

# HEIGHT OF CHIC



**DESIGNER** Rebecca Leivars, 01273 732253, [leivars.com](http://leivars.com).

Plush velvet furnishings and smart storage give a sophisticated twist to the gentlemen's club aesthetic in this lofty family living room

**CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE SPACE?** This room is on the upper ground floor of a beautiful Victorian villa. The architect, Stephen Fletcher, knocked two rooms into one to create this dual-aspect living room, reinstating the cornicing to emphasise its fabulous high ceilings. With simple white wooden shutters adorning the windows at either end, I had a real blank canvas to work with.

**HOW DID YOU DEVISE THE SCHEME?** As I quickly established that my clients enjoy regular stays at hotels, I came up with the idea of an eclectic look that offers a modern take on a gentlemen's club. The key was to give the place wow factor, with a balance of plush pieces and industrial elements, while also creating a sanctuary that the couple and their two young sons would use.

**WHAT INSPIRED THE BOOKCASE?** I wanted to showcase the fact that my clients enjoy reading, but I was concerned that, with the height and size of the room, a stand-alone piece would create a division. The design I came up with – a contemporary take on the joinery you might find in a classic members' club – features a lower section that runs up to the fireplace, which helps to connect the space. The bookcase incorporates open shelves for books and accessories, and base drawers to hide photograph albums and CDs. The drawers feature soft-close runners and I added nickel filing cabinet handles to give them a subtle industrial edge.

**WHAT INFLUENCED THE COLOUR PALETTE?** The family have a passion for English country gardens and their own garden is filled with fragrant flowers, such as roses and lavender. The palette developed from a desire to bring the outside in. I felt the colour of the joinery needed to be calm yet strong; this rich grey with a slight green tint was matched from an existing sample. To complement this, we selected softer tones for the furnishings as we felt these worked well against the bookcase: the purple and aqua are happy summer tones that echo shades found in the garden.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR CHOICE OF FURNISHINGS.** So as not to detract from the impressive proportions of the space, it was important to give it a feeling of unity. Matching rugs help to connect the two halves of the room, while a pair of dainty armchairs face an L-shaped sofa to create an intimate setting around the woodburning stove. The ottomans not only provide more low-level seating, they also allow traffic through without obscuring the sight lines to the garden beyond. It might be surprising to see velvet upholstery in a house with young children, but the clients are relaxed and encourage their children to use this inviting space. □

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FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM PHOTOGRAPH NICK SMITH

## SOURCES

**Architecture**, Stephen Fletcher, 020 7637 1244, [stephen-fletcher.co.uk](http://stephen-fletcher.co.uk). **Bespoke bookcase**, Rebecca Leivars, 01273 732253, [leivars.com](http://leivars.com). **Pablo ottomans**, £1,630 each plus 6.5m fabric, The Sofa & Chair Company, 020 8752 8935, [thesofaandchair.co.uk](http://thesofaandchair.co.uk). **Maori armchairs**, £1,995 each plus 4m fabric, UniQue, 020 7351 5181, [uniquehomeuk.com](http://uniquehomeuk.com). **Ottomans in Otello** 53329; **armchairs in Otello** 53355; both £70,50m, Nobilis, 020 8767 0774, [nobilis.fr](http://nobilis.fr). **Arctic Pear chandelier**, £3,996, Ochre, 020 7096 7372, [ochre.net](http://ochre.net).

(On bookcase) **Angel wings**, £110 a pair, Attic, 020 8943 9626 [discoverattic.com](http://discoverattic.com). **Butterfly plate**, £70; **Blue Chair wavy bowl**, £75; both John Derian for Astier de Villatte at Designers Guild, 020 7351 5775, [designersguild.com](http://designersguild.com). **Paintings**, Matteo Massagrande at Shine Artists, 020 7499 1616, [shineartists.com](http://shineartists.com). **Flooring in Douglas fir**, from £136sq m, Dinesen, 020 3630 0196, [dinesen.com](http://dinesen.com). **Fedra rugs in Light Grey**, £555.45 for 2.3sq m, Nina Burgess, 020 7731 4191, [ninaburgess.co.uk](http://ninaburgess.co.uk).

