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### PRIMROSE HILL APARTMENT BY NICOLA HOLDEN

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Nicola Holden worked in the manufacturing industry before deciding to focus on her true passion, interior design. After completing a course at Chelsea's prestigious KLC School of Design she went on to open her own boutique design consultancy, [Nicola Holden Designs](#). They pride themselves on delivering edgy and offbeat designs for residential interiors and outdoor living spaces.

Her Zimbabwean roots and love of international travel inspire Nicola's style of contemporary meets quirky. From her experience working in manufacturing and design, Nicola understands the importance of designing spaces that are not only balanced and beautiful but are also functional. She shares one of her favourite interior design projects with The LuxPad below...

**Project name:** *Primrose Hill Apartment.* This new build apartment sits between London's up-market Primrose Hill and trendy Camden Market.

**Floor Area:** *Living area – 900 square feet. Garden area – 480 square feet.*

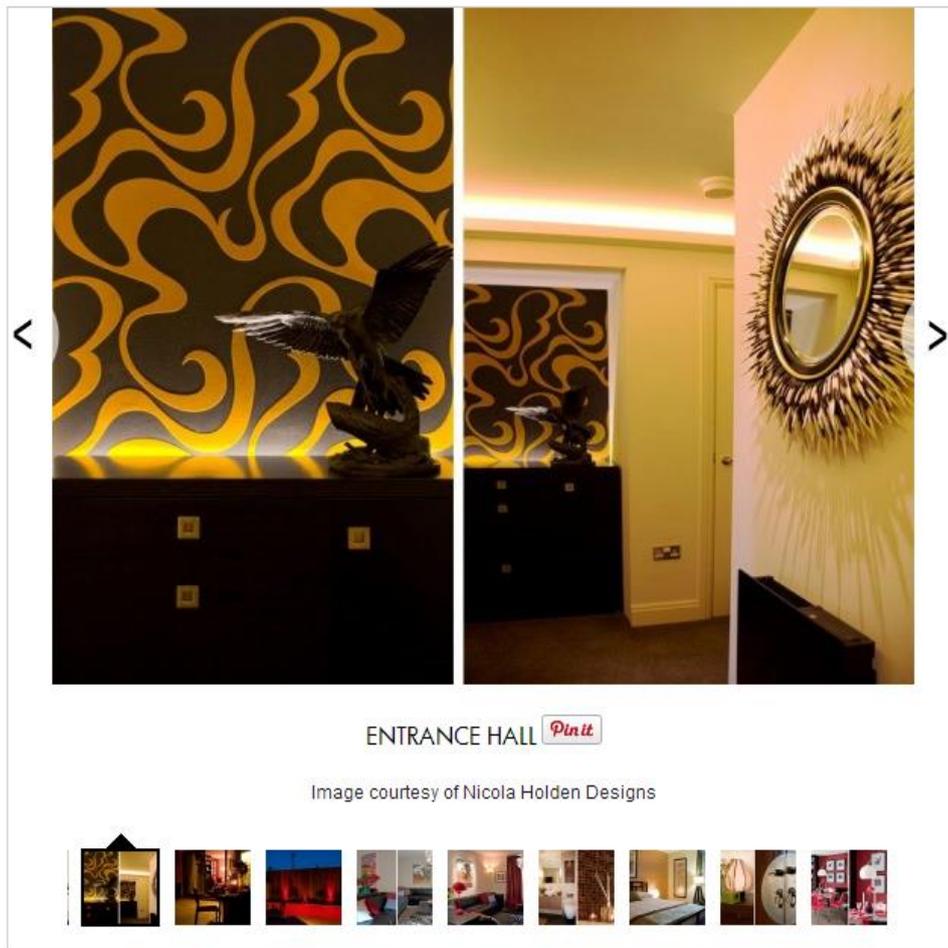
**Project time take:** *Working to the client's timescales, the project was completed in four stages over a period of 21 months.*

## The Brief

Before starting work on this project the apartment was all light wood floors and magnolia walls, and being a new build it had reasonably low ceilings and little in the way of character.

The client wanted his modern apartment transformed into a statement bachelor pad. He wanted a 'wow' factor as you walked through the front door, taking inspiration from Philippe Starck's use of lighting. Then, for the living area, the brief consisted of four words – retro, funky, dark and red. This was to be a mischievous and evocative space – one that would provoke a reaction. The garden was to be a continuation of this space.

In the bedroom he wanted a Chinese styled sanctuary – a calm, de-stressing room that nurtures and nourishes, with the theme being carried through to the small en-suite bathroom. The main bathroom was to provide a neutral, spa like style, evoking luxury through the use of natural materials.



## The Creation / Planning process

Based on the brief I created mood boards for each of the rooms. I then used these to pick out patterns, colours and textures to be incorporated into the final design. The next step was to create sample boards, using the actual fabrics and finishes, to help the client imagine what I can visualise in my mind for the finished project. Parallel to this I drew up layouts for each space, detailing the furniture and considering the activities that would take place. The final step was to design the lighting, focusing on the four elements of general, task, accent and decorative lighting. Lighting is such an important element of interior design for me, and can make or break a scheme.

I also worked with the client's sister, an artist, commissioning the African paintings in the living room.

## How it went

The client was living in the apartment throughout the process, and used to send me text messages when he got home each evening and had taken a sneaky peak. He was delighted at the transformation, and how smoothly the whole process went.

### Favourite room / part of the project

*It's hard to pick a favourite room as each space is so different. But I did have a lot of fun creating the design of the living / dining room because it is so different from anything else I had designed before.*

### Issues or challenges

*I had designed the hallway around the funky porcupine quill mirror, choosing the flock wallpaper to compliment it, and the warm concealed lighting to show it off to its best. However, the week that installation started I learned that my supplier had gone into liquidation, and I was not going to get my mirror. I scoured the internet and eventually found a company in the US who could supply it – better late than never!*

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