

DRAWING ROOM As part of the mood-lifting colour palette, the fender around the fire is finished in cheery, gloss pink. **Green sofa and ottoman**, Fermoie. **Patterned sofa** in Pomegranate Sea Holly, Lewis & Wood

CHARACTER DRIVEN

Remodelled online and refurbished offsite, this Tudor farmhouse has been transformed into a vibrant retreat for a fun-loving family

Harriet is from Yorkshire, James is from Suffolk, but they live in Bermuda. Life there is good, but during Covid, both came to realise just how much they missed family back home, and how deeply entrenched their roots were here. 'We hatched a plan to find a home-from-home in the UK, to return to whenever possible,' explains Harriet.

In search of muddy dog walks and all-day fishing trips, their pin dropped in the Suffolk village of Pettistree. 'James grew up close by,' says Harriet. 'It's got the lot in terms of rural charms – a 13th-century church, a village green, an award-winning pub. There are even bell ringers!'

The dilapidated Tudor farmhouse they'd bought was, however, a challenge. Harriet was managing the project online from Bermuda, using a local Suffolk architecture firm. At the point where the building work was complete enough to think about decorating, she cajoled interior designer, Sean Symington, to step in.

'He was a hard nut to crack. He's based in the West, the house was in the East, so the journey time was horrendous. But he agreed to do a consultation, despite there being no one to show him around. He called later and said, "If you let me gather and store everything here in Bath, then allow me to fit it in one go, I'll do it." I was relieved and delighted.'

Despite already having been fully renovated, the house was rather bland at that point, with white walls and oak flooring. 'We did a full-on finishing off job,' says Sean. 'Harriet wanted warmth, colour and cosiness. Her brief was, "fresh for summer, but cosy enough for the winter. Not too velvety and pub-like, but still

multi-layered – a look to work in all seasons". So the vision was to create a classic feel without stuffy formality, lifting the heavy woodwork and original beams with vibrant colours and charming patterns that bring a sense of joy and warmth.'

Sean describes the old house as 'thrillingly higgledy-piggledy' – from the drawing room to the kitchen is probably a five-minute walk down some stairs, through four rooms, then round a couple of corners. It's not practical but it is so, so charming.' And in need of many crafty design solutions. The sitting room, for example, has a scheme of teal blue, green and yellow, with intentionally uneven design elements to create a space that feels as if it has evolved naturally over time.

Green and raspberry – Harriet's favourite shades – weave their way through nearly every room, scores of fabrics and prints whisper bold design confidence, while a mix of 'old-fashioned' brown furniture and the occasional contemporary piece lands on just the right side of eclectic.

'Pops of colour, a bit of gloss, some fun stripes – these are the things that ensure a traditional property still brings the zing,' says Sean. 'We did the install in one very long day, during a heatwave in July. It's not the conventional way to decorate a house, but I'm delighted to say, it worked!'

AT HOME WITH

OWNERS Harriet and James Coles, and their young son, Bertie, live here when they are in the UK.

HOUSE A Tudor farmhouse, comprising a front entry hall-cum-library, drawing room, snug, dining room, a bedroom suite with dressing room, son's bedroom with en suite and three guest rooms.



DRAWING ROOM Harriet didn't want a matchy-matchy scheme. Instead, a fresh but still layered look works for all seasons. **Rug**, Dunelm. **Sofa and ottoman**, Fermoir. **Ceramic side table**, Wayfair.

‘It’s rich with character and warmth, and the slightly over-the-top styling allows each room to flow seamlessly into the next’



LIBRARY Sean designed the joinery in the entrance hall, creating a capacious library. Curtain fabric, GP&J Baker. Floor lamp, Pooky. Lampshade, Penny Morrison. Small bamboo table, Vinterior

SNUG Pastel shades lifted from the rug are echoed throughout the room, appearing in art, accents and paint, delivering a fresh and cohesive scheme. Rug, Etsy. Table lamp, Oka. Lampshade, Fenella Designs

CLOAKROOM A clean, minimal scheme allows the colours and tiles to take centre stage, resulting in an uplifting space that seamlessly links to the rest of the house. Tiles, Bert & May. Basin, Healey & Lord

SNUG Sean trawled eBay and antiques shops for just the right ‘brown furniture’ such as the side tables, to offset the bold colour scheme. Sofa and armchair, sofa.com. Curtains, GP&J Baker. Ottoman, Isabelle Baldwin



DINING ROOM Soft floral prints complement the hand-painted wall mural. Hampton chandelier, Visual Comfort. Mia dining chairs, Dining Chair Co, upholstered in Tilly Soft Red, GP&J Baker

HARRIET'S COUNTRY LIFE

SIMPLE PLEASURES 'Living mainly overseas in a busy urban environment, the farmhouse allows us to shake all that off and connect with nature.'

FAVOURITE VIEW 'When we're in the drawing room, with its windows on either side, there's a sense of being enveloped by nature, especially when the trees change colours in the autumn. It's my go-to spot for relaxation.'

SHOP AT 'Gallery East (galleryeast.co.uk) showcases established and new artists. We love their focus on local talent.'

EAT AT 'The Greyhound Inn (greyhoundpettistree.co.uk). Cosy and great for family and friends time. The seasonal menus keep us coming back. Definitely our go-to for the first night we arrive home.'



BERTIE'S ROOM In the eaves of the house, eau de nil walls are brought to life with cushions and upholstery in a charming jungle print. **Bedside table**, Georgie Wykeham. **La Jungle curtain fabric**, Christopher Farr

MAIN BEDROOM Bold **fabrics** and **wallpaper** choices bring colour and warmth to the main bedroom. scheme Green and white **valance** and **cushion fabric**, Thibaut. **Table lamp shades**, Fermeo

MAIN BEDROOM Old and new work well in close quarters. Here, a brown chest of drawers with a classic stripe chaise and bobbin lamp prove the point. **Rattan mirror**, Mahe Homeware, **Chest of drawers**, SSD Ltd

GUEST BEDROOM An inexpensive divan bed has been elevated with an upholstered wavy headboard. **Divan base**, Dunelm. **Headboard fabric**, GP&J Baker. **Table lamp**, Pooky. **Lampshades**, Alice Palmer

SUFFOLK FARMHOUSE

BEDROOM Gingham, stripes and florals in a red, white and blue scheme make the spare twin bedroom a cheery spot for guests. Rattan mirror, Mahe Homeware. Lampshade, Matilda Goad

