



Dark blue cabinetry leads the way from the dressing area through to the bathroom.

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

VIVIENNE AYERS discovers how a busy London family created the perfect holiday home to escape city life on the idyllic East Lothian coast

A much-needed antidote to city life is how the McBride family describe their breathtaking holiday home on the East Lothian coast. "This is our bolthole away from the urban hustle and bustle of our busy lives in London," explains Anna McBride.

She and her husband Alistair run a successful business and needed somewhere to escape to with their children, Jessica, 16, Rory, 14, and Sophie, 12, where they could all unwind. "We wanted our stays here to give us a sense of peacefulness and tranquillity and the soothing coastline views really adds to this emotion for us," reveals Anna.

And the coast could barely be closer - it's a mere hop, skip and a jump away. "The beach is literally at the bottom of our garden so we really enjoy waking up and taking our two dogs Bella and Olly for a walk first thing in the morning along the quiet beach," explains Anna.

She and Alistair were drawn to the area as they have family in Edinburgh (Alistair is originally from the city) and they had a holiday home in Edinburgh for some years. Being outdoor people, they frequently visited the picturesque coastline and beaches of East Lothian, especially as Alistair is a keen golfer and regularly visits the local courses there.

When the children came along, the lure of the coast became even stronger and the couple decided to buy a house in an

exclusive development in East Lothian where each of the houses are unique, with the aim of being near the beach and golf courses.

"Alistair is a very keen golfer and we are spoilt in East Lothian for courses to play on," says Anna. "We were travelling up and down all the time when we had our house in Edinburgh so it made sense to actually move here. Our family in Edinburgh still feel close enough for us to be able to spend quality time with them but they also love visiting us here."

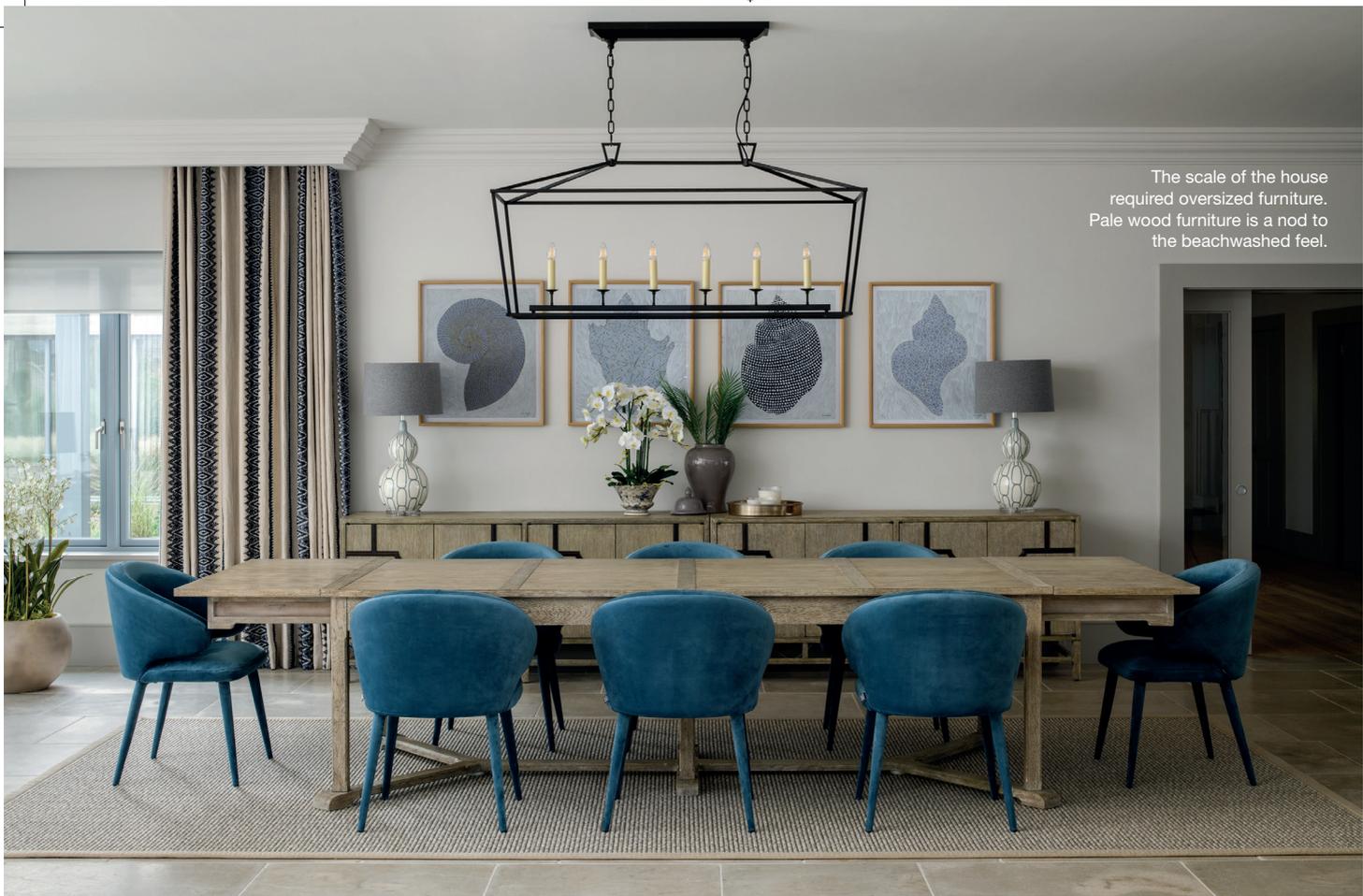
The setting of the development is

stunning and reminiscent of New England, surrounded by large pine trees and with magnificent views out to sea. "We loved the community feel in this development and in particular how each home is individual rather than being a typical new build that you could see anywhere in the UK," reveals Anna.

Then, in 2021, the plot of land opposite their holiday home came up for sale and the couple couldn't resist buying it because of its amazing sea views. "It is a really beautiful site just on the coast with uninterrupted views of the



This elevated and informal seating space on the first floor has intense, spectacular views of the sea and the beach.



The scale of the house required oversized furniture. Pale wood furniture is a nod to the beachwashed feel.

JEFFREYS INTERIORS' TIPS FOR COASTAL INTERIOR DESIGN

- 1 Maximise the views by using soft voile curtaining on the windows. This creates a light and airy feel and also will not distract from the views.
- 2 Use natural and textured materials along with bleached woods to harmonise with the surrounding landscape.
- 3 Keep the colour palette light and airy and draw on the sea and sky tones for pops of colour.
- 4 Comfortable swivel armchairs at the window to soak in the views is a must.
- 5 Use large abstract art and accessories to add personality rather than lots of smaller items that can clutter up the space and look untidy.

sea and beach. We can also see a little lighthouse, which adds a wonderful focal point to the view," says Anna.

The couple had a vision for their new home. "We wanted to create the perfect home that worked for our growing family as well as our frequent guests coming to stay."

The house was designed with the



The study is the darkest room in the house and the decision was made to embrace it with a dark blue colour scheme.

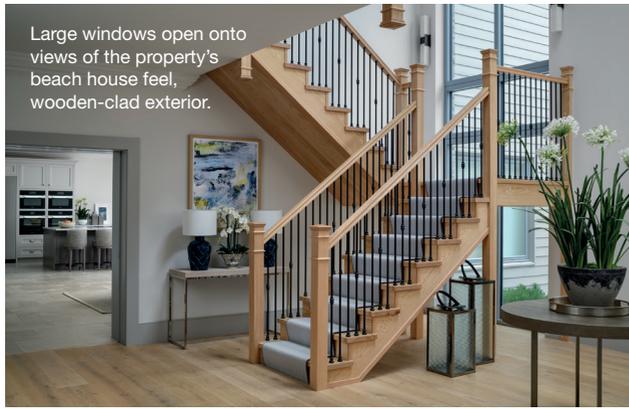
surroundings in mind. "The exterior of the house is very sympathetic to the environment it sits in. We purposely chose to have natural materials, such as stone and wood panelling, to sit harmoniously within the site so it looks like it is meant to be here and doesn't fight with the scenery all around," explains Anna.

"We really invested in the windows of this house to give clear wall to wall, floor to ceiling uninterrupted views. We have a beautiful, elegant formal room on the ground floor, where we can open the door directly on to the coastal-inspired garden that features natural planting and leads to the sandy beach.

"We also have a more relaxed family living room on the first floor that has the most breathtaking views, as it is elevated. Our bedroom also looks right out onto the sea view. Sometimes we don't draw the curtains and we just lie in bed with a cup of tea watching the view changing before our eyes. It really is the best of both worlds because we are right on the coastline with uninterrupted views and beside the golf course too."

When it came to the interior, Anna and Alistair wanted the house to





Large windows open onto views of the property's beach house feel, wooden-clad exterior.



A textured wallpaper evokes the soft swirliness of sea movement in the formal living room.



Tall maritime blue armchairs are shaped with organic curves and provide comfortable seating in the kitchen seating area.

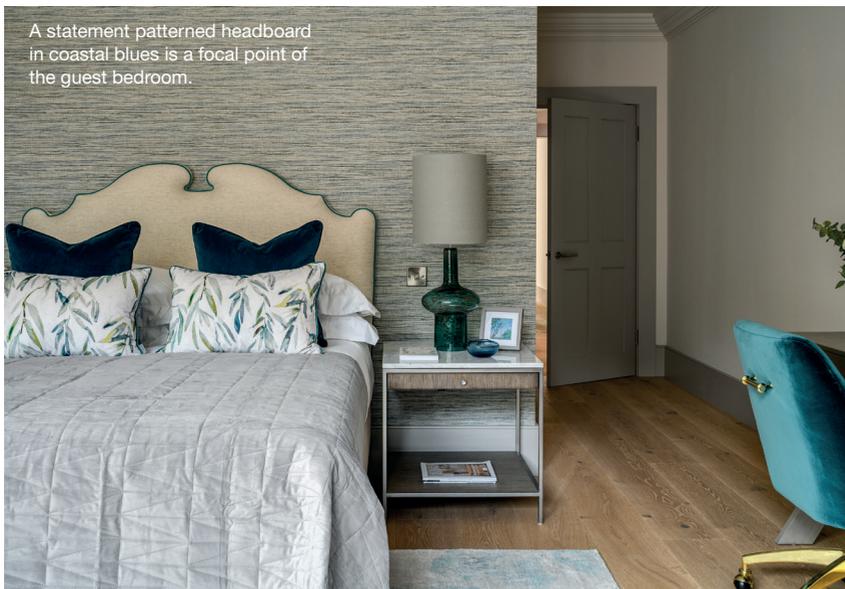


The cushions have a subtle nod to the location with fringing that is reminiscent of sea foam.

The master bedroom has wonderful sea views.



A statement patterned headboard in coastal blues is a focal point of the guest bedroom.



‘Our bedroom looks right out onto the sea view. Sometimes we don’t draw the curtains and we just lie in bed with a cup of tea watching the view changing before our eyes’

really flow in terms of the colour palette and look and feel, and turned to Jill Eilbeck of Jeffreys Interiors to come up with a dream scheme. "We wanted this house to be a real sanctuary and feel calm and restful for us and everyone who stays with us. We worked along with Jill to create a beautiful interior that I know we are going to enjoy for a very long time," says Anna.

Jill has created a striking yet tranquil decor that is perfect for entertaining. She explains: "Anna's main objective was to have a comfortable and hardwearing family home that's wasn't too formal and grand - she loves blue so we incorporated lots of shades, as well as references to the coast." The elegant interior has a relaxed feel with its soothing colour palette. Statement pieces and sumptuous fabrics evoke a luxe aesthetic.

The McBrides' new home has had huge benefits for the family's way of life. 'There are lots of family activities that we can do here, such as surfing and paddle boarding. We find we spend so much more time outdoors here whether the sun is shining or not. It's still wonderful to be here,' says Anna. 'We find the air is so much cleaner here, which really helps boost the children's mood and energy levels. We love our life here.'

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ANNA'S FAVOURITE THINGS TO DO IN EAST LOTHIAN

- A morning stroll along the beach with the dogs. We love to go first thing in the morning when it's quiet and we often have the beach to ourselves.
- Running up and down the sand dunes with the children. It's one of life's simple pleasures and the children find it so much fun.
- Dinner at our local restaurant, The Lawn (lawnrestaurant.co.uk), which sources local produce and the best seafood. We also love The Bonnie Badger (bonniebadger.com), a stylish restaurant with rooms that serves delicious food.
- We love to visit Archerfield Walled Garden (archerfieldwalledgarden.com), an 18th century walled garden that used to grow produce for Archerfield House and now encompasses a rose garden, perennial meadow, wildlife area, potager and cut flower beds. There are lots of great events there, including garden tours.

