

# OUT OF TOWNERS

A love affair with London prompted Americans Julia and David to snap up an aunt's mews house when she decided to sell



PHOTOGRAPHY Darren Chung  
WORDS Sharon Smith

## SNUG

This used to be the home's garage. 'The first thing our designer Jenny had to tell me was what a snug is because I didn't know. Now all our American friends who visit go home saying they'll have a snug, too,' says Julia. 'We come in here as a family at Christmas and watch the film *Love Actually*. It's a family tradition because we all love the film; we must have seen it 10 times or so.'

Round **wall cabinet** and **coffee table**, Graham and Green. **Walls** in Cordoba, Little Greene. **Chair**, Robert Langford; covered in a Larsen fabric. Similar vintage **rice basket**, Vinterior. Similar **sheepskins**, John Lewis & Partners

## LIVING ROOM

Julia was initially wary when Jenny suggested breaking up the green with pink and coral. 'I was worried that it would look tropical, which I didn't want. But Jenny said it wouldn't, so I had to trust her on that and she was right.'

**Sofa** and **armchairs**, Designers Guild. **Stools**, Robert Langford; covered in fabric by Rapture & Wright. Spring **pendant light**, Tom Dixon. **Mirror**, Tom Faulkner. Customised **rug**, Jennifer Manners. Mixed media **artwork**, Anna Perlin at Thackeray Gallery. **Sculpture** (on mantelpiece), David Klein. **Walls** in Ulla, Little Greene

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## THE OWNERS

This is the London base for Julia and David Fleischner, who also have homes in Philadelphia and Martha's Vineyard in the US. Julia is chairwoman of Mural Arts Philadelphia, a public art programme. David is executive vice-president at Asplundh Tree Expert. Their daughters, Margaret, 21, and Caroline, 18, are students. Wally, their King Charles spaniel, lives at their Philadelphia home.

## THE PROPERTY

A mews house in west London. On the ground floor is the sitting room, kitchen, courtyard garden, snug and cloakroom. On the first floor are two en-suite bedrooms.





**KITCHEN**  
‘David loves green as well, though he did say, “So, the kitchen’s going to be green too?”; laughs Julia. To Julia’s relief, her concern about having open shelves proved unfounded. ‘I was worried that everyday detritus can look messy, but we curate what we have.’

Bespoke **units**, Huntsmore; painted in Pompeian Ash, Little Greene. Cabinet **handles** and **tap**, Plank Hardware. **Ceiling** in Sage & Onions, Little Greene. **Print** on shelf (top left), Alberto Morrocco at Thackeray Gallery. Flower **artwork** by Judy Buxton



# W

hen David Fleischner's aunt decided to sell her mews house in west London, he and his wife Julia didn't hesitate to buy it. 'David's uncle had died and his aunt was looking to move. She said to us, "I know you both love London, so would you be interested?"' says Julia. The couple had stayed at the house when visiting the UK and immediately said yes. 'A friend wondered why we would want to take it on,' says Julia. 'But it's a house we love and enjoy spending time in. Hotels are lovely, but this feels like home. I'd always thought it had great bones.'

Its location is perfect for the couple and their daughters Margaret, 21, and Caroline, 18, to enjoy the city as well as use it as a base from which to explore Europe. 'My love affair with London began when I came here to study. I love the accessibility to all the art galleries and the museums,' says Julia. David also spent time as a student in London, although the couple met back in the US.

They bought the house in February 2019. The first task, says Julia, was 'out with the beige'. A fan of colour, Julia's vision was very different to the aunt and uncle's penchant for neutrals. The starting point was a green runner by Roger Oates teamed with a Little Greene fern-patterned wallpaper. 'I said to David, "We're going to build the interior around this runner and this wallpaper," and he said, "Really?"' Luckily, he has faith in me.' Julia's plans were thwarted when Covid hit and, unable to fly to London, she asked Jenny Luck Interiors to collaborate on the project. 'A friend recommended Jenny and told me she is brilliant with colours.'

Also using the wallpaper and runner as inspiration, Jenny suggested a mainly green palette. 'I went with green because Julia loves nature and I wanted to bring the outside in,' says Jenny. 'Also, green is very versatile' – as she proves with her eye-catching palette of shades teamed with pink and coral. The secret to getting so many greens to work together lies in selecting complementary tones, she says. 'It's also about the strength of the colours and in what proportions, where and how you use them.'

Julia was keen to fill the house with furniture and artwork by local craftspeople and artists and Jenny proved an invaluable guide to London's galleries. 'The UK has really creative people and art is very important to me,' says Julia. 'I will fill up the house with more artwork over time – it happens organically.'

She now regularly rearranges the rooms around how the light changes through the year. 'When you come in, it's a calm, peaceful sanctuary, she says. 'In the morning, birds are singing and we don't hear the city at all, even though we're just minutes from the shops.' Julia spends as much time as possible in what her daughter calls their 'little jewel box', but says it's not enough. 'If it weren't for our spaniel, Wally, at home in Philadelphia, I'd be here more.'

x

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## HALLWAY

**Julia enjoys the sharp contrast with the adjoining space. 'When you come in, the eye is drawn into the living room, which has a very different feeling and is very calm after the excitement of the wallpaper in the hall.'**

Fern wallpaper,  
Little Greene

## LANDING

'Jenny said, "What about a pop up here?"' says Julia. 'I said, "What kind of pop?"' and she said, "Pink". I was nervous because I wouldn't have thought to put pink there, but I like a moody pink, which is just what this cabinet is. We have used every inch of the space.'

Custom **wall cabinet**, Huntsmore; painted in Hellebore, Little Greene. Similar **pendant light**, Pooky. Fern **wallpaper**, Little Greene



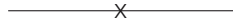


## MAIN BEDROOM

'I love big florals but David wanted a little break from them, so I suggested just putting them in the bedroom,' says Julia. Rather than going all-out, she had the headboard upholstered in a floral print.

**Headboard**, Robert Langford; covered in fabric by Christopher Farr Cloth. **Cushions**, Jenny Luck Interiors. Custom **bedside cabinet**, Huntsmore; **cabinet and walls in** Little Greene's Boringdon Green. **Doo-Wop pendant**, Louis Poulsen

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### MAIN BEDROOM

The antique walnut burr chest of drawers belonged to David's aunt and gives the room a 'soft and homely feel,' says Julia.

Similar antique chest of drawers, 1stDibs. Artwork by Ethel Walker at Thackeray Gallery



### GIRLS' ROOM

'I fell in love with this paper I spotted in the showroom at Little Greene and I kept going back for another look,' says Julia. Jenny matched the colour with a bespoke wardrobe and desk.

Wallpaper, Little Greene. Bespoke wardrobe and desk, Huntsmore; painted in Aquamarine, Little Greene