

HOME INSPIRATION

Echoes of NEW ENGLAND

East Coast American charm blends with chic industrial accents in this converted workshop in Appledore, Kent

WORDS BY ALEX REECE PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD GADSBY
STYLING BY BEN KENDRICK



OPPOSITE Homeowner Amy Maynard and her children, Lottie and Theo, in their garden
THIS PAGE The exposed brick walls are the only remnants of the original workshop, which is now the kitchen

next



THIS PAGE The Royal Military canal runs below Appledore village, dividing it from the marshes and reclaimed land; picket fencing encloses a secluded outdoor seating area **OPPOSITE** Steel-framed doors, by The Green Window Company, dressed in curtain fabric by Ada & Ina in Ronja Cherry, create the industrial-accented look Amy envisaged

The sunsets here are unlike anything I've ever seen," says Amy Maynard of the big skies over Appledore in Kent, where she lives with her husband Charlie and their two children. As the historic village lies on the edge of Romney Marsh – a large area of coastal wetland, dotted with sheep and ancient churches – there is plenty of open space for the sinking sun to put on a spectacular display. "Moving back here," she continues, "has given me a renewed sense of awe about the area."

Amy grew up in nearby Winchelsea – a hilltop town in East Sussex that overlooks the south coast. All through her years working in London as a journalist, she always knew that she would return to her rural roots. "I think the countryside is in my blood," she says. "I'd come down to visit my parents and the minute I got into the car to drive back, I could feel my shoulders going up. I loved London, but I knew my heart was down here."

After meeting Charlie, a fellow journalist, and having children (Lottie, seven, and Theo, five), her desire to move became even more urgent. And so, in 2015, after four years of casually browsing properties online, the couple began searching in earnest. To finance their lifestyle change, they were looking for a family home with an outbuilding they could convert and run as a holiday let. They viewed just two properties in the vicinity of her parents' home, and the second – an 18th-century former village store in Appledore,

with four bedrooms and an Arts & Crafts frontage – seemed to have exactly what they wanted. But what really clinched the deal was the carpenter's workshop in the garden and an orchard leading to open fields.

The family settled into their new home in August that year. The house itself needed only a lick of paint to make it theirs – the workshop was a different story, though: "It was very rudimentary," Amy says. "There was sawdust everywhere and a massive crack in the back wall." She and Charlie enlisted the help of an architect, who began drawing up plans for a new-build to take its place.

Unfortunately, a few months into the scheme, everything came to a halt when the architect – who was the son of a family friend – stopped working after becoming ill.

AMERICAN DREAM

Eventually, Amy was recommended the architect Rob Pollard (now of RX Architects) and their plans were back on track. Planning permission was granted for a single-storey bolt-hole, and work began in August 2017. Amy was determined to project-manage, alongside her builder, Ryan Blake: "He really shared my vision and was sensitive to the whole process." From the outset, Amy had clear ideas about how The Outbuilding should look, with a cedar-clad exterior that was inspired by ▶



The pared-back industrial feel carries through to the steel-framed doors



New England vernacular architecture and the interior similar to a New York loft.

Completed in February 2018, it was a radical rebuild. The original workshop was almost completely taken down, save for two brick walls, around which everything else took shape. These now form the textural backdrop for the open-plan living space, and the pared-back industrial feel is carried through to the steel-framed doors, which open out onto the decked terrace. "They were the most expensive thing," Amy says, smiling. "I wanted it all to feel rustic but luxurious." A smaller, black-framed window has been installed between the main bedroom and the living area – a clever means of opening up the layout and flooding it with light.

CHARACTERFUL CURIOS

By spending money on key pieces, such as the windows, engineered oak parquet flooring and sleek shower fittings, Amy achieved the high-end look she wanted. She reduced costs by sourcing pieces from antiques markets, charity shops and eBay. The roll-top bath was a favourite find: "We discovered it on a local forum – a guy had it rusting in his garden," Amy says. Now ▶



OPPOSITE Amy made the most of space with bespoke shelving, which she has filled with favourite books. THIS PAGE Embroidered cushions brighten the room, while on the brick wall, a series of illustrations surround an antique-style map



re-enamelled by Faversham-based The Bath Doctor, and painted on the outside in Little Greene's Light Peachblossom, it is the centrepiece of the main bedroom, where dusty pinks, pale greens and ticking fabric combine to create a romantic and timeless feel.

In the kitchen area, above cupboards painted in Farrow & Ball's Railings and topped with pale quartz, colourful ceramics, glass and enamelware line the open shelving. Mismatched embroidered cushions dress the sofa and a rocking chair sits beside the woodburner. "I wanted it to feel like a home from home," Amy says. Other quirky touches include the custom-built bunk beds in the corridor. Inspired by sleeper cabins on ships and trains, they give children a playful sleeping zone to make their own.

The Outbuilding opened to guests in 2018, and it's received lots of glowing feedback: "People get inspiration from it, which is particularly nice," Amy says. She works from home (as a freelance journalist and PR), so hosting guests fits easily around her routine. Outside work, the family have immersed themselves in the local community and countryside. "The children can be more free range," Amy enthuses. "We love Gamber Sands and spend a lot of time in Rye - there's so much for kids to do around here." As for Amy, she has reconnected with the landscape of her childhood in an entirely new way. "I used to take it for granted," she says, "but the countryside is really uplifting, and living here has given me the chance to fully appreciate it."

THE OUTBUILDING sleeps up to four people and is available to rent through theoutbuildingappledore.com.

countryliving.com/uk



Dusky pinks and ticking fabric create a timeless feel

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: An indulgent roll-top bath sits in the bedroom; brass and marble accents lend an elegant touch; architect Rob Pollard designed the clever corridor bunk beds
THIS PAGE: Chalky colours heighten the romantic feel, with the headboard upholstered in fabric by Vanessa Arbuthnott