

Citrus CRUSH

A smitten Emma Gordon knew just how to add zest to a tired townhouse, but first she had to convince husband Andy that they should buy it

FEATURE HEATHER DIXON PHOTOGRAPHY COLIN POOLE



MEET THE OWNERS

Emma Gordon, an interior designer, her husband Andy, who is a national sales manager of a flooring company, and their son Rudy, plus Humphrey the chocolate Labrador and Henry the cat

PREVIOUS HOME 'Our last place was a 200-year-old cottage in West Yorkshire,' says Emma.

CURRENT PROPERTY Former mill manager's house in West Yorkshire, built in 1860

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, drawing room, kitchen/diner, music/playroom, office, utility room, larder, cloakroom, six bedrooms, two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2008 PRICE £215,000

RENOVATION COST £100,000

VALUE £350,000



2 & 3 SITTING ROOM Emma takes a moment to relax with Humphrey the Labrador. 'I love feature wallpaper,' she says. 'I've used them as a starting point for nearly every scheme in the house.' **Asuka wallpaper**, £40 for a 10-metre roll, Osborne & Little (020 7352 1456, osborneandlittle.com). **Burnished silver fireplace**, £1,500, Artisan (01484 723717, artisanfireplaces.co.uk). **Lime corner sofa**, £2,000, available through Emma's interior design company Eye Candy. For further details, call 07748 648040 or visit eyecandy-interiordesign.co.uk



Emma and Andy Gordon had already submitted an offer on a property nearby when they decided to view this solid-stone house in West Yorkshire for a second time out of sheer curiosity.

'Our other candidate needed a complete structural overhaul, whereas the only problem here was the tired and dated decor,' says Emma. 'Andy was struggling to see the potential and wanted to go for the bigger project, but I loved this place, with its generously proportioned rooms and cavernous cellar, which I thought would make a great kitchen/diner. There was even a window to provide natural light.'

Eventually, Emma persuaded Andy that buying this former mill manager's house made financial sense, so a deal was done, and interior designer Emma set to work on the renovation. 'Our son Rudy was just a year old, so I managed the project with him in tow, holding meetings on site while he slept,' she recalls. 'It was stressful, but I had a great team of people behind me and Rudy took it all in his stride. I think he must have seen it as an adventure.'

The biggest job the Gordons faced was restructuring the series of small basement rooms into an open-plan kitchen/diner. 'We had to excavate the old flagstone floor to give us the headroom we needed, and all the rubble – five skips worth – had to be taken out by hand, either ▶

1 HALL First impressions are everything to Emma, which is why she chose to make an instant impact with the striking stair runner and bright-yellow sideboard. The group of framed family photos hung halfway up the stairs is a personal touch. **Audrey Sunrise carpet**, £106 per sq m, Crucial Trading (01562 743747, crucial-trading.com). **Trollsta sideboard** in yellow, £249, Ikea (0845 358 3363, ikea.com). **Bourgie Perspex lamp** by Kartell in Crystal, £159, Eye Candy. **Photo frames**, from a selection, Habitat (0844 499 1111, habitat.co.uk)



through a small window or up the cellar steps,' Emma recalls. 'It took Andy and five of his rugby-player friends to remove an old stone sink we'd found down there.'

Emma was keen to keep the original flagstones, but as they made the space look dark, she installed light-reflecting marble tiles instead. These continue up into the hall, which retains many of its original features. 'The house hasn't lost any of its character,' says Emma. 'We had to update things like the plumbing and electrics, and we've reinstated the sitting-room fireplace, but for the most part we've simply accentuated what was already here.'

Both Emma and Andy liked the idea of combining the architectural highlights of their new home with modern

1 & 2 KITCHEN/DINER Emma adores the canvas on the wall of the dining area. 'We got married in New York and this is a picture of our wedding car,' she explains. It ties in well with the other citrus accents in her home, such as the kitchen's glass splashback. **Zebrano hi-gloss units, worktops, splashback and appliances**, £12,000 in total, Palmer & Palmer (01422 383700, palmerandpalmer.co.uk). **Parker oak table**, £749; **Parker benches**, £249 each, all Habitat (0844 499 1111, habitat.co.uk). **Green pendant lamp shades**, £100 each, Eye Candy Interior Design (07748 648040, eyecandy-interiordesign.co.uk). **Sienna marble tiles**, £72 per sq m, About Stone (01943 817161, aboutstoneuk.co.uk)



3 BATHROOM This used to be smaller, but Emma and Andy knocked through to an adjacent bedroom to create a more luxurious space with a fresh aqua palette. **Orchid wallpaper**, £47 for a 10-metre roll, Cole and Son (020 7376 4628, cole-and-son.com). **Olympus limestone wall tiles**, £51.75 per sq m, About Stone. **Circular mirrors with square frames**, £89 each, Bathstore (0800 023 2323, bathstore.com). Its Trend design, from £599, is a similar bath

4 MASTER BEDROOM The bed combines classic design with a modern finish. **Louis four-poster**, from £1,995, Heals (0870 024 0780, heals.co.uk)

5 RUDY'S BEDROOM Now a daybed, this versatile piece used to be a cot. **Barnslig quilt cover and pillowcase**, £14.99, Ikea (0845 358 3363, ikea.com). **Chic Shack's** (020 8785 7777, chicshack.net) **Veneza cot**, £799, is similar

Glamorous West Yorkshire home

wallcoverings and tactile furniture. 'We wanted to respect the age of the house while giving it a contemporary twist,' says Emma. 'We find soft greys surprisingly warm, and love taupe, which is slightly masculine but very flexible. To prevent the schemes from seeming boring, we introduced brighter hues through wallpapers, lamps and the sunny yellow sideboard in the hall. But we restrained ourselves, as too many bold colours can be difficult to live with.'

Many of the pieces dotted around the property came from the couple's previous home, 'although we still had to buy more, as the rooms here are enormous,' says Emma. 'Because most of the ceilings are very high, we added picture rails to make them appear lower. It was important to get the size of things right, too. The fabulous lime-green corner sofa in the sitting room is a good example of this – anything smaller would have seemed lost.'

And while Emma might have been tempted to go out and buy everything at once, she took a reserved approach. 'We saved up for good-quality, classic items, and always found it was worth waiting to get exactly what we wanted,' she says. 'Andy and I pulled out all the stops to make this a individual but comfortable family home. It just goes to show what you can achieve if you stay focussed.' **BH**

