

a Chelsea Gold Medal in 2013 and also looks after the gardens at Exbury, Hampshire, created by her great-grandfather, the celebrated plantsman Lionel de Rothschild.
01380 848181; www.balstonagius.co.uk

Pip Morrison

Until recently, Pip worked alongside fellow garden designer and author Mary Keen. Today, the accomplished landscape architect, who trained in Edinburgh, maintains a famously low profile.
07817 736360

Robert Myers Associates

A large, Cambridge- and Herefordshire-based practice that's designed many private country gardens and public spaces, including the Magic Garden at Hampton Court Palace and the Bowes Lyon Rose Garden at RHS Wisley. It's currently working on designs for the proposed redevelopment of the In and Out Club on Piccadilly, W1.
01544 232035; www.robertmyers-associates.co.uk

Rupert Golby

This Kew-trained garden designer keeps a low profile, but has nevertheless built up a word-of-mouth following in the Cotswolds and beyond for his Classical planting. His project portfolio includes Daylesford House in Gloucestershire and Kingham Hill House in Oxfordshire.
07785 226384

Simon Johnson

As an experienced country-house landscape

designer, Simon Johnson's expertise takes him to projects all over the world, from the Mediterranean to New England in the USA. Based near Bath, he worked with acclaimed designer Penelope Hobhouse for many years.
www.simonjohnson.co.uk

Todd Longstaffe-Gowan

As gardens adviser to Historic Royal Palaces, Todd Longstaffe-Gowan was responsible for the redesign of Kensington Palace's commemorative White Garden, which opened last summer.
020-7253 2100; www.tlg-landscape.co.uk

Tom Stuart-Smith

Widely regarded as one of the country's most influential garden designers, Tom Stuart-Smith has won eight gold medals and three best-in-show awards at Chelsea. Country-house gardens are a staple, but work takes him around the world. He's currently designing the new RHS garden near Salford, the first stage of which is anticipated to open in 2019.
020-7253 2100; www.tomstuartsmith.co.uk

Xa Tollemache

Xa Tollemache's garden at Helmingham Hall, near Ipswich in Suffolk, was named the Historic Houses Association's garden of the year in 2017. Her practice, which was established in 1996, favours a classic contemporary style. Her Global Growth garden, for RHS Hyde Hall in Essex, is due to open this summer.
01473 890799; www.xa-tollemache.co.uk

Interior decorators

Of all the decorative trends that have been in vogue during the past 50 years—be it Scandi, mid-century, Minimalism or industrial—none has been as powerful or as enduring as that of the English country house. Exported all over the world, it's a near indeterminable alchemy that informally blends elements such as mixing brown furniture with contemporary objects, layers of pattern and textiles, kilims, ikat lampshades and comfortable sofas.

There are, thankfully, few rules to country-house interior design. It's a broad church of tastes that, with every new generation of decorators, is being reinterpreted and producing some surprising and delightful results.

Alidad

Brought up in Iran and Switzerland before moving to the UK and then working at Sotheby's, Alidad has a deep appreciation for history and can talk eloquently of aesthetics from Baroque to neo-Classicism, Chinoiserie to Art Deco. Although Alidad eschews fashion, he believes in 'timeless elegance and matured nonchalance'. Studio Alidad is his 'ready-to-wear' arm, which is aimed at a younger audience or those on a tighter budget.
020-7384 0121; www.alidad.com

Ben Pentreath

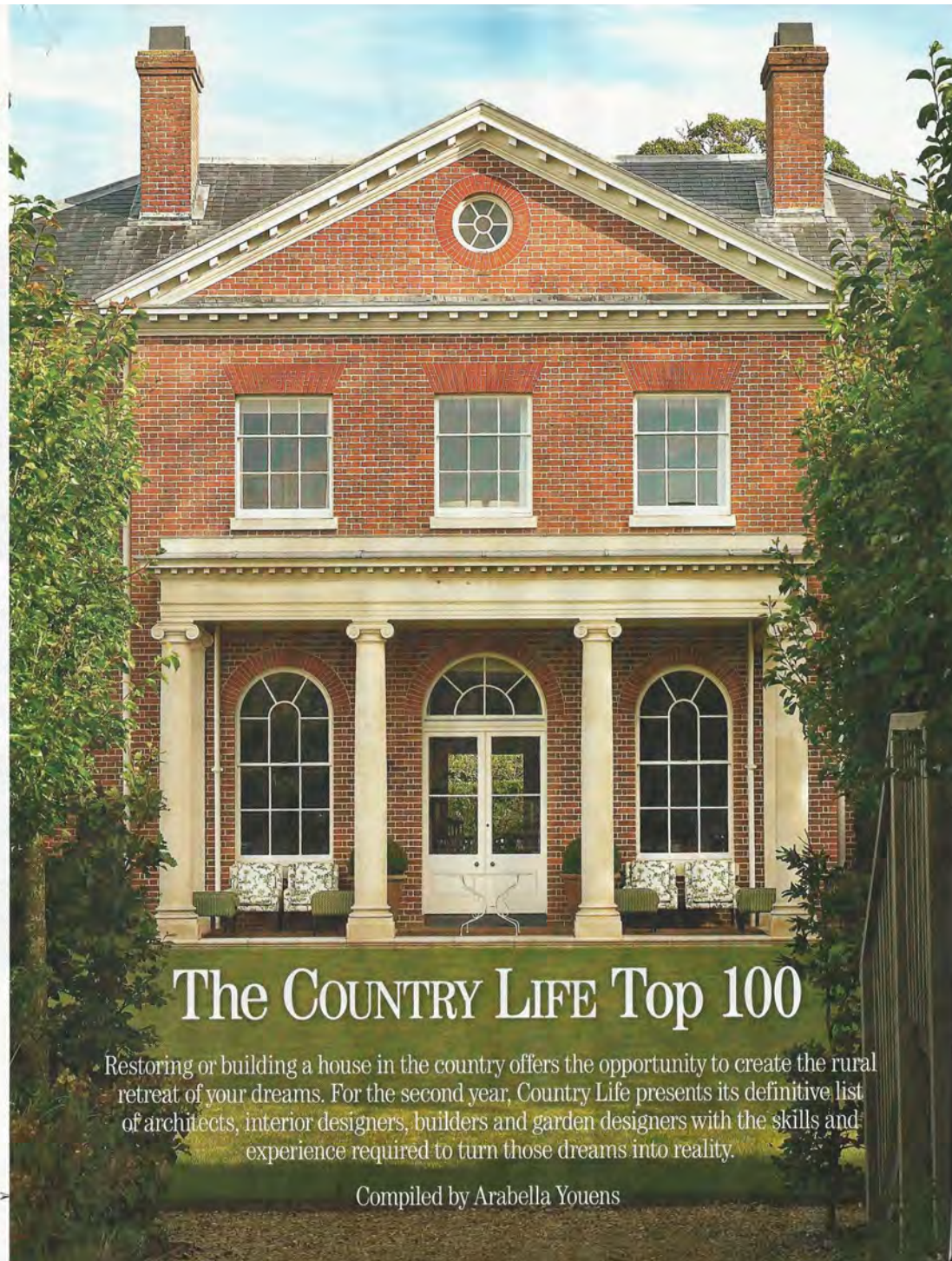
The highly regarded interior-design arm of Mr Pentreath's architecture practice (see page 99) typically combines a strong use of colour and Classical details with simple patterns and an eclectic mix of furniture and lighting from different periods.
020-7430 2424; www.benpentreath.com

Colin Orchard

Like many of the most accomplished decorators, Colin Orchard cut his teeth at Sybil Colefax & John Fowler, where he led a design team. Since 1989, he's run his own business, where he works on projects that criss-cross the Atlantic. He's spent much of the past decade working on the exquisite Ballyfin in Ireland.
020-7351 5501; info@colinorchard.com

Linley

Exquisitely made joinery features strongly in interior projects by Linley, the decorating arm of Lord Snowdon's furniture business. The in-house team of interior architects, designers and consultants works on residential and commercial projects all over the world.
020-7730 7300; www.davidlinley.com



The COUNTRY LIFE Top 100

Restoring or building a house in the country offers the opportunity to create the rural retreat of your dreams. For the second year, Country Life presents its definitive list of architects, interior designers, builders and garden designers with the skills and experience required to turn those dreams into reality.

Compiled by Arabella Youens



A paved terrace offers views across this garden designed by Robert Myers Associates

Douglas Mackie Design

With an eye for integrating serious art collections into private homes—a recent project placed 20th-century art in a Tudor-era mansion—Douglas Mackie is skilled at creating stately yet cosy spaces. After studying architecture at Cambridge, he trained with legendary decorator Tessa Kennedy. 020-7487 3295; www.douglasmackie.com

Edward Bulmer

The interior decorator and natural paint pioneer studied fine art at the University of East Anglia before joining David Mlinaric's practice. Later, he worked with artist and picture restorer Alec Cobbe before setting up his business in Herefordshire, where he specialises in listed houses. 01544 388535; www.edwardbulmerpaint.co.uk

Emma Sims Hilditch

Emma and her team specialise in executing a relaxed and modern country style, which is achieved through a singular approach to lighting, texture, colours and the flow of rooms that becomes the main focus of each project. Work varies from large family houses to new-build town houses in Bath, London apartments and coastal homes in the Channel Islands. 01249 783087; www.simshilditch.com

Guy Goodfellow

The fact that Guy Goodfellow and his team refused to be pigeonholed into a specific style explains why clients with multiple homes repeatedly ask him to decorate them all. There's an underlying current of Englishness to each design, but, from there, it can go in any direction. He also sells his own collection of fabrics and wallpapers. 020-7349 0728; www.guygoodfellow.com

Henrietta Spencer-Churchill

With a Classical aesthetic and a fleet of clients in both the UK and America, Henrietta is known for her deep knowledge and passion for country-house interiors and architecture (she studied history of art in Florence and Paris). Based in Woodstock, Oxfordshire, she's also a director of HRW Antiques. www.spencerchurchilldesigns.com; 01993 811887

Henriette von Stockhausen

Co-founder of VSP Interiors, Henriette von Stockhausen uses her background in antiques to create rooms that are classically inspired yet colourful and eclectic, blending a mix of old and new furniture and decorative pieces. Based in Dorset, and with a passion for the countryside, she's popular with families moving out of London and establishing a country house. 07787 574192; www.vspinteriors.com



Henriette Von Stockhausen of VSP Interiors designed this country-house bedroom

Hugh Leslie

Although he professes to have no house style, this is a designer who certainly isn't afraid to make a statement. Colour features strongly in his schemes—perhaps something to do with the fact that he hails from New Zealand. Abstract art is a major feature. 020-7584 7185; www.hughleslie.com

Jane Churchill Interiors

A name synonymous with classic English interior design, Jane Churchill has been known for her deft ability to combine traditional and contemporary elements since she established the business in 1975. 020-7730 8564; www.janechurchillinteriors.co.uk

Janine Stone & Co

The go-to practice for clients looking for luxurious, elegant design. The multi-disciplinary team covers architecture, interior design, building and project management and is based in London and Cheshire. This highly creative design practice led by Janine Stone and her team of 50 professionals predominantly focuses on private clients and their town houses and apartments in central London and country houses in the Home Counties and further afield, including international projects. 020-3797 7256; www.janinstone.com

Joanna Wood

With an interior-design practice and eponymous shop on Belgravia's Elizabeth Street,

Joanna Wood brings Classical style, a well-honed eye for practical details and enormous energy to her projects. Currently tasked with decorating the American ambassador's residence in London, she can turn her hand to anything from Soho penthouses to classic country houses. 020-7730 0693; www.joannawood.com

John Evans

An interior architect and designer, John Evans's expertise lies in spatial planning and improving the flow of interior space in his projects. Birmingham-based (and with an office in London), his projects have a contemporary bent and range from new-build country houses to luxury ski chalets. 020-7252 2392; www.johnevansdesign.com

Katharine Pooley

With showrooms in Walton Street and Qatar (she grew up in the Middle East and has lived in the Far East), Katharine Pooley's projects include barn conversions, country houses and castles in Scotland, in which she creates fresh, contemporary country spaces. Last year, she published *Journey By Design*. 020-7584 3223; www.katharinepooley.com

Keech Green

Established by Michael Keech and Graham Green in 2002, the practice specialises in bespoke furniture, unusual finishes and what they describe as a signature 'Modern Deco' approach to interior design. A good choice for someone looking for a finish



Joanna Wood designed this bathroom for her own house in the country

that's both elegant and masculine. 020-7351 5701; www.keechgreen.com

Lucy Elworthy

A Wiltshire-based interior designer (who's handily married to Canadian-born architect John Comparelli), Lucy Elworthy has a reputation for blending period and contemporary pieces to create stylish, comfortable country houses. Formerly Decoration Editor of *House & Garden*, she creates schemes that are characterised by a discreet use of colour and pattern. 07957 693246; www.lucyelworthy.co.uk

Max Rollitt

Antique dealer, furniture designer and decorator, Max's skill is for creating graphic, elegant and distinctive spaces that look as if they've evolved over the years—it's a style that follows very much in the vein of the greats, including Christopher Gibbs and Robert Kime. 01962 791124; www.maxrollitt.com

McWhirter Morris

Former director of Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler Sarah Morris joined forces with established antique dealer James McWhirter in 2005. The result is a practice that marries the traditional English country-house style with carefully chosen antiques. The pair worked on the refurbishment of Dumfries House for The Prince of Wales and projects range

from town houses to country houses and villas abroad. 020-7349 2575; www.mcwhirtermorris.com

Mlinaric, Henry and Zervudachi

A blue-chip firm of decorators, founded in the 1960s by David Mlinaric. The partners work on an extensive range of projects for private clients, often with extensive art collections. The firm has offices in Paris and New York and projects take members to all the (most glamorous) corners of the globe. 020-7730 9072; <http://mhzlondon.com>

Nina Campbell

The decorating legend, who started her career shadowing the legendary John Fowler and collaborating on the interiors of Annabel's in their first incarnation. She also has hugely successful collections of fabric and wallpaper and owns an eponymous boutique in Walton Street, SW3, and a showroom at the Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour, SW10. 020-7225 1011; <http://ninacampbellinteriors.com>

Paolo Moschino for Nicholas Haslam

Clients appointing Paolo Moschino will most likely be looking to introduce the company's signature luxurious finishes and good art to their London, Paris or New York homes, but the contemporary designer can equally bring its distinctive, Continental flair to country

houses. The Belgravia-based shop makes and sells furniture, fabrics, lighting and antiques. 020-7730 8623; www.nicholashaslam.com

Penny Morrison

A South African-born interior designer who champions the 'undecorated' look and whose guiding motto is 'who cares if the colours don't match?'. Rooms are full of colour, pattern and interesting pieces of furniture. She also designs her own range of fabrics that, together with a collection of decorative accessories, are available to view at Lorford's Antiques, Langton Street, SW10. 01865 595470; www.pennymorrison.com

Pippa Paton

Working from her full-service interior-design, architecture and project-management studio in Kingston Bagpuize, Oxfordshire, Pippa creates fresh and contemporary rooms that sit happily alongside exposed historical features—as demonstrated in her book published last year: *Twenty First Century Cotswolds*. 01865 595470; www.pippapatondesign.co.uk

Rita Konig

Multi-tasking interior designer and journalist Rita Konig specialises in timeless and elegant designs that mix and deliberately don't match, with charming and always distinctive results. Although she's based in London, a lot of projects take her to the USA, where she used to live and work. 020-3735 7280; <http://ritakonig.com>

Robert Kime

A quiet and unassuming man with impeccable credentials and unimpeachable taste, Robert Kime is, unquestionably, one of the great English decorators of today. With a passion for antiques (visit his showroom in Pimlico Road for evidence), he has an extensive collection of fabrics to draw upon and his interiors encapsulate all that's individual, off-beat, informal and interesting about country-house design. 020-7831 6066; www.robertkime.com

Rose Uniacke

An absolute master of the restrained and more disciplined approach that is, nevertheless, a long way from Minimalism, Rose Uniacke brings her deep knowledge of antiques and razor-sharp aesthetic eye to her projects. She's a favourite with A-list clients who want rooms that are comfortable as well as stylishly curated. 020-7730 7050; <http://roseuniacke.com>

Salvesen Graham Nicole FOR 2018

Founded in 2013 by Nicole Salvesen and

Mary Graham, this thriving practice quickly gained a reputation for a style that is achieved by layering textures, pattern and colours and juxtaposing antiques with contemporary pieces. Both have young families and young clients to boot.

020-7967 7777; www.salvesengraham.com

Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler

After moving to its new premises on Pimlico Road, this long-established English firm continues to go from strength to strength. Run by eight directors, who all have their different style and expertise, but channel Fowler's belief—chiefly, that a room should be 'well behaved but free from any rules'.

020-7493 2231; www.sibylcolex.com

Studio Atkinson

With various projects for the Soho House group and, more recently, Beaverbrook, Surrey's latest country-house hotel, under her belt, Susie Atkinson knows how to decorate chic, comfortable spaces. She has a particular passion for craftsmanship.

020-7384 0700; <http://susieatkinson.com>

Dylan Thomas

Thorp

Based in smart, Belgravia offices—a conveniently short taxi ride for her many Mayfair-based clients—Philippa Thorp's

practice covers all bases and will take projects from the ground up, including not just the interiors, but also the design of furniture and fittings to suit each room.

020-7235 7808; www.thorp.co.uk

Todhunter Earle

Emily Todhunter and Kate Earle work on projects that range from country houses to hotels (Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons), yachts, nightclubs and ski chalets. Designs are grown-up, but with quirks—a glitter ball here, a splash of colour there. They also have a collection of lighting, wallpaper and rugs.

020-7349 9999; <http://todhunterearle.com>

Veere Grenney

Another New Zealand-born designer, Veere Grenney creates projects dotted around the world. His designs are immaculately tailored and respond carefully to the architecture, climate and culture of the buildings.

020-7351 7170; www.veeregrenney.com

Wilkinson Beven NEW FOR 2018

A Birmingham-based studio that has lots of experience working on country houses in the Cotswolds and Warwickshire as well as ski chalets in the Alps and holiday homes in the Caribbean. With a resolutely contemporary bent, it has a meticulous attention to detail.

0121-622 7366; www.wilkinsonbeven.com

Builders

New-build country houses and extensions to listed or historically sensitive buildings require professional attention and specialist knowledge. It's worth spending just as much time choosing your builder as you do your architect.

Our recommendations for firms specialising in country houses are based on their craftsmanship and expertise in the fields of conservation, restoration and time-honoured building skills.

Collectively, the companies boast several hundred years of experience and many of them count skilled artisans within their teams. Testament to the strength of their reputation is that many of them are commissioned to work not only in the British Isles, but also by clients based overseas, who require the assurance of excellence.

Artichoke Ltd NEW FOR 2018

A specialist joinery designer for country houses (and traditional town houses) established by managing director Bruce Hodgson in 1990. The firm bridges the gap between architecture and interior design and makes all its fitted furniture, kitchens and interior joinery in its Somerset workshop.

01934 745 270; www.artichoke-ltd.com

Carpenter Oak

Award-winning builder of handcrafted oak-framed buildings, houses and extensions, examples of which have been shown on Channel 4's *Grand Designs*. Based in South Hams, Devon, the firm has a reputation for marrying modern technology and expertise with age-old skills and the team has completed a number of international projects, including a new-build house in the Dordogne and a swimming pool in St Petersburg, Russia.

01803 732900; www.carpenteroak.com

Oakwrights

This large company is based on the outskirts of Hereford and operates both nationwide and abroad. It's won multiple awards for the design and construction of all styles of oak-framed houses and buildings, in both traditional and contemporary styles.

01432 353353; www.oakwrights.co.uk

Prime Oak

This Staffordshire-based firm was founded in 1998 and, since then, it has won many awards and established a reputation for delivering innovative new products to the market, such as bi-folding doors and windows. Sister companies include oak-framer >



The Tea Room at The Temple of Diana in the grounds of Weston Park, designed by Janie Money, associate director of Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler