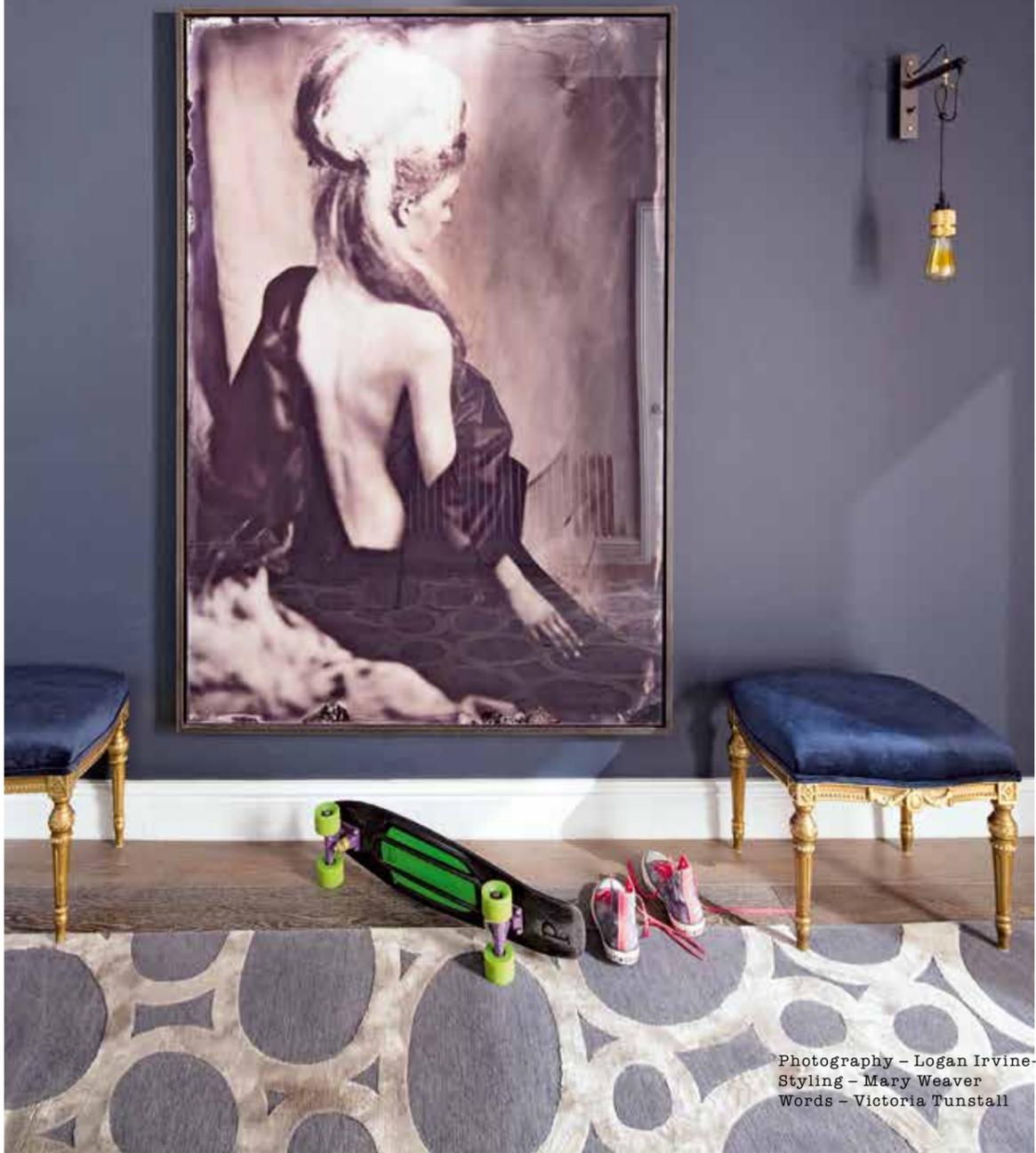


MAXING *out*

With drama in her design DNA and a bucketful of smart decorating tricks, it's no surprise Veronica's once 'long and thin' semi is now a super-roomy, stylish family pad



Photography – Logan Irvine-MacDougall
Styling – Mary Weaver
Words – Victoria Tunstall



← **BASEMENT HALL**

'I decided to go really dark on the walls – it's often better to go dark than to try to lighten up a space that will never be that light in the first place,' says Veronica.
GET THE LOOK The wall is painted in Farrow & Ball's Pavilion Gray estate emulsion. The photograph by Igor Vasiladis is from the Lionel Gallery in Amsterdam. The footstools are from Ardingly International Antiques & Collectors Fair and were re-covered in Nuit velvet by Christian Lacroix. This is the Silver Rings rug by David Rockwell for The Rug Company.

Home profile

THE OWNERS Veronica Lucey, an interior designer, and her children Charlie, 18, Harry, 16, and Ella, 13. Plus Zola the Labrador.

THE PROPERTY A semi-detached Victorian house in southwest London. The ground floor has a reception room, kitchen-diner and cloakroom. The master bedroom suite and Charlie's bedroom suite are on the first floor. There are a further three bedrooms, a bathroom and an office on the second floor. Down in the basement there is a media room, guest bedroom and bathroom.

MEDIA ROOM

'The kids love to bring all their friends down here and hang out. I don't crowd their space and they don't crowd mine,' says Veronica.
GET THE LOOK The cabinetry is a bespoke design by Veronica's interior design company MagentaPink Interiors. This is the Long Island sofa by sofa.com. The Moon Pebble coffee table is by Ochre. The Meurice wall sconce is by Jonathan Adler and the floor standing light, leaning over the sofa, is from Mr Resistor.

DINING AREA

'My glass doors go from floor to ceiling and are as wide as possible. So in the summer, the kitchen really does feel like part of the garden,' says Veronica. **GET THE LOOK** The Konstantine dining table is from Living Space. These are Hans J Wegner's Wishbone chairs for Carl Hansen & Søn from The Conran Shop. The Parker wall sconces and white vases are by Jonathan Adler. The painting is by Ray Caesar.

KITCHEN →

The kitchen sink, built into a recess, keeps the island clutter free... and dry! **GET THE LOOK** The kitchen units were designed and made by Meson's. The Wrong for Hay Revolver bar stools came from The Conran Shop. The Newgate kitchen clock is from Occa-Home. The Stanley pendant light is by Original BTC.



Don't cramp my style, Mum!



It's an often-heard cry in a home with three teenage children – but not in Veronica Lucey's southwest London Victorian semi. Thanks to a major overhaul 18 months ago, the house has morphed into a serene and elegant home that gives everyone room to breathe. 'We've now got a massive basement, which we use as a movie-cum-music room, where the kids entertain their friends,' says Veronica. Lucky them – they also have spacious bedrooms and Charlie the eldest has his own en suite.

It wasn't always this way. Veronica lived in the house for 20 years before attempting any major renovation. 'I was working full time in advertising and raising three children, so although I dreamt of making massive changes, the reality of doing so was fairly far off my radar,' she says.

Fast-forward to a change of career, where Veronica swapped working in the media for interior design and a revamp of the house became a top priority. She set up Magentapink Interiors and worked on a few small projects before tackling her own. 'This house was my first major project – so now I've had the experience of being both client and contractor – an interesting learning curve!' says Veronica.

Creating a sense of space and drama was Veronica's key objective. 'These Victorian semis are long and thin, so I wanted to create the illusion that it was wider and grander than it actually is,' she says. Clever tricks included installing double doors on the ground, basement and first floors. Floor-to-ceiling sliding doors add light, width and height in the kitchen and in the master bathroom, unexpected full-length mirrors are set above the basins to take your eye right up to the ceiling.

Dramatic focal points are also part of Veronica's design DNA. A show-stopping stairwell with a cascading Murano glass chandelier was the first thing she designed when she began doing up the house. 'I bought it before the work even started,' she says, laughing. Now light bounces off it from the glass walls of the stairwell, which also reflects down to the basement.

That basement – unusually tall as it's the same height as the ground floor – spans the whole width of the house. Its dark grey hallway, theatrically hung with an oversized photograph shipped over from Amsterdam, sets the tone for the rooms.

The ground floor was reconfigured so that an old snug and L-shaped kitchen were incorporated to create one large, light space, linked with an opening to the front reception room. Beautiful original details – the Victorian tiled hallway, stained-glass front door and cornicing – were preserved to live on in their new environment. Old sisal carpet in the reception room was replaced with exquisite French-patterned oak parquet. Upstairs, rooms were reconfigured so that the master bedroom is larger, with a dressing room and en-suite bathroom, and there is also a bedroom and bathroom in the basement.

Veronica used an elegant palette of soft greys and chalky blues to unite the rooms and shook up the period bones of the house with unexpected pops of industrial lighting, The Rockstar bar and edgy art. 'My style may look upmarket, but there's plenty of high street mixed in with high end,' she says.

Family life actually benefited as a result of the project. 'We spent more time together because we had only one room to socialise in,' recalls Veronica. 'It made a nice change to have my children watching a film with me rather than hiding away on their laptops!'

Now it's back to normal – with more room for all to enjoy and Veronica itching to do another personal project. 'We won't be moving any time soon, but once the children have flown the nest, who knows?' she says. *Check out Veronica's interior design work at magentapinkinteriors.co.uk*

RECEPTION ROOM ↑

Oak parquet flooring in a Versailles pattern sets the tone for this grand reception room. Veronica widened the entrance to the kitchen to link the rooms and match the glass-sided central stairwell.

GET THE LOOK The Versailles parquet is from Cheville Parquet. These are The Rockstar whisky/cocktail bar and the Hooked wall light, both by Buster + Punch. The sofa is from Graham and Green. The buttoned footstool is a bespoke design made to order by Magentapink Interiors.



Home truths
WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DESERT ISLAND INDULGENCE? A tap filled with ice-cold white wine!
WHO WOULD BE ON YOUR FANTASY DINNER PARTY INVITE LIST? David Bowie, Graham Norton, Patsy and Eddie and my late parents.
WHAT DID YOU HAVE FOR SUPPER LAST NIGHT? Ottolenghi's chicken and three-rice salad.
WHAT WOULD BE YOUR INTERIORS ROOM 101? Sofas that look amazing, but feel like you're sitting on a park bench.
WHAT'S A TYPICAL SUNNY SUNDAY MORNING FOR YOU? Lying on the Chesterfield with the Sunday papers and a cup of builder's tea.
WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE THING ABOUT SUMMER IN THE CITY? The alfresco life – being able to sit outside in lively restaurants on long balmy evenings.

RECEPTION ROOM
 Although comfy, the sofa can look a little austere, so Veronica softened it with cushions and a throw.
GET THE LOOK The Chesterfield is by Old Boot. The cushions are by Designers Guild. The throw is by Cologne & Cotton. These are Pollock chairs by Julian Chichester. The vase is by Jonathan Adler.

'I put in big double doors wherever I could. It gives the whole house a grander scale'

GROUND FLOOR ↑ HALLWAY

Veronica opened up the narrow hallway with tall double panelled doors that lead into the reception room. The original Victorian floor tiles have been restored.

GET THE LOOK The oil painting Dymas is by Carl Melegari. The glass orb light is by The White Company.

FIREPLACE DETAIL ↑

The French Regency-style fireplace, which was in the house when Veronica bought it, goes nicely with her new parquet.

GET THE LOOK The Deco gilt and glass Wheat sheaf table was sourced by Magentapink Interiors. The mirror is by Dominic Schuster.

MASTER BEDROOM

A palette of soft greys and steely blues makes for a peaceful environment.

GET THE LOOK The walls are painted in *Skylon Grey* matt emulsion by *Fired Earth* and the alcoves in *Squid Ink* flat emulsion by *Paint & Paper Library*. The bed is by *sofa.com*, upholstered in *Designers Guild's Castellani* in *Graphite*. The throw is by *Cologne & Cotton* and the cushions are by *OKA* and *Designers Guild*.

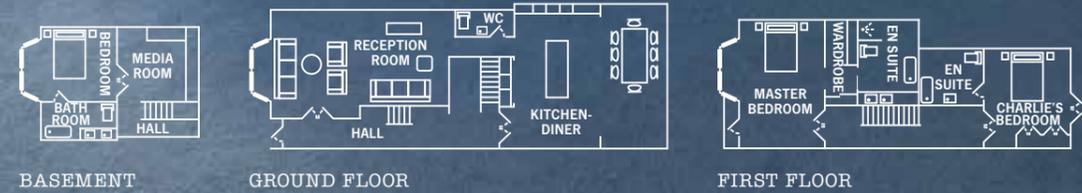
MASTER EN SUITE →

Veronica converted a smaller bedroom next door into a bathroom and dressing room. 'A daily bath is my everyday indulgence at tea time. It started during the build and I've continued the ritual,' she says. She hung floor-standing mirrors on the wall to accentuate the ceiling height.

GET THE LOOK The mirrors were bought at auction. The box pendant light is by *Davey Lighting*. The *Duravit Foster* basins are from *CP Hart*.



The blueprint



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