

Essential

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KITCHEN

BATHROOM BEDROOM

THE ESSENTIAL KITCHEN BATHROOM BEDROOM MAGAZINE **THE UK'S NO.1** £3.75

FRESH LOOK

NEW IDEAS FROM CLASSIC TO CONTEMPORARY

WE CHAT WITH
TOP DESIGNER
ALLEGRA HICKS

REAL DREAM KITCHENS

- SOFTER COLOUR PALETTE
- BESPOKE RESTORATION
- A LIGHT-FILLED MODERN BASEMENT CONVERSION

ENTERTAINING SPACE
WITH AN ICE-WHITE FINISH

CELEBRATING AT
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ANJALI PATHAK



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ALLEGRA HICKS

This stylish designer talks about her new work/life balance and what inspires her



Left Reupholstered chairs in Calypso fabric from Allegra's new collection.

Below Eye to Eye folio for iPad, £60, John Lewis.

Bottom Cushions in Daisy and Eye fabric available from allegrahicks.com.



Allegra Hicks, known for her exquisite painterly fabrics and designs, studied textiles and art in Milan and New York. She launched her first range of rugs and textiles in 1996 and now designs for The Rug Company. She has recently collaborated with Made.com to produce an armchair in one of her signature fabrics. Born in Turin, she moved to London following her marriage to designer Ashley Hicks, son of Interior Designer David Hicks and grandson of Lord Mountbatten.

Allegra still lives in London with the couple's two daughters, Angelica, 20, and Ambrosia, 15.

What is your favourite room?

My dining room. I radically changed it a year-and-a-half ago, covering the walls in raw silk and having it embroidered with beaded roses. The fireplace is actually made of MDF but I painted it with layers of oil paint to give this marble effect.

What is your kitchen style?

The kitchen I have designed at my other home in Naples is quite decorative. There is an 18th century console with mirror and lots of glass and I've used an old table and combined it with wicker Pantone chairs.

What made you decide to pare down your business?

I wasn't well a couple of years ago and it led me to re-evaluate. I let go of many of the unimportant and uninteresting stresses and decided to focus on the element I love most which is the design. I am so lucky because I get up in the morning and I love what I do and loving your work is heaven.

Have you ever designed furniture before?

I did the little table and consoles in my home years ago. I decided to do a chair in my fabric design because everyone needs a small armchair that can be tucked away in a corner of the house. I like the rounded shape – inspired by a Gio Ponti sofa – because, like my

fabrics, it doesn't pinpoint a specific period and fits anywhere.

What is your colour palette?

Organic colours are my signature style – blues and greens; neutral without being beige. I love watercolours and all my designs begin life that way.

Should design be expensive?

Good design is good design and is nothing to do with price. If you think about it, product design evolved after the industrial revolution to provide mass produced furniture for people who could not afford antiques or handmade one-off items.

Some of my favourite items in my home, like a stool in my sitting room or coloured glasses in my kitchen, were finds in random shops and markets.

Are you an internet junkie?

I love using the internet for research but I don't tweet. I take pictures and do Instagram. I think in images, so it feels natural to express myself in pictures.

Which country do you find most inspiring?

India. I went there on my honeymoon for the first time and remember feeling completely at home. People there live very close to one another and the senses are heightened. The aesthetic is very inspiring, the history is fascinating and the philosophy even more so – I also adore the combination of new and old in Istanbul and the beautiful textiles.

English or Italian?

My work ethic is Anglo-Saxon but my upbringing and sensibility is Italian. I came here in my early twenties and learned how to dress in London. Everyone says Italians dress well but they dress very conventionally; people in London are much more original. There is an edge of eccentricity and uniqueness that I value and understand and has become a part of my way of life.

allegrahicks.com

INTERVIEW SUSAN ROZSNYAI