

JULY 2013



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The extra-deep work surfaces are a great contrast to the walnut cabinets

All fitted out

Furniture designer Barbara Genda had the luxury of refurbishing and re-designing the whole interior of her Clapham Common family home, discovers Linda Parker

Barbara Genda and her husband Harry Jarman have lived in the Clapham Common area since 2005, when Barbara moved in with Harry to his 'bachelor' house on the North side of the common. 'Harry had lived in the area for 20 years,' explains Barbara, 'But when our son Eddie was one, and I was expecting Amelie, we decided to sell up and move to the West side of the Common – I was very keen to start afresh and create a family home for us'.

Barbara's design skills mean that she was able to focus on every detail of the refurbishment, creating fitted furniture and cabinetry for virtually every room in the house, whilst sourcing bargains from eBay. The process wasn't easy though, Barbara recalls a host of disasters and difficulties which the couple had to overcome. 'I had to sack the builders –



Barbara Genda
at home in
Clapham

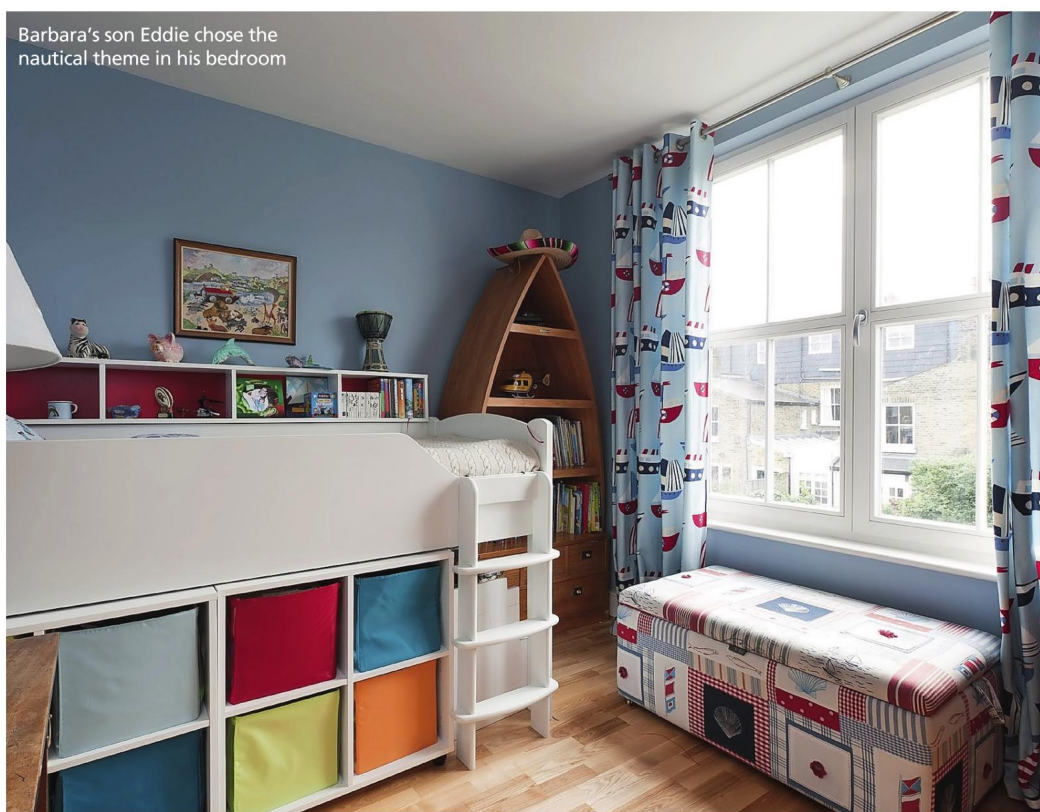
The house was a relic from the 1950s, with an outside toilet, a metal shower cubicle and electric meters...

after they decided not to turn up anymore – and then discovered there was a huge list of failings from the Building Control officer,' she says.

She took over the project management, as well as continuing to run her business and look after newly-arrived Amelie. Her father had come to stay from Poland for the duration of the build project, and with the help of their handyman friend Gregor they completed the refurbishment in the space of eight months. The transformation is outstanding. 'The house was a relic from the 1950s, with an outside toilet, a metal shower cubicle on the ground floor and coin-operated electric meters in the bedrooms,' say Barbara. She knew it was the house for them as soon as they walked in, despite the condition. 'I could see its potential and we had pretty much made an offer for the asking price by the time we left the first viewing'. ➔



Barbara's son Eddie chose the nautical theme in his bedroom



Barbara designed a sleek media cabinet in high gloss grey lacquer and wenge finish oak veneer for the TV room



The stunning mosaic tiles in the bathroom are by Bisazza



Above: The egg-shaped bath in the master en-suite is in stone-resin, by Castello Baths, and stands out beautifully against the walnut wall paneling



Left: The loft conversion was a masterpiece of planning. Barbara managed to include two bedrooms, with an en-suite between them, accessible from both bedrooms

Barbara's furniture designs are undoubtedly modern, but with a classic look that works well within her mid-century home. She's also had to accommodate Harry's antiques and collectibles. 'I describe my style as 'eclectic smooth contemporary' she says, 'I like modern, clean pieces, and they interweave with the more traditional antiques and decorative pieces that Harry has collected. The real challenge was to make the two blend together'.

Barbara's design philosophy is 'Practicality, purpose, and beauty' and she likes working with oak, which can be stained to achieve different finishes. 'Every home has its own rules' she says, 'every situation and design brief requires a different approach and different materials'. The end result, in her own home in Clapham, is a family home that works beautifully for the couple and their two children, Amelie six, and Eddie, seven. ●

✦ To find out more about Barbara Genda Furniture call 020 7978 23249 or visit barbara-genda.com

Get the look

Steal Barbara's streamlined style



Lyon coffee table, £585

Alison at Home, 020 7087 2900;
alisonathome.co.uk

Style note

Barbara bought the upholstered ottoman-chest in Eddie's bedroom from Loungin' in Battersea (loungin.co.uk)



Brighton Wide Shelves Storage Unit with red shelf, £250

Aspace, 0845 872 2400; aspace.co.uk



Thinn Gio bath, £3,474

BC Designs, 01206 827100;
bcdesigns.co.uk