



NEW DIRECTIONS

Isabella Worsley on the design renaissance of the Great British Pub

My design philosophy is driven by buildings themselves – I'm inspired by the classical backbone of architecture, so a pub is a wonderful subject matter. From a design perspective, the most important starting point is considering heritage: British pubs are so historically established, and have played a really important role as the centre of communities.

For example, The Surprise in Chelsea has a great naval history – it was named after *HMS Surprise*, a famous ship used by the British to surprise attack the French. When Jack Greenall brought me on board to re-imagine its interior, I wanted to weave in subtle references to its naval roots and its location near the Thames. By contrast, with The Pheasant Inn at Lambourn (which I added three rooms to last year, building on a 2016 redesign by Flora Soames), we wanted to pull on the heartstrings of the British country pub and its role within the countryside. We used lots of deep, rich hues, rusty reds and an autumnal palette which invited that pastoral sensibility.

Translating these design principles into a home works really well. A key thing is to utilise local craftsmen and artisans wherever possible. Designers need to be thinking about the environment more than ever before, so it's important to be mindful when you're sourcing suppliers. Locally crafted, second-hand or refurbished pieces bring enduring quirk, charm and personality to a space.

The last couple of years has brought about a wonderful renewed appreciation for The Great British Pub. The importance of a space for communities to gather has revived interest post-Covid, it's very exciting and inspiring for designers to create spaces to really be enjoyed. As for my favourite pub? I think it has to be The Gunton Arms in Norfolk, designed by Robert Kime. He's done a wonderful job of giving a sense of heritage through his design, which is strikingly counter-balanced by contemporary artworks from Ivor Braka's collection.

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FROM TOP: The Pheasant Inn; The Surprise

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