

# HOMES & GARDENS

## Imaginative interiors

EVOCATIVE HOMES LAYERED  
WITH COLOUR AND TEXTURE

A BEAUTIFUL  
EASTER  
ITALIAN-STYLE  
FEASTS BY  
THEO RANDALL  
TABLESCAPES  
WITH SEASONAL  
FLOWERS

- OUTDOOR ROOMS  
AND GLASS EXTENSIONS
- COTTAGE GARDEN  
IDEAS AND ADVICE

TIME TO ESCAPE  
WALLPAPERS  
AND FABRICS  
TRANSPORT US TO  
DREAM DESTINATIONS

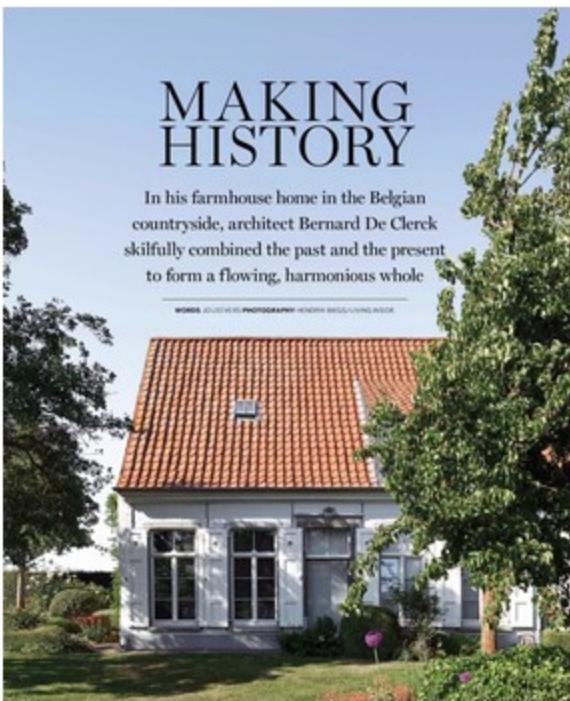
DAZZLING  
& EASY  
DECOR  
UPDATES

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# MAKING HISTORY

In his farmhouse home in the Belgian countryside, architect Bernard De Clerck skilfully combined the past and the present to form a flowing, harmonious whole

WORDS JOELIE VAN PHOTOGRAFIE HENDRY BROWN/LIVING INSIDE



www.bonanza.nl/garden.com

## HOUSES

**EXTERIOR**  
The grounds were originally all meadow, but have now been turned into a gentle meadowscape with the house.



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**GARDEN AREA**  
Gardens, like interior spaces,  
often bloom unexpectedly,  
with pieces in only  
time comprising  
the fullness of the work.  
—CAROLYN COOPER



HOUSES

ART AND ARCHITECTURE  
All the rooms in this house  
feature artwork on a scale  
that has never  
been seen before. The  
artist, Carolyn Cooper,  
uses old world skills  
to create these  
original pieces.

## HOUSES

**M**idway through the renovation of this 19th-century farmhouse, architect Bernard De Clerck struck upon exactly the right color palette for his historic home. The house came with its original shutters and doors, but they had been concealed by almost two centuries' worth of paint and lacquer. But after plenty of careful scraping, the first layer of paint was revealed: "There were all shades of grey, one a bit greenish, the other a bit bluish, but all with a beautiful patina," De Clerck says. "These colors were the inspiration for the new palette."

As a restored architect, Bernard already had a reverence for the "bones" of this house, a farmhouse and adjoining barn in Lutzenheide, deep in the Belgian countryside. "The house dates from 1823, but architecturally it was still rooted in the 18th century," he says, with some of the windows resembling an ancient-style ones in Brueghel's paintings. And it was these bones that inspired Bernard: beams, beams, doors and shutters—that inspired his palette.

While he has added some modern touches in the form of polished concrete flooring and several pieces of contemporary furniture, Bernard's commanding aim was to capture the spirit of the property, while sensitively updating it for life in the here and now. "When you move into an old house, you don't need to make it into a museum. But sometimes you do need to bring something alive," he explains. "Your own history and the history of the house can combine to create a new harmony."

Bernard's subtle alterations mean that the farmhouse's rooms now have a more opened-up feel and a sense of flow that would have been quite unfamiliar to the building's 19th-century occupants. Its spring and summer, the doors that lead off the main sitting room are kept open, while modern

glazing has been added to link the spaces with the garden. The red beams have been exposed and a large, dark wood staircase dominates and highlights. The result is a mixture of atmosphere that feels lived-in, but can also be closed off for privacy, or to retain heat in the winter. Bernard points out that when the old doors are shut, they almost look like well-pounding, adding to a more snug, private mood; set into walls that have been painted in a lime paint that closely resembles the beam-like finish that backs into the family room's fireplace.

A recent highlight in the life of the house via a guest renovation was this in which Bernard works and meets with clients. In here, too, more generous modern windows look out onto the extensive gardens, which have been transformed into a sequence of equally considered spaces, including a pool area, cultivated areas and then wilder meadows.

Patience is about comfort as well as integrity

and many items have been in the family for years

or decades. "I always say that the house will have brought us weekend visits to much later."

I love the feel of rustic and antique objects side

by side," says Bernard, who has added a classic Arne

Jacobsen Egg chair, contemporary art and his own large-scale photography to these rustic spaces.

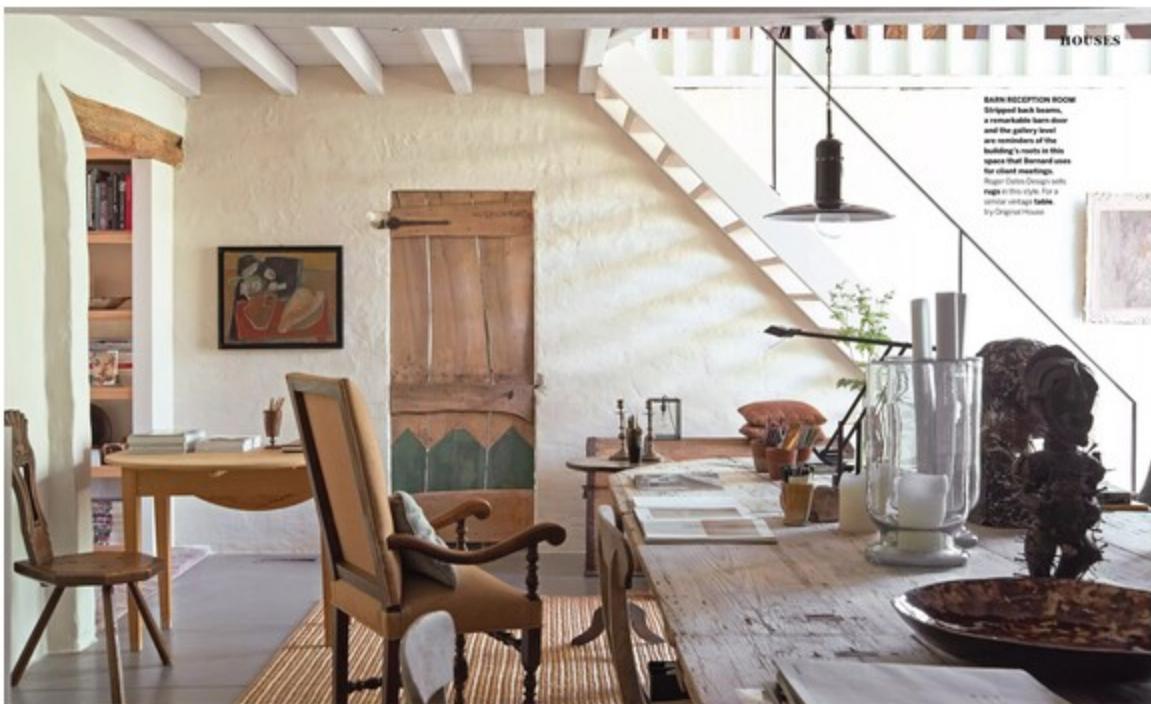
The road setting was what initially attracted Bernard and his wife to their spot. "Twelve years ago, we felt the urge to move somewhere with a really open, outside feel. We wanted to stay away from urban surroundings, so we immediately purchased this farmhouse, we were immediately enchanted," he recalls. Bernard's redesign has retained that sense of enchantment, while adding elements that reflect his own family's story, creating a home that will continue to inspire for years to come. ■

■ Bernard De Clerck Architects, bernardeclercck.be

**MAIN SITTING ROOM**  
Ocher tones and  
antique finds meet  
contemporary surfaces.  
See [www.bonjour-mag.com](http://www.bonjour-mag.com)  
for more by Jonathan  
Adler. Find a vintage  
seata at Vinterior



**MAIN RECEPTION ROOM**  
Stripped back beams, a remarkable tiled floor and rustic doors are reminders of the building's roots in this house that Beeson uses for office meetings. Roger Daltrey Design walls rug in this style. For a similar vintage table, try One Off.





**EXTERIOR**  
Bernard is a keen  
gardener and social.  
“I’ll buy new plants  
and flowers every  
weekend,” he says

**BAR AREA**  
A bare space that carts  
around from time to time,  
a bar area decorated with  
plants and photographs.  
“We often sit here for  
lunch with friends and  
family,” says Bernard.  
Find a similar bar stool at  
Maison du Monde.  
Organic Home can source  
a table in this style. The  
photograph is by Bernard.



**NOTE WELL**  
“The polished surface  
spans walkable paths  
through sand and pebbles.”