

# A House That Reimagines English Country Style

In rural Hampshire, the British designer Faye Toogood has converted a 19th-century manor into a space where modern and traditional interiors coexist.

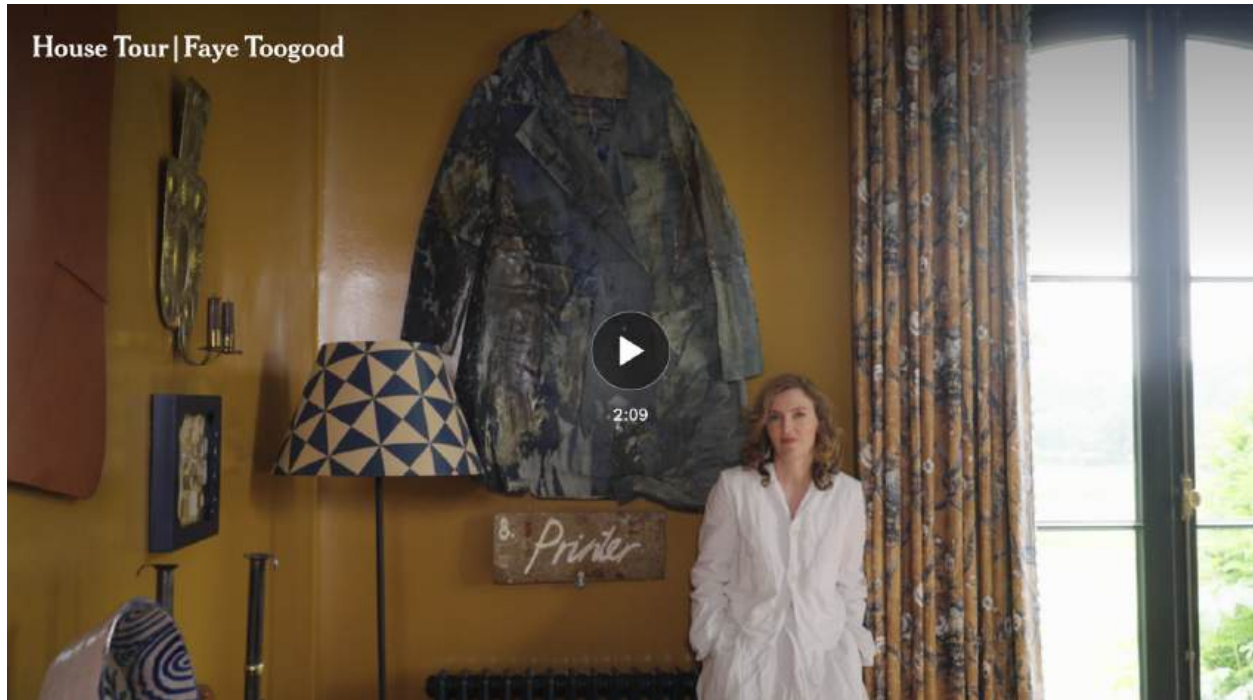
By Aimee Farrell  
Photographs by Martin Morrell  
May 1, 2025



In the kitchen eating area of the designer Faye Toogood and the broadcaster and writer Matt Gibberd's home near Winchester, England, a timber wall sculpture by Toogood hangs above the fireplace. Her Roly-Poly dining table is surrounded by antique chairs from Foster & Gane. Toogood also designed the Izé knobs for the cabinet, painted in Farrow & Ball's Broccoli Brown. The walls are Farrow & Ball's New White. Credit...Martin Morrell

IN 2017, WHEN the British designer Faye Toogood, already the mother of one, learned that she was pregnant with twins, she found herself craving more space and privacy than life in central London allowed. And so, along with her husband, the broadcaster and writer Matt Gibberd, and their eldest daughter, Indigo, now 12, she moved to the small city of Winchester, in Hampshire, where she'd spent her teens. The family, which soon included the twins Etta and Wren, now 7, lived first in a rental cottage, then in a Victorian garden flat down the road from Toogood's parents. Finally, in 2020 they settled into a two-story Victorian outside of town, eight miles east of Winchester's Norman Gothic cathedral. A country manor whose stucco facade is interrupted by an elegant arched loggia, the house is a departure from the spare, conceptual spaces that the couple always inhabited in London. And, they insist, it was never their intention to live on such a grand scale: The six-bedroom house encompasses 6,500 square feet and sits on five and a half acres. But Toogood, 48 — who,

since establishing her namesake studio in 2008, has become well known for her sculptural furniture, modern decorative objects, workwear-inspired clothing and minimalist residential interiors — often leans heavily on intuition as a designer and took a similar approach to house hunting. “This is the house,” she says, “that invited us in.”



The designer and her husband, the broadcaster and writer Matt Gibberd, lead a tour of their 19th-century manor near Winchester, England. Credit...Jerome Monnot

Built in the late 19th century, the slate-roofed mansion sits high above the main road, its crescent-shaped, south-facing lawn giving way to a patchwork of fields and grassland that slope down to the River Itchen on the horizon. It was the picturesque setting that drew Gibberd, 47 — who is the grandson of the English architect and town planner Frederick Gibberd — to the property. “The view,” he points out, “is the only thing you can’t change.” In remaking the home to suit her family, Toogood also worked from the outside in, first repainting the pistachio exterior a light taupe and then adorning the frontage with pale pink climbing roses. Inside, the goal was to soften the space, which had been stripped of its original finishes by the previous owners and, says Toogood, “lit up like a football stadium” with recessed fixtures, which they removed. After restoring the moldings and fireplaces — which had been covered up, layered in paint or fitted with modern wood burners — they installed traditional Victorian cast-iron radiators in many rooms, refurbished the sash windows and renovated the kitchen, adding internal glass windows and doors, an Aga stove, Plain English cabinetry and Derbyshire fossil stone countertops.



In the sitting room, a glass chair, coffee table and console designed by Toogood, floor matting by Rush Matters, armchairs upholstered in Jubilee Rose by Colefax and Fowler and curtains and cushions fabricated by Downers Design. Credit...Martin Morrell



The kitchen, with cabinetry by Plain English, is fitted with a pendant light by Toogood, an Aga oven, Jamb sconces and reclaimed Staffordshire floor tiles. Credit...Martin Morrell

WHEN FRIENDS FROM London visit for the first time, the couple say, they're often taken aback, having expected to find the pared-down interiors that Toogood is best known for designing and that Gibberd has championed with the Modern House, the London-based real estate agency-cum-digital magazine that he co-founded in 2011. Instead they're met with Pierre Frey floral curtains in the dining room, Jean Monro rose fabric on the primary bedroom headboard and botanical chintz armchairs in the sitting room. But Toogood points out that the décor is less a departure than a return: She and Gibberd first met working at *The World of Interiors*, where they developed an appreciation for print and pattern under the tutelage of the magazine's founding editor, Minn Hogg, an affirmed maximalist.

One enters the home through a rectangular foyer, where the walls are papered with a woodland scene that Toogood designed with the Brooklyn-based manufacturer Calico. In the center of the room, a giant glazed 19th-century display cabinet, which once sat in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, holds a collection of antique French plaster mushrooms that Toogood purchased from a friend's father. A life-size Carrara marble sculpture of a coat from the clothing line that Toogood designs with her sister, Erica, stands against the far wall, casting a slightly eerie specter. To the right is the dining room, where the 19th-century French mahogany dining table is surrounded by a set of



Gio Ponti Superleggera chairs. Devoid of electric lighting, the room is flooded with sun during the day from the large French doors that open onto the lawn. At night, the egg yolk-hued walls — painted in a custom Farrow & Ball color called Toogood Earth — glow with candlelight during frequent dinner parties with weekend guests.



In the bedroom of one of her daughters, a clip light from Original BTC, a Toogood-designed Spade chair for Please Wait to Be Seated, her Roly-Poly stool and a bed curtained in Pierre Frey and Robert Kime fabrics. Credit...Martin Morrell

Though Toogood says that she wanted to avoid making the home feel like a showroom, its size made dipping into her archive a necessity. “This house swallows up furniture,” she says. Near the end of renovations, she filled a truck with pieces, including a crystal version of her signature [Roly-Poly chair](#) and one of her hand-carved oak Plot I coffee tables — both of which are now in the sitting room, providing a contemporary counterpoint to the 1960s Holland & Sons sofa and canvas Marcel Breuer club chair, which once belonged to Gibberd’s grandfather. In the kitchen, a large space at the back of the house that she lined in reclaimed Staffordshire blue tiles, she placed her Roly-Poly table, a 55-inch round fiberglass pedestal where family dinners — planned by Toogood and mostly cooked by Gibberd — are served.



In the primary bedroom, a pair of Toogood's Gummy armchairs are upholstered in Pierre Frey Opio fabric. She also designed the hand-carved oak table and the bust. The blinds and curtains were made by Downers Design. Credit...Martin Morrell



In the entry, a Pavilion Globe pendant by Jamb hangs over a display cabinet originally from London's Victoria and Albert Museum that holds a collection of 19th-century plaster mushrooms. Toogood designed the wallpaper for Calico, and the rug is by Crucial Trading. Credit...Martin Morrell



More of Toogood's designs fill the den, including the round stoneware vase, the steel mesh coffee table, the dark green leather chair for Hem and the rug, which was produced by CC-Tapis. Credit...Martin Morrell



In the children's bathroom, an Edwardian-style sink and bath hardware from Burlington, sconces from Original BTC and wallpaper designed by Toogood for Calico. Credit...Martin Morrell



In the dressing room, a 19th-century Chinoiserie mirror, a Toogood Spade chair and a Chinoiserie cabinet from Foster & Gane. The dress is from Toogood's clothing line. Credit...Martin Morrell

Adjacent to the table is what the family refers to as the Pot Room, a glassed-in area dedicated to the white hand-thrown ceramics that Toogood has amassed over the years, some of them everyday dishes, others prized rarities. It's one of several such collections on display: Brown slipware fills a shelved nook off of the mudroom and, in the Flower Room, which is papered in a Colefax and Fowler seaweed print and hung with 19th-century pressed blooms, there are dozens of white biscuit-fired vases designed by the early 20th-century florist Constance Spry for London's Fulham Pottery. "I've always made sense of the world through collecting," says Toogood. "Living with Matt has refined these collections down, but the disease is still there."





In the mud room, a creamware jug from the Lacquer Chest on a painted table from Repton & Co.; in the primary bath, a Lefroy Brooks tub and hardware and a Roly-Poly side table; and in the dining room, a candelabra from Max Rollitt, Superleggera chairs by Gio Ponti for Cassina and a rug from Crucial Trading. Credit...Martin Morrell

For the girls, the most exciting aspect of their home is upstairs: At the far end of a landing, what appears to be a deep shelf set into the wall and stocked with seashells and pink British lusterware is actually a hidden “Scooby Doo” door, as they call it, leading to the couple’s shared dressing room. To enter, one must hop over an 11-inch-high, 15-inch-deep slab, which — they discovered during renovations — is essentially the structure’s central lintel. Like much of the house, it’s made from an early form of concrete known as no fines, mixed from fragments of flint and fish bones rather than sand. In the Victorian era, the material was extremely rare, considered the height of innovation. The family’s new home, it turns out, was more on brand than they’d initially believed. “It’s irrefutably an English country house,” says Gibberd, “but it has a real modernity to it.”

*Aimee Farrell, a freelance writer, editor and consultant based in England, reports on London’s visual arts and fashion scenes for T Magazine.*

*A version of this article appears in print on May 18, 2025, Page 117 of T Magazine with the headline: Against Type.*