

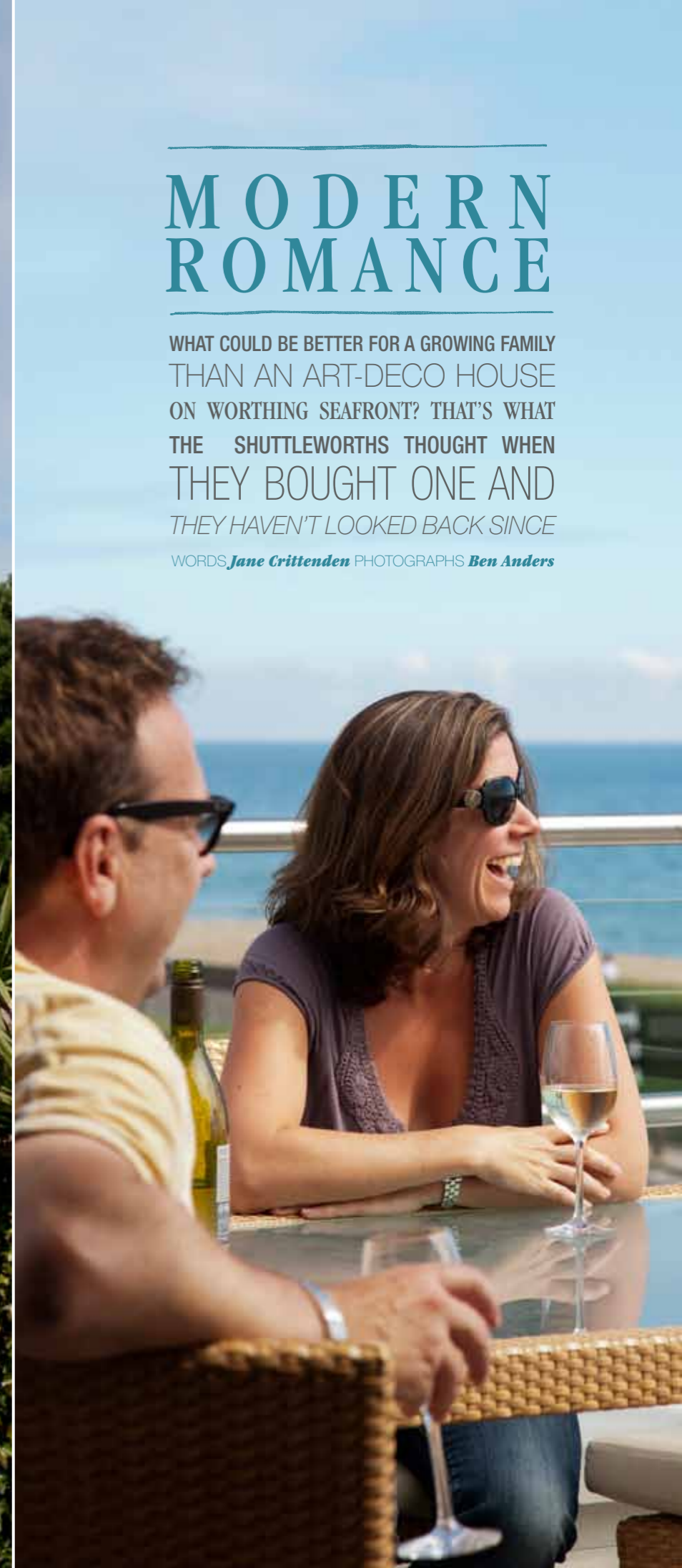


THIS PICTURE The Art-Deco house was unloved when Craig and Catherine (right) first saw it but they have sympathetically restored the exterior and created a light and airy family home within

MODERN ROMANCE

WHAT COULD BE BETTER FOR A GROWING FAMILY THAN AN ART-DECO HOUSE ON WORTHING SEAFRONT? THAT'S WHAT THE SHUTTLEWORTHS THOUGHT WHEN THEY BOUGHT ONE AND THEY HAVEN'T LOOKED BACK SINCE

WORDS *Jane Crittenden* PHOTOGRAPHS *Ben Anders*





‘WE WANTED TO CREATE A CLEAN, WHITE SPACE HERE. AN INTERIOR DESIGN FRIEND SUGGESTED ADDING SOME COLOUR WITH SOFAS, CUSHIONS AND CHAIRS, WHICH LOOKS JUST RIGHT’

You can't miss the Shuttleworths' holiday home on Worthing's seafront because it is such a striking example of seaside Art Deco. The substantial property with its white walls, curved form and roof terrace – so typical of the architecture of the time – attracts a lot of attention. 'People stop and look,' Catherine says. 'We've even had locals knocking on the door asking to see how we've decorated. A newsletter produced by the Worthing Society [a historical group] wrote favourably about us and it is nice to know the town is pleased with what we've done. At least we've kept the house as a family home rather than turn it into flats.'

A HANKERING TO LIVE BY THE SEA

Catherine and Craig's decision to buy a holiday house at the seaside happened, as these things often do, by chance. Initially they were looking for a bigger home in London, where they live full time. However, with five children to consider, aged from six months to 18 years, more space was essential.

'Our London home is a Victorian terrace with a basement family room and it can be a bit of a squeeze at the weekend,' says Catherine. 'We couldn't sell our house, so we looked for a coastal holiday home where we could escape to instead.'

The couple didn't have a firm idea of where to buy but wanted somewhere easily reached by train from Clapham Junction. 'I've always had a hankering to live by the sea,' Catherine says. With a hectic weekday schedule (both Catherine and Craig work as solicitors) and family life to juggle, their goal was to find a haven to relax and unwind in at the weekends.

Craig says they 'followed the train line' south to Sussex. Rather than the bright lights of Brighton, however, they looked further west along the coast. When they found the 1930s Art-Deco house, with its roof terrace, big windows and fabulous position near Worthing beach, the decision was made for



THIS PICTURE The house is furnished with classic 20th-century pieces such as these Barcelona chairs and the Arco standing lamp by A&PG Castiglioni OPPOSITE, FROM TOP The original wooden floor and staircase have been refurbished and an Art Deco-style mirror was made for the hallway wall; the roof terrace is encased in a stainless-steel and glass balustrade by Railing London

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEASIDE ART DECO

The 1920s and 1930s were decadent years following the horrors of the First World War, and increasing numbers of people flocked to the coast for their holidays. For the first time, local councillors were given the responsibility of managing their own budgets, allowing them to improve seaside towns to cope with the boom. The flamboyant architecture of the Thirties, with its Modernist zigzags, geometric shapes and linear symmetry, heralded an exciting future. Buildings referenced ocean liners, with curved corners and windows, railed balconies, circular staircases, flat roofs, glass and chrome. Worthing still has many Art-Deco buildings, such as the Beach Hotel and the Connaught Theatre. According to Nevil Hopkins at The Twentieth Century Society, the Shuttleworths' house was designed in 1935 (c20society.org.uk).



THIS PAGE Splashes of colour throughout the house work well against the white interior OPPOSITE The couple put an en suite in their bedroom where the distinctive curved windows overlook the sea



THIS PICTURE The high-gloss kitchen cabinets are by Hacker and the worktop is Corian OPPOSITE, FROM TOP Architect Nigel Dalby designed the cantilevered bathroom vanity top. The sanitaryware is Hansgrohe from John Nicholls; Catherine and Craig had library shelves built across one of the dining-room walls for books and Art-Deco ornaments. The globe pendant is from Heal's and the chairs are John Lewis

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them. 'We didn't really know much about the town,' admits Catherine. 'It's only since we've spent time here that we realise how lucky we've been. We only have to cross the road to go swimming in the sea or visit the playground, and the town is a five-minute cycle along the seafront. It's just perfect for us.'

OPENING THE BUILDING UP

Catherine and Craig first viewed the property in late 2008. Although the rooms were poorly organised and hadn't been touched since the 1970s, the couple could see that there was plenty of potential. Few original interior features remained, but the exterior architecture, although in poor shape, was certainly salvageable. It soon became clear that this was going to be a bigger renovation project than the couple had anticipated, but they liked the Art-Deco style and location so much that they weren't put off.

Unsure where to begin, they consulted their interior designer friend, Lizzie Stueck. She recommended some architects, and advised them on fabrics and furnishings, which another interior designer, Tamsin Chubb, implemented when Lizzie later went on maternity leave. Architect Nigel Dalby then began working on a design that would lead to a more open-plan, contemporary interior and a roof extension, along with designing some bespoke furniture.

The work downstairs was straightforward enough: knocking down walls and putting in steel beams to create more space. However, upstairs was more complicated. The extension was to be built onto the flat roof of the existing tower to create a living area, observation room and roof terrace.

Nigel says the planners treated the property as listed even though it wasn't on the statutory list. 'The extended roof had to retain the expression of the original tower,' he explains, 'so I made it smaller and added a roof canopy over the terrace, which is more in keeping with the style of the building.'

The plans were approved in September 2009 and work then started. Nigel recommended the building contractor Chris Marchant from Edgehill Estates, who also project managed while the couple were at





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work in London. Chris's team gutted the downstairs and reconfigured the layout. The front bay windows were removed, and full-height windows along with French doors installed. These open on to a new set of curved steps leading down to the sunken garden.

'We knew it would take a lot of work, but not quite how much,' Catherine says. 'But we're so pleased with Nigel's design and Chris's attention to detail.'

A CLEAN, WHITE SPACE

When it came to the interior, the couple had already started collecting some 1930s pieces such as an original Pullman's liner poster, a drinks cabinet and period ornaments. Nigel also sourced an original 1930s Bakelite bell push from eBay and mounted it onto a stainless-steel backplate. The walls were painted white to showcase their art collection and create a calm environment.

'In London our home is dark and cluttered,' Catherine says, 'so we wanted a clean, white space here. Our artist friends had given us some work as gifts and Lizzie helped us source a white kitchen. She then suggested adding bits of colour with cushions, sofas and chairs, which looks just right.'

The house was finished in autumn 2010 and since then, the family are frequent weekend visitors, often for longer stretches in the school holidays. Catherine and Craig have been surprised by how relaxing it is in their coastal home. 'It's like being on holiday all the time,' Catherine says. 'When the weather is nice, we swim in the sea, go out for ice creams and have barbecues on the roof terrace. And there's so much space for us all, not just inside the house but outside, too. It's lovely having nothing in front of us except the sea and the sky. We love coming here.'

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CATHERINE & CRAIG'S PERFECT DAY

'We're never in a rush at the weekend – we just drift around,' says Craig. 'Catherine used to scuba-dive near here, so she and our daughter Yasmin might start the day with a swim in the sea.'

We've bought kayaks and an inflatable boat, so we'll have a potter about on the water, too. We like having brunch at the Bluebird Café on Ferring Beach (01903 503033) and at some point the younger ones go to the playground over the road. Later on, we might cycle along the seafront to Worthing and have a late lunch of fish and chips and ice cream on the beach. By the evening we will have all worked our way up to the roof terrace. Catherine and I will crack open a bottle of wine and then it's time for me to get the barbecue going.'

THIS PAGE Worthing Pier was rebuilt in 1935 in 'Streamline Moderne' style. OPPOSITE, FROM TOP The terrace is a popular space for family barbecues; a child's bedroom features Orla Kiely-print pouffes, candy-striped blinds and an Andy Warhol Flowers print.