

H A M M O N D S

In order, to live better.

# moments

## LAIID-BACK HOSTING

Our guide to a relaxed dinner party, with fuss-free recipes

## A SPACE BUILT FOR LIVING

A multi-purpose space that works for you, your family and your lifestyle

## HOTEL AT HOME

Get your home overnight guest ready, with a spare room revamp



VOLUME 21 | THE WINTER EDITION

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THE WINTER EDITION

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# The winter edition

## Welcome to Moments



In this issue of Moments we're embracing all things winter and festive - think, cosy dinner

parties, overnight guests and seasonal makeovers. The winter months are naturally filled with social events and spending time with your loved ones; we're looking at the art of slowing down, taking time to focus on yourself and embracing slower living.

As this year comes to an end, and we begin to make plans for the year ahead, we often re-evaluate our homes and the spaces we spend our time in. From a complete room renovation, to a quick restyling with a few homeware additions, we've got expert tips and heaps of inspiration to reinvigorate your excitement for your home.

Whether you're browsing over your morning coffee, or taking a moment to read before bed, we hope you find some inspiration to make your winter truly wonderful.

*Josh*

Josh Hammonds, Editor

PERFECT  
YOUR GUEST  
BEDROOM  
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# Winter wonders

From cosying up your home, to practical hosting picks; we've selected some of the best home additions to make entertaining effortless this party season.

HERE'S OUR PICK OF THE BEST BUYS, PERFECT FOR THE WINTER SEASON AND BEYOND...



## 1 Liberty Stately Bouquet scented candle £52

There's no better 'welcome home' than a greeting from a beautiful scent. Liberty's Stately Bouquet candle exudes the wonderfully cosy notes of cashmere woods, blackberry and musk. [www.libertylondon.com](http://www.libertylondon.com)

## Ripple carafe set £33.95

# 2

Keep hydration on hand with this contemporary smoked grey carafe set. [www.fermliving.com](http://www.fermliving.com)



## Neroli hand wash £10

# 3

Give your bathroom a boost with a beautifully scented hand wash. Pair it with the matching lotion for a luxurious guest-ready touch. [www.arket.com](http://www.arket.com)



## 4 Green floral tableware from £5.99

A timelessly chic style with a modern twist, Zara Home's green floral earthenware adds a beautiful statement to 'help yourself' dinner tables. [www.zarahome.com](http://www.zarahome.com)

## 5 Mixed pattern napkins £9.99 for two

Pep up your tablespace with a mix of pattern and colour. These heart check napkins and cotton check napkins add a homely cottage feel and will work perfectly year round. [www.zarahome.com](http://www.zarahome.com)



## 6

### Tic tac toe £65

Printworks' classic tic tac toe has been designed to look equally good when played or displayed; the perfect game for all ages that sits artfully as décor - a real winner!

[www.fortnumandmason.com](http://www.fortnumandmason.com)



## 7

### Disco ball £79

Add a little disco to your dinner party with a sparkling disco ball. A showstopping centrepiece, perfect for the festive season. [www.grahamandgreen.co.uk](http://www.grahamandgreen.co.uk)



A photograph of a wooden chair and table. The chair is a classic wooden chair with a curved backrest and a seat. The table is a round wooden table. On the table, there is a white ceramic cup with a handle, filled with coffee. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The floor is made of light-colored wooden planks.

# What looks good *now*

New colours, an unexpected revival and a search for comfort - stylist Melissa Denham talks us through the key decorating trends for homes this winter.



MELISSA DENHAM  
Hammonds Stylist

**We spend a lot of time indoors in the wintertime, which puts the focus on our interiors more than ever.**

**Whether we're hosting over the**

**holidays, or just want to cosy up in comfort, a beautiful and organised home does a lot to help us feel good, however cold it may be outside. We spoke to stylist Melissa Denham about the key trends this winter.**

### Chocoholic design

“Chocolate was a colour trend first being talked about at the start of 2022, but this winter is really the season where we first start to see it come to life,” Melissa says. “People are realising that grey isn’t the only neutral to ground a space. Brown works surprisingly well with pretty much every colour out there. Layer it with neutral tones of cream and taupe. Pair it with pastel pinks, soft sage green and blush tones for a sophisticated edge. It also works with a moody palette of lush emerald green, cobalt blue, ochre and claret.”

### Return to the 1970s

“An unexpected trend coming through is a seventies revival, although the 2020s take is more restrained and curated, cherry-picking 1970s highlights while ditching the dated

aspects. It includes an eclectic mix of textures and patterns, such as animal prints, shag-pile rugs, velvet furnishings, geometric shapes, and soft curved edges. Designers embodying this style include Paloma Faith Home, House of Hackney, Bert & May x Livingetc collection, and Divine Savages.”



### Natural connection

“The after-effects of the pandemic are still being felt, and after our period of isolation, we have a longing to be close to nature. There is also a biophilic element to 1970s decor that is part of its appeal today - a lean towards natural materials such as rattan and cork, handcrafted ceramics, and macramé wall hangings. Not to mention a houseplant or two! Colours that make us feel warm, secure, safe and have that link to nature are ones that we want to surround ourselves with.”

### The fifth dimension

“Just like the four walls around it, a ceiling can do a lot to transform a

room. Considered the “fifth wall” by interior designers, ceilings shouldn’t just be an afterthought. Paint your ceiling the same colour as your walls to create a cocooning effect, something we all crave in winter months. Or you can treat the ceiling as a blank wall in its own right, and paint it a contrasting colour. Paint effects and wallpapered ceilings are also becoming more popular.”

### Soft touch

“Winter always make us want to cosy up, so fabrics that have that a soft, warm feeling will always be popular in the colder months - think velvet, chenille and wool. Textured bouclé fabric has become popular for upholstery. However, the uber-cool designer Abigail Ahern has just included a bouclé for curtains and Roman blinds in her second collection for Hillarys; something I haven’t seen before. We are also seeing “teddy bear” fabric starting to appear. This is a softer version of bouclé, which is not as hardwearing, but is perfect for throws and cushions in those cold winter months snuggled up by the fire!” ■



A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a large, rustic loaf of bread. The bread is golden-brown with a thick, cracked crust and is resting on a wooden cutting board. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey wall. The overall mood is warm and inviting, emphasizing the theme of slowing down and savoring the moment.

# The art of *slowing down*

Take time to focus on you and embrace slower pastimes this winter.

**The slow living way of life is on the rise, as people are moving away from fast-paced daily routines. Slow living is a concept that encourages caring for physical and mental wellbeing, above all.**

Many people think working hard in the week and resting at weekends is enough to recharge our minds and bodies. Yet it seems considering slowing down as a way of life might just be the way to go. Embracing the quiet, taking time to pause, and embarking on a calmer day-to-day helps us appreciate each important moment in our everyday life.



As the on-the-go summer lifestyle dwindles and cold, drizzly nights become the norm, there's no better time to put slow living to the test. Whilst many summer activities involve a fast pace, there are plenty of slow pastimes that align perfectly with the cosiness of winter, allowing you to be completely encompassed in the moment. Here are our top picks of slow hobbies that are perfect for the whole family this winter.

### **A spot of baking**

An idyllic solo activity or a wholesome thing to do with loved ones - baking lets you slow down and focus solely on the moment. Perfect your go-to recipe or recreate an old family favourite; a day of baking will leave you filled with contentment and your home filled with beautifully sweet smells. Bonus - you get to eat tasty treats at the end of it!

### **Delve into a puzzle**

Taking the time to organise your pieces, carefully putting together the edges, and gradually building up a perfect replica of the reference image; a puzzle is the ideal activity to let you clear your mind and pass the time indoors. Opt for an intricate design or choose a simpler style fit for little ones to get stuck into.

### **Pick up a good book**

Diving into a good book is the epitome of slow pastimes - let your mind fall deep into a fairy tale, travel far across

the world or solve a wonderful mystery without taking a single step outdoors. Light a scented candle, change into your comfiest outfit and pour yourself a cup of tea ready for an hour or two of turning pages.



### **Spend time in nature**

Getting outdoors is a brilliant way to slow down your mind and make you feel refreshed, whatever the weather. A nice stroll through the countryside, foraging for fallen conkers and crunching boots through the browning leaves is a perfect weekend activity. Wrap up warm for a solo stroll and take in the calming sounds of nature, or get the whole family together for a wholesome day out.

### **A moment of calm**

Slowing down doesn't always mean setting your mind to something; in fact, clearing your mind completely is just as good in creating calm. Taking

just 10 minutes out of your day to meditate is the perfect way to weave a little wellbeing into your everyday routine; play gentle calming music, clear your mind and focus on taking slow, deep breaths. ■

## Create a space for slow living

The concept of slow living is about clearing your mind, minimising stress and focusing on your mental wellbeing. A cluttered home can hinder your search for calmness.

Ensuring your home has ample storage will make for a tidy, clutter-free environment and instantly minimise your daily stress. Start your journey to slow living with a good declutter and reorganisation session - after all, a tidy home is a tidy mind.



# Hotel *at home*

Create a cosy  
and welcoming  
guest bedroom.

**The hosting season is finally here. As you prepare to open your home to loved ones, there's no better time to get organised and transform your spare room into a beautifully welcoming guest bedroom - for a hotel-at-home feeling.**

## **Light and inviting**

A beautiful flood of light creates a calm and inviting space but beaming light first thing in the morning might not be a welcome wake-up call - make sure your windows are dressed to suit the sunrise and ensure your guests get a good night's sleep. Considered lighting is a great way to make your guests feel at home; overhead lighting makes getting ready easier and bedside lighting gives a cosy feel perfect for settling down at night.





### Embrace space

While you're guaranteed to add your own style and character into your guest room, it's important to ensure the space isn't overwhelmed with a mass of furniture, trinkets and clutter. The best hotel rooms often feel spacious and fresh, even when they're not overly big. Your guests are likely to have overnight bags with them, so ensuring they have space to keep their things is key - any free hanging or drawer space is an added bonus!

### Cosiness on hand

There's no better feeling than knowing your loved ones feel comfortable in your home - encourage cosiness by considering all the home comforts you love. A soft rug will give them a cosy feeling when they climb out of bed, and layered throws on their bed will

create added texture and warmth - perfect for the colder months. Light a wonderfully scented candle before they arrive for an extra special touch.

### Keep it fresh

You can't beat the fresh sheet feeling - it's one of the best parts of staying at a hotel! Change your sheets the day before your guests arrive to ensure they're as fresh as can be, and give them a spritz with a lovely linen spray for an extra zhuzh. A folded fresh fluffy towel placed at the end of the bed is a welcoming touch and gives your guests the freedom to freshen up at their leisure - especially if they've had a long journey.

### The little extras

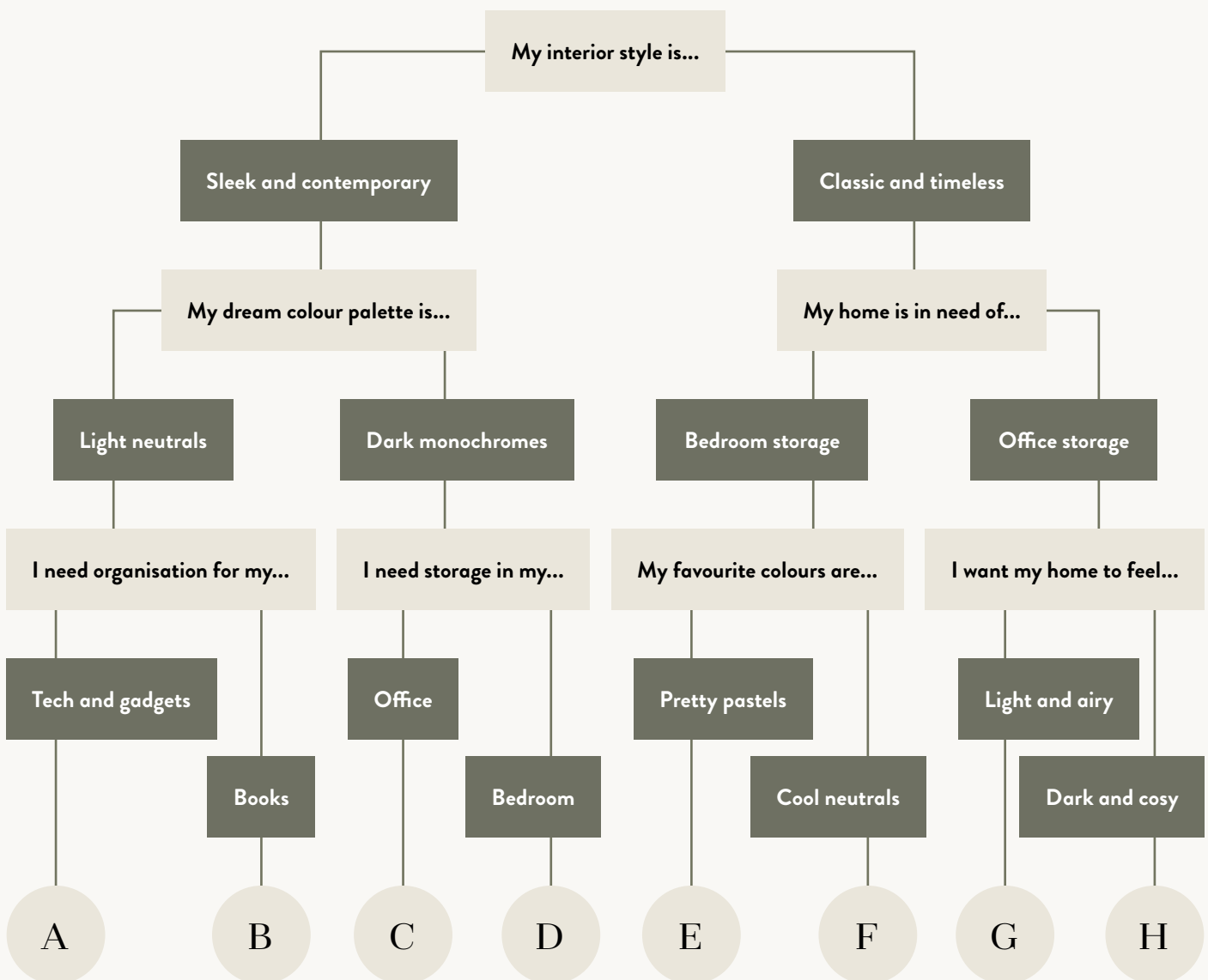
You've created a soothing sanctuary for your guests, now there are a few

little extras that will have your loved ones feeling like guests of honour. It's easy to forget the odd thing when spending a weekend away, so a handy selection of toiletries or even a small bedside snack will give them a home-away-from-home comfort. Tip: Make sure your guests have easy access to plug sockets! ■

Spare rooms can easily become a dumping ground. Giving them a dual purpose with clever storage means your space will be both practical and guest ready all year round, whether you add fitted wardrobes for a walk-in wardrobe feature or create the ideal office setup to make working from home simple and stress-free.

# Find your *perfect storage*

A contemporary, neutral living space or a timeless, rich-toned home office? Take our quiz to find the best storage for your home.





A

**Linje media unit in Driftwood**

The perfect addition, to keep Scandi-inspired living spaces organised.



B

**Radley reading nook in Nordic Grey**

Minimal in style, with plenty of practicality, perfect for an organised bookshelf.



C

**Linje home office in Graphite**

Make every work day feel glamorous and opulent, with a sleek home office.



D

**Avon wardrobes in Graphite**

Clean lines, a sleek finish and a rich grey tone, perfect for clutter-free bedrooms.



E

**Croft wardrobes in French Grey**

A delicate green hue that adds a calming feel to organised bedrooms.



F

**Langton wardrobes in Pebble Grey**

Beautifully classic detailing and clever wardrobe storage - a winning combination.



G

**Harpsden home office in Light Praline**

A soft neutral hue with plenty of storage - a calming space perfect to work in.



H

**Marden home office in Cobalt**

Bold in colour and classic in style, a strong look ideal for creative and productive days.

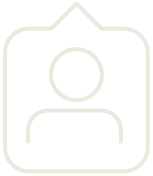
Not found your dream match?

Head to our Instagram @hammonds\_uk for heaps of interior and storage inspiration - or pop into store for an in-person browse. Find your nearest store at [hammonds-uk.com](https://www.hammonds-uk.com).

# Real Homes

We love to see your beautiful Hammonds homes! Here are just a few of our favourite images from customers who have tagged us on social media recently.

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM FOR MORE INSPIRATION



Balance the darker winter months with bright, energising interiors. @thecottagebythebridge exudes country cottage comfort, with a beautifully fresh touch. Croft's clean lines in White pair perfectly with organic textures and soft neutral tones to create a calm space.

@thecottagebythebridge





@claire.totman.designs

We love the contrast of these two beautiful homes, both transformed with the classic and versatile Marden range. @claire.totman.designs chose the Light Praline colour for soft and contemporary fitted living, which she's styled with a mix of vintage and contemporary homeware finds. @mynewstreethome has opted for rich opulence with Dust Grey, a deep neutral that brings warmth and elegance to this cosy window nook.

@mynewstreethome



# Real Homes

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM FOR MORE INSPIRATION @HAMMONDS\_UK



@be.you.bloom



Harpden's detailed edges and traditional styling brings character to any space. @be.you.bloom created a cosy and comforting bedroom with crisp furniture in White, whilst @claremackwrites added ample wardrobe storage with the timeless and contemporary Light Praline hue.

@claremackwrites



# A space built for living

How cleverly designed storage can help transform a hub of the home into a multi-purpose living space.

**Multi-purpose spaces are key in modern homes, from dining rooms that transform into games rooms, to home offices housed in spare bedrooms and awkward alcoves. Clever storage can help homes adapt to the wonderful nuances of daily life.**

Whether you're hosting a seasonal party, having a family games night, or taking time for yourself - a living space that has versatility for all occasions is a dream for homeowners.

As winter comes around we often find ourselves having less time to tidy and organise our homes, as we travel near and far to spend time with loved ones. It's easy for clutter to mount up and leave our living spaces unorganised and disordered, but storage that is tailored to both your space and your lifestyle makes daily

tidying an effortless task. With the help of Hammonds' expert designers, a fitted living unit can have space for everything you need; shelves stacked with board games, a drawer that perfectly houses your beloved record collection, or a hidden-away drinks cabinet perfect for a winter get-together with friends.

Hammonds furniture offers two options for interiors. The first has an open back, meaning every little inch of space is utilised, to really maximise your storage potential. The second is a fully lined interior with a back panel to protect your belongings - this has flexible inners, meaning your fitted living storage can transform and adapt as your life and storage needs change.

Whether you're a young family with endless toys or you're settled into

your forever home, a perfect place to store both day-to-day things and your seasonal bits and bobs is a brilliant way to transform your home from a living space to a space that's built for living. ■





# At home with Laura Orgill and Georgia Morgan



“We just loved seeing the whole project come together... we really couldn't be happier with the final result.”



**Laura and Georgia worked with our designers to create a calm wardrobe space they could both use everyday. They chose Hatton in Light Grey to transform their cluttered spare room into a tranquil and organised dressing room, with a combination of enclosed wardrobe storage, open shelving and a dreamy dressing table.**

#### **Why did you choose Hammonds?**

“We love that Hammonds products are British made, and we knew the quality, detail and craftsmanship would be unrivalled. We love the range of storage solutions and knew they could create the perfect wardrobes for our day to day needs.”

#### **What was your space like before your room transformation?**

“The room we eventually decided on was originally a spare bedroom. The bed was too big, the room was dark and there was just no flow! Everything seemed to be getting in the way. Our clothes, shoes and bags were everywhere. It created such a task to even start the day off in the right way.”

#### **How would you describe your interior style?**

“Our aim is to keep our spaces light and airy, but still cosy and classic at the same time. We love the look of traditional spaces but enjoy adding our own modern twists. The Hatton range instantly stood out to us as timeless but modern.”



#### **Why is organisation important to you?**

“Organisation is key to starting our day right and ending it on a high note. We find it so important for everything to have its own place; it makes life easier and looks so much better. Just knowing exactly where to find a favourite pair of shoes or jumper makes us both very happy.”

#### **What is the best thing about your new dressing room?**

“Honestly, everything! If we did have to pick we’d probably choose our shoe storage solution. All of our shoes are now kept all in one place, but hidden behind a door for that extra touch of organisation.” ■



Get festive

with florals

Wreaths, garlands and a fabulous table centrepiece will create the wow factor when it comes to your Christmas decorations. Celebrity florist Larry Walshe shares his tips for a beautiful and blooming display.



Florist Larry Walshe has worked with celebrities including Adele, Rhianna and Stella McCartney. He is the founder of Bloom, the UK's first zero-waste and plastic-free floristry service. As well as prepared wreaths, Bloom also sells Christmas DIY Wreath Kits so you can create your own display. See [www.bybloom.co.uk](http://www.bybloom.co.uk)

### Let no door be undressed this winter.

Festive wreaths are a fantastic way to celebrate the season and add a touch of flair and colour to your neighbourhood. Let your creativity go wild and show your friends and neighbours what you stand for. Are you a traditionalist or do you prefer a contemporary moment? Do you love a good bauble or a whole host of natural ingredients? Whatever your style, express it outwardly and give all that pass your door a smile! When hanging your wreath, command hooks are your new best friend. They leave no mark and can easily be removed at the end of the season.

Tip: We all enjoy a little drink during the festive season and your wreath is no exception. Give your festive outdoor wreath a gentle spritz of fresh water once or twice a week to keep it looking fresh during the holiday season.

**Create a flexible floral display for your dining table.** Using multiple vases on your dining table will allow you to flex your display, depending on the number of guests and the food you are serving. For Christmas Day, with so many dishes to serve, you may prefer just a few floral touches. For a plated three-course meal with friends, you have more space to impress with flowers and trimmings. Vases that aren't required can easily be scattered around the house to add colour at every turn.

Tip: Low is always better when decorating your dining table. Ensuring you can see all your friends and family

around the table is always the most important consideration at this special time of year.

**Add chic sparkle to your Christmas tree.** When dressing the Christmas tree, we love to work tonally. Pick a scheme and then explore shades of that palette, using lots of different shapes and finishes to add interest and depth. At Bloom, our favourite look for 2022 is mixed metallics, exploring the shades of champagne, gold and platinum, with frosted harmony coming from touches of silver, white and frosted hues.

Tip: Add dried flowers and other unexpected touches to your Christmas tree for an extravagant look. You could insert pampas grass, dried seed or flowerheads, berry-laden red Ilex branches, or even feathers, to add texture and depth to your tree. ■



Image (and left) courtesy of Kate Nielen Photography

# Spotlight on Erdington

New Midlands showroom now open

GROUND FLOOR | 28 GOOSEMOOR LANE | ERDINGTON | BIRMINGHAM

**Our Erdington store has been given a sparkling new look, showcasing more of our fitted furniture and offering a chance to experience the Hammonds effect in a series of stunning room designs.**

With an extensive refurbishment, increased floorspace, and a new frontage, Hammonds' Erdington store is being allowed to shine - and manager Parveen Chauhan couldn't be happier. 'We've had amazing feedback from customers, and more and more people coming into the store, attracted by the furniture displays they can see.

“Everyone deserves the time to talk through their purchase and be absolutely confident with their selection”

**PARVEEN CHAUHAN**  
Store Manager







They walk in to take a look, then they want a demonstration of the furniture and the storage solutions we offer. Soon, they are opening doors and pulling out drawers, and experiencing the quality for themselves.'

While design consultations take place in people's own homes, it's in the store that customers really begin to appreciate the transformation that's about to happen to their home. 'We will have people visit the store before booking a design appointment, so they get a feel for the furniture and

how it might work in their space. Or customers will come in once they have their design plan so they can see the range and finish they have chosen,' says Parveen. 'We welcome people at every stage of the planning process and will have a cup of tea and a chat. Everyone deserves the time to talk through their purchase and be absolutely confident with their selection.'

Why not visit your local Hammonds store and see how our furniture can help you live better? ■

## Ask our people

### What do you love most about your job?

'Meeting customers and talking to them about our furniture. I love to find out what they're looking for and show them how we can help.'

### How has the refurbishment changed the Erdington store?

'We have more space, which means we can showcase our entire range. You really can see every finish and range to help you visualise the perfect fitted furniture for you.'

### Which design is most popular?

'There isn't one favourite look - we have contemporary ranges and more traditional designs; every person and home is individual, and we can provide beautiful furniture for every customer. Saying that, people are always impressed by the shoe trays! Everyone needs shoe storage.'

# The curated shelf

**Top tips on styling your open shelves to perfection - from selecting the best pieces to display, to techniques for layering your treasures.**

Open shelves are a wonderful addition to living spaces - they give you the space to display your treasures and add interest to your room. Cleverly arranged open shelving works well in any room; an easy-to-reach spot for kitchen essentials, a beautifully organised bookshelf in a snug or a considered display of décor pieces, to tie together your living room.

While often concealed storage is the priority, open shelving can effortlessly break up a furniture-heavy space and breathe life and character into a home. We've pulled together five tips for making sure your shelves are styled to perfection, no matter what room they're in.

## **1. Cleverly curated**

It's easy to get carried away with lots of trinkets, but more is not always better. A carefully curated shelf is more eye-catching and feels more 'style' than 'clutter'. The perfect styling doesn't necessarily happen overnight - pick out some of your most-loved treasures to start and gradually add to it over time. Antique shops and flea markets are full of gems that don't cost the earth, and pieces thoughtfully purchased while travelling add a personal touch.

## **2. Consider your scheme**

Items like ceramics, candles, baskets, sculptures and art are brilliant go-tos when it comes to shelf styling, but

The items you choose to display will vary depending on the room - from kitchen crockery to bathroom bits and bobs - but sticking to these five general styling tips will ensure your shelves always look picture perfect.



for a well-rounded space it's best to ensure they fit seamlessly with your scheme. If your interior is a neutral haven, adding a random pop of colour on your shelf may look distracting and out of place. Think about every piece you add and consider whether it really works with your desired scheme and style. Tip: if there's a scented candle you love that doesn't match your colour palette, try to find a hurricane vase that works and hide your candle inside.

### 3. Layer textures

Keep things interesting by layering textures; woven baskets and raw ceramics add a natural touch, whilst framed art creates a personal, homely look. Books are another great way to add new texture and varied height to your shelves. Create a few different arrangements for a fluid look. On one shelf place a few books standing vertically, capped with a bookend. On another try a horizontal stack, topped with a vase. Second-hand bookshops are a great place to find key pieces and give them a new lease of life.

### 4. Create balance

Avoid your shelves looking like an overstocked shop shelf by creating balance throughout - spreading out colour and texture will make it more appealing to the eye. If you have a mainly neutral collection with just a hint of green accents, spread out the pops of colour across the shelves



so they are not condensed into one focal area. Rather than sporadically spreading items out, try placing them in sets of three or five for a considered and balanced aesthetic.

### 5. Change it up

It's important to remember that your style and possessions will evolve over time - the great thing with open

shelves is that they can evolve with you. As the years go by and your collection of treasures grows, you can easily switch out your styling to incorporate new things and create a different look. A shelf restyle is a great way to bring fresh life into your home and ensure you're constantly living in a space that brings you joy. ■

# A guide to laid-back hosting

THE NEW WAY TO ENTERTAIN

**In recent years many people have begun taking a calmer approach to life - embracing the now and finding joy in the little things. From flexible working to comfort-first fashion choices, the current and upcoming trends all lead back to prioritising health and wellbeing. Life is for enjoying - every wonderful thing and moment.**

Socialising isn't any different, with a more laid-back approach to the pristine dinner parties that were once all the rage. Now a dinner party is a

relaxed home setting, with simple and hearty home-cooked food served on perfectly mismatched tableware and laughter amongst loved ones filling the air; a beautifully wholesome scene.

With the season of entertaining firmly here, it's time to light the candles, preheat the oven and pull out your comfiest clothes, for wonderful nights spent around the dinner table. We've pulled together three cosy recipes that are perfect for a laid-back dinner party with your nearest and dearest.

## COCKTAIL

## Dark rum egg nog

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Egg nog is one of the most indulgently decadent and delicious of all traditional festive drinks. The addition at the end of whipped-up egg whites is what gives this its wonderful light frothiness.

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Serves 4

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### Ingredients

Eggs 2

Caster sugar 80g

Chilled single cream 200ml

Chilled whole milk 200ml

Dark rum 200ml

Orange cocktail bitters 8 dashes

Star anise 4 whole or

Thyme 4 sprigs

Nutmeg for grating

---

### Method

**Separate the egg** whites and the yolks into two clean large mixing bowls.

**Divide the sugar** evenly between the bowls.

**Whisk the yolks and sugar** until thick; then whisk into that the cream, milk and dark rum.

**Add the dashes** of orange bitters. Transfer to a serving bowl.

**Now for the egg whites.** Whisk them with the sugar until they form meringue-like stiff



peaks, then gently but thoroughly fold the stiff whites into the bowl containing the cream and rum, etc.

**Ladle into glasses,** finishing each one with a grating of fresh nutmeg and a star anise or thyme sprig.

Don't worry about the perfect glassware; add character to your cocktails and utilise all of your mismatched pieces!



## APPETISER

# Mussels in lemon-grass, galangal and turmeric broth

British mussels are especially delicious when cooked in this aromatic broth, thickened by breadcrumbs, which also give some lovely flavour, contrast and crunch.

Serves 6

### Ingredients

Mussels 1kg

Banana shallot 1

Ghee or rapeseed oil 2tbsp

Lemongrass 1 stalk

Garlic 2 cloves

Turmeric root 5cm piece

Galangal 5cm piece

Coriander 50g

Coconut milk 400ml tin

Panko breadcrumbs 30g

Chili flakes 1/4tsp

### Method

**Peel and finely chop the shallot.** Heat 1 tablespoon of the ghee or oil in a wide pan over a medium heat. Add the shallot and cook for 5 minutes or so until just softening.

**Finely chop the lemongrass and the peeled garlic.** Add to the shallot, stir



for a couple of minutes, then grate in the turmeric root and galangal and add the finely chopped coriander stalks (be sure to save the leaves for later). Stir for a minute until softened.

**Pour in the coconut milk**, add some salt, and let it simmer gently for a few minutes.

**Increase the heat and add the mussels.** Put the lid on the pan and let them cook, undisturbed, for 4 minutes.

**Add the panko breadcrumbs** and chili flakes to the heated remaining ghee or oil in a small frying pan - toss around

until nicely golden.

**Take the lid off the pan of mussels** and you should see them excitingly opening. If some are still closed, replace the lid and cook for another 2 minutes, then remove from the heat and discard any that have remained closed.

**Scatter half of the coriander leaves** over the mussels and broth and stir the rest through the crisped chilli breadcrumbs before scattering over the top of the mussels and broth, and serve straight away.

## DESSERT

## Chocolate olive oil cake with figs and hazelnuts

This is a pleasingly elegant cake to serve as a dessert. It's not overly rich, and has a lovely tangy bite from the yoghurt topping, with hazelnuts giving crunch as well as flavour.

Serves 10

### Ingredients

Mild olive oil 150ml

Carob flour or cocoa powder 60g

Hazelnut liqueur 2tsp

Golden caster sugar 200g

Large eggs 3

Self raising flour 125g

Fine salt pinch

Greek yoghurt 200g

Ripe figs 2

Skinned, toasted hazelnuts 100g

### Method

**Preheat the oven** to 190C fan. Grease the sides of the cake tin with a little of the oil, and line its base with baking paper.

**Sift the carob flour** or cocoa powder into a bowl, then whisk in 125ml boiling water and the hazelnut liqueur. Set aside.

**Put the sugar**, the rest of the olive oil and the eggs into a large mixing bowl.



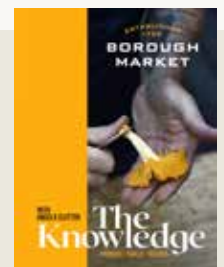
**Use an electric whisk** to beat them together until thickened: you are trying to get lots of air into the mix.

**Beat in the carob flour/cocoa powder** mixture, then sift in the flour and salt.

**Gently but thoroughly fold the flour in**, then pour the mixture into your prepared cake tin.

**Bake for 35-40 minutes** until just about set. Remove from the oven, cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes, then remove from the tin and leave to cool some more.

**Once the cake is cool**, spoon the thick yoghurt on top. Top with sliced figs and a scattering of hazelnuts.



All recipes from our guide to laid-back hosting can be found in **Angela Cutton's** cookbook, **The Knowledge**.



# It's *showtime!*

If you're staying in or going out-out, follow our guide to the best of the season's entertainment

Christmas at Blenheim Palace



**FILM Glass Onion:  
a Knives Out Mystery**

Who doesn't love a murder mystery at Christmas? Daniel Craig returns as the detective from America's Deep South, solving the whodunnit puzzle in a luxury Greek island resort, where friends have gathered for their yearly reunion - and everyone is a suspect.

**BOOK The Dazzle of the Light**

Set in the 1920s and inspired by notorious all-female crime syndicate, The Forty Thieves, this

compelling thriller tells the story of beautiful thief, Ruby, and Harriet, the journalist following her exploits. Soon, their stories will become increasingly intertwined.

**SHOW Emma Bunton & Friends**

Emma Bunton is bringing the Christmas party atmosphere to theatres around the UK, starting in Manchester on 12 December and finishing in London on 19 December. She will be singing favourite Spice Girls hits as well as her own songs,





and has promised some very special guests to appear along side her.

### BOOK **The Happiness Year**

Set yourself up for the year ahead with this beautifully illustrated book by Tara Ward. It takes you through each of the seasons, with timely ideas for crafts, meditations and inspiration from the natural world. By Tara Ward, Quadrille.

### FILM **Spirited**

Ryan Reynolds plays Clint Briggs, who is visited by Will Ferrell's Ghost of Christmas Present in this sweet and funny musical retelling of A Christmas Carol. There's a twist in the tale, though, as Reynolds turns the tables on his tormentor, and soon it's the ghost who is re-examining his past, present and future. In cinemas and streaming on Apple TV.



## Three of the best Christmas light trails

### **Christmas at Bedgebury, Kent**

The National Pinetum becomes a magical forest, with the tree canopies lit by installations from international artists.

### **Christmas at Blenheim Palace, Oxon**

An indoor and outdoor spectacular for the festive season. Discover the Kingdom of the Snow Queen in the palace's grand rooms, and follow the Illuminated Christmas Trail through the stunning gardens.

### **Christmas at Dunham Massey, Cheshire**

Lights, music and fairground rides bring the season to life in the Georgian house and gardens, with its biggest ever immersive illuminations.

All on until 2nd January 2023



Christmas at Dunham Massey

# Embrace your space

**Clever design can turn an awkward corner into a stylish storage solution you couldn't do without. We spoke to Hammonds designer Tom Hefford to find out more...**



**Tom Hefford has a flair for design. Just 18 months after**

**starting his role with Hammonds, he has transformed the homes of hundreds of customers with his practical but inventive use of space.**

‘As designers, the home visits we do are really important. We find out the look the customer wants and how they plan to use the room, but we can also look at the space and see exactly which products from the Hammonds’ ranges will make the best use of every inch. Functionality is important but the fitted furniture has to look fantastic, too. We spend half our lives in our bedrooms; when they open their eyes in the morning, we want our customers to love the room we’ve created for them.’

Awkward rooms with tricky spaces - sloping or low ceilings, say, or a

nook that’s too small for freestanding furniture - can present challenges to customers, and opportunities to designers. ‘A Hammonds designer does more than measure up; we can offer solutions that a customer didn’t even know existed,’ agrees Tom. Here, he shares three ways you can embrace your space with Hammonds...

## **Try out lots of options**

‘At Hammonds, we create designs on the computer in front of you, rather than drawing the plan on paper as some firms do. That means you can try out lots of different ideas until you feel totally confident in your decision. We’ll even take a photo of your wallpaper and carpet and upload them to the 3D plan, so you can really imagine how different your room could be.

## **Prepare to be surprised**

‘A designer can show you solutions

you didn’t know were possible,’ says Tom. ‘For example, you might have a sloping ceiling and think hanging space isn’t an option for you, but we can design cupboards that include a low hanging rail with shelves above for folded clothes or bedding.

## **Expect your room to look bigger**

‘I tell customers that every bedroom has a space to hang clothes, it’s just not where they might think,’ says Tom. ‘For example, there may be only one place to put a freestanding wardrobe, but that means it dominates the room and there’s wasted space around it. If we create fitted storage with hanging space in another part of the room, then suddenly the space that once held the wardrobe is opened up - and your room, whatever its size, will look bigger and have a better flow.’

Find out how a Hammonds designer can help transform your home; book your design visit today. ■



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