

# COUNTRY LIFE®

APRIL 4, 2018

EVERY WEEK

## Interiors special

### Why the English look is back

Bedded bliss: the return of the four-poster  
The wicked world of nursery rhymes



# A vintage revival

The decoration of her husband's family home in Scotland gave Caroline Inchyra the idea of creating textiles inspired by her own collection of antique pieces, explains Arabella Youens

Photography by Dan Duchars  
Styling by Sara Bird





# Interiors

*Previous page:* This room was 'always very beautiful, but rarely used' before James and Caroline took over the reins of the house. By toning down the formality, introducing more relaxed fabrics and changing the arrangement of the sofas to open up space, it's in constant use. *Right:* Every room in the house, apart from the central staircase hall, boasts original hardwood floorboards. Other than some damage repair after the flood, the room is almost as it was during Caroline's grandparents-in-law's tenure

**W**HEN Lord Inchyra's grandparents bought a Grade-A listed Regency house near Perth in the 1950s, the property was described in *COUNTRY LIFE* as 'the most perfect small estate in Scotland'. When he, his wife Caroline and their three children moved there from London, the first requirement was to add a large kitchen extension to the ground floor. Then, in piecemeal fashion, they began to tackle the other rooms. With the help of an Edinburgh-based decorator, Sara Whitby, a George Smith sofa from their London house, trunks rescued from the attic and long lengths of fabrics from the likes of de Le Cuona and Colefax and Fowler, the drawing room was transformed. Later, damage caused by two successive floods forced them to address several further rooms that they might have otherwise left; today, the work remains in progress.

**‘I've always been happier with something beautiful and old, rather than new and shiny’**

In the meantime, Caroline is juggling the evolution of her new business. Whenever time has allowed, she has enjoyed rummaging through antique markets for textiles and turning her finds into curtains or cushions. 'When it comes to fabrics, I've always been much happier with something beautiful and old, rather than new and shiny,' she explains. But it wasn't until the move to Inchyra that this hobby transformed into something altogether more ambitious. 'It would've been pretty easy to spend my

**The main entrance hall, with a fire that 'roars for a good part of the year', is often used as an entertaining space**





**Inchyra fabrics are treated using a secret method that makes them feel like they've been part of a room for a lifetime, yet keeps the resilience of a brand new fabric**

whole life gardening, but I've always worked and definitely wanted something else,' she says. A chance meeting with the owner of a textile mill in Perth sparked an idea of giving some of her beloved antique fabrics a new lease of life. She set to work and a small collection of archive-inspired fabrics was unveiled in 2012. 'Looking back, now that I understand the size and scope of the fabrics industry, I can't quite believe that I had the temerity to think that I could jump in,' reflects Caroline.

**‘Inchyra is as much about the feel as the look—the fabrics have a luxurious depth and quality’**

The collection started to grow. In some cases, designs were rescued from patterns that would otherwise have been lost and others were edited with changes of scale and colour. Caroline also added new designs that were complementary. 'Something has to jump out and I never know what that might be—it might be a motif from a piece of 18th-century china, for example.' All the fabrics are treated with a 'I'll-tell-you-but-then-I-will-have-to-kill-



you method', which gives them a soft, slubby handle and makes them look as if they've been in a room for a lifetime, yet they have the resilience of a new fabric. 'I spent ages playing around, trying to find a finish that replicated what happens to old fabrics—that way that the colour sets into the material rather than on top. It's important to me,' she continues, 'Inchyra is as much about the feel as the look—they have a luxurious depth and quality that bring instant heritage to any room. We aren't mass market—and never will be—but we cater for people keen to create a more informal look.'

Recently the Balazuc collection was launched (*Interiors news*, page 86); named after a medieval village the couple

love in the Ardèche region of France. It boasts beautiful floral prints in a strong palette of colours including deep reds, soft pinks, mustard yellows and aged blues and greens. Caroline has plans to add to the designs organically. 'I wanted to create a collection that works together like a family: when we add something new, I always try to link it back to existing fabrics so that everything works comfortably together. We aren't interested in trends: the fabrics we design are as relevant today as they will be in 10 years.' By then, she will hopefully have completed the protracted business of breathing new life into her family's beloved home. 

*Inchyra Designs* (01738 860066; [www.inchyradesigns.co.uk](http://www.inchyradesigns.co.uk))

# Interiors News



### Sleeping beauty

Embellished with brass bed knobs, spun in Norfolk, the Victoria bedstead costs from £999 for a double size, Wrought Iron & Brass Bed Co. (01485 542516; [www.wroughtironandbrassbed.co.uk](http://www.wroughtironandbrassbed.co.uk))



### Light and shade

Penny Morrison's treasure trove of decorative lamps includes this Tortoiseshell Candlestick design, £348, and handmade 18in Mollis shade with Golden Trim, £342, made from vintage textiles (020-7384 2975; [www.penny-morrison.com](http://www.penny-morrison.com))

### Natural choice

Honed from a single block of Carrara marble, the Tuscan Farmhouse 800 sink, £2,450, is designed to last a lifetime, deVOL (www.devolkitchens.co.uk; 01509 261000)



### Aged beauty

Inspired by vintage textiles, Caroline Inchyra's collection of aged linens and pure wools have a gentle beauty, seen here in patchworks from the latest Balazuc collection, prices from £82 per m. Inchyra Designs (01738 860066; [www.inchyradesigns.co.uk](http://www.inchyradesigns.co.uk))



### Modern elegance

Clean lines on a classic piece—the Cromer coffee table in Beeswax finish, £390, is designed to suit both modern and traditional-style rooms. From Jim Lawrence ([www.jim-lawrence.co.uk](http://www.jim-lawrence.co.uk); 01473 826685)