're after? Maybe Maggie, £38 for 2.5L Claypaint, Earthborn Paints.



Switch on with this mini beast-inspired glazed lamp. **Dragonfly ceramic lamp base**, H31xDia28cm, £90, 14in **shade**, £79, both India Jane.

Weathered acacia, parquetry details and elaborately turned legs combine harmoniously on this eye-catching centrepiece. Toulouse **coffee table**, H48xW150xD92cm, £1,375, Oka.

Modern Country Classic Club fender

Every hearth deserves to be framed by a welcoming surround. At this busy time of year when the house is full, toasty extra seating is always handy! Bespoke designs enhance the look of a room while making use

of the space around the fireplace. No matter what the style, designs feature an array of padded-seat options in luxurious finishes, lending an air of grandeur to cosy living room gatherings.

Where to buy...

- **Fiona Wilbraham** for modern and contemporary, bespoke club fender corners.
- **Norfolk Fender Seats** for traditional designs.
- **Rockingham Fender Seats** for handcrafted solutions.



FEATURE: HOLLY PHILLIPS