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10 Ways To Revamp A Victorian Home

By Georgia James

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High ceilings with cornicing, feature fireplaces with ornate tiling, picture rails, dado rails... from the big features to the little flourishes, it's not hard to see why Victorian [properties](#) are an estate agent's dream to sell.

Built during a time of great change and innovation, Victorian housing is the proud legacy of the Industrial Revolution. Thanks to worldwide trade, rapid economic growth and the expansion of the railway network, the building industry was thriving - and now we're enjoying the spoils.

Featuring an [eclectic mix of styles](#) - many of which were borrowed from the past - and an abundance of adornment and trimmings, the Victorian home was coveted by its residents and seen as the ultimate reflection of their status.

And with the Victorian revival in full swing, the buildings and their original features are as coveted now as they were then. But tastes in interior décor have changed dramatically. While light and space are two of the top requirements on the [modern interiors tick-list](#), the Victorian aesthetic favoured rooms crammed to the cornices with dark, heavy furniture in ruby reds and dark greens, teamed with ebony floors, heavily-patterned wallpaper and soft furnishings in rich, heavy fabrics.

Of course [flashes of opulence](#) (who hasn't tried the patterned statement wall?) provide a beautiful contrast to the modern minimalist approach but how do we keep things contemporary without losing the beauty of the original features? And how do we remain sympathetic to the Victorian aesthetic without creating a look that's too moody and stifling?

"Let the features be features!" says Rebecca Tucker, interior designer and co-director of Suna Interior Design.

"Mix original features with contemporary colours, lighting, furniture and modern kitchens and bathrooms," she adds.

"For example, keep features such as sash windows, fireplaces, cornicing, coving, ceiling roses and picture-rails. Then with those as your backdrop, add in your contemporary features.



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“Always be sympathetic to the building, and remember that quality can be expressed through time and dedication, as well as cold, hard cash.”

If you're the lucky owner of a Victorian home, here are 10 easy ways to strike that tricky balance between classic and contemporary.



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10 Ways To Revamp A Victorian Home

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FULLSCREEN



Paul Thompson via Getty Images

Restore Original Features

"Your home may already contain much of what you need – sometimes the best features are those that are originals and have been restored," says Rebecca.

"These can be fireplaces, cornicing, ceiling roses, original flooring and to some extent picture and dado rails. Remove any fireplaces not true to the era and replace them with reclaimed originals.

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Glow Decor via Getty Images



Layer Up With Brights

"Original architectural features can be quite neutral in colour. Use this to your advantage by then bringing in your own style and colour - which can be modern and bright - on other elements of your home," says Rebecca.

"Embrace original features – rather than over design – then simply and gently, add layers to your design until you've created your perfect room "

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An advertisement for HomeSense featuring a tea set on a table. A sign in the foreground reads "SAVINGS UP TO 60% EVERY DAY". The HomeSense logo is at the top left, and a "FIND OUT MORE" button is at the bottom right.



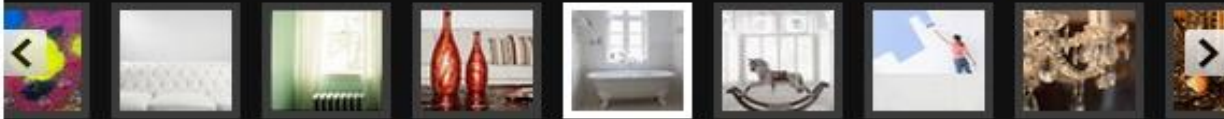
Moodboard via Getty Images

Mix Contemporary And Classic

"Install modern, contemporary kitchen and bathrooms into your revamped home. For example a roll-top bath in your modern bathroom creates a complimentary juxtaposition between the new interior design and the original building," says Rebecca.

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A promotional advertisement for HomeSense. The background is a teal color with a floral pattern. In the center, there is a white ceramic tea set on a blue and white patterned tablecloth. A large, circular sign with a dashed border reads "SAVINGS UP TO 60% EVERY DAY". Above the sign, a banner says "Unique finds Irresistible prices". The HomeSense logo is in the top left corner, and a green button with the text "FIND OUT MORE" is in the bottom right corner.





Echo via Getty Images

Experiment With Paint Colours

"As the ceiling heights are usually higher in Victorian buildings, you can afford to go bold. For example, experiment with paint colours," says Rebecca.

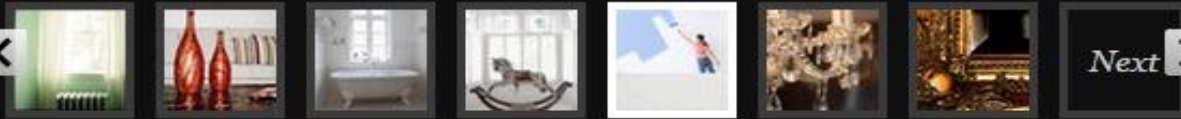
"You don't need an on-trend colour, rather a classic colour that you love. Take advantage of Victorian design – picture and dado rails reduce the impact of colour within the room. Keep the upper section of the wall white while implementing a strong colour below."

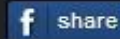
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Super-size Your Lighting

"Continuing with the wonderful, high ceiling theme, look towards chandeliers and larger lighting options for your lighting solutions. A bigger light will work well in a larger room."

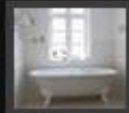
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