

A full-page photograph of Michelle Ogundehin sitting in a light-colored, textured armchair with gold legs. She is wearing a green patterned jacket, dark pants, and teal high-heeled shoes. The room features a window with blue curtains, a hanging plant, and a wooden floor. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# AN ODE TO HOME

*Author, broadcaster  
and former  
ELLE-Decoration  
Editor-in-chief  
Michelle Ogundehin  
is an expert in  
creating a happy,  
healthy home.  
Here, she shares  
the details that  
make her smile*

*Photography* MARIANNA WAHLSTEN

Michelle sits on her 'D.153.1' chair by Gio Ponti for Molteni & C, upholstered in Rubelli's 'Puntegiato' fabric, also designed by Ponti. The cushions are from John Lewis & Partners and The White Company ►



I love my home to the extent that the best aspect of any travel for me, is the return. My home is, quite simply, my favourite corner of the world, my ultimate retreat and my greatest ally. It is my space to be fearless and splendid in all of my obsessions. In short, I think of it as a secret superpower that protects and supports me – something that feels ever more essential now the world seems to have gone a bit bonkers.

But with its perfectly symmetrical brick-fronted façade, original leaded glass windows and pretty walled front garden, it looks like the sort of house you'd expect to see adorning a chocolate box. Built in 1821 (so strictly speaking, Georgian), it even has a little porch with flower baskets hung on either side, and there's an ancient passion flower tree and pink roses tumbling across its front. But this is to belie the modernity I have installed inside thanks to new electrics and plumbing, a few raised ceilings, marble-clad bathrooms, a Corian-countertopped kitchen, and underfloor heating throughout.

As for the décor, I live and breathe the philosophy expounded in my book – *Happy Inside: How to Harness the Power of Home for Health and Happiness* – in that every single thing in my home contributes to my wellbeing, from the weight of my cutlery to the feel of my sheets and the colour of my cushions. And I do not say this lightly. It is the consequence of everything being very carefully considered. But not in an achingly pedantic, hours of ►

**'AS FOR THE DÉCOR, EVERY SINGLE THING IN MY HOME CONTRIBUTES TO MY WELLBEING'**



**Opposite** Ercol chairs, stained to match the wooden flooring from Ecora, flank a 'Tulip' table by Eero Saarinen for Knoll. The side tables behind Michelle's dozing Basset Hounds are the 'Dritto' by Piero Lissoni for Salvatori and 'Tokki' from Habitat. **Above** A vintage Robin Day 'Forum' sofa for Habitat, covered in pale pink Dedar velvet defines this corner; shelves are filled with treasured objects, including Fornasetti candles. **Kitchen** Ikea units with glossy grey doors are finished with a Corian countertop

## AT HOME WITH

trawling sort of way, rather, for anything to be welcomed indoors, it has to contribute positively to the story of relaxation and harmony that I want to tell with my home. In this way, surrounded by things that make me happy, and the colours, fabrics, materials and finishes that soothe me, no matter where I look, I am uplifted.

However, it's not been about spending a lot of money. The majority of my furnishings are not expensive designer pieces. Instead, I prefer to lavish attention on the envelope of my home – walls, floors and ceilings. The most important design decision being the flooring. Literally and visually, it is the foundation for everything, underpinning every view and item lain upon it. I indulged a long-standing dream and splashed out on a dark stained oak parquet floor for downstairs; hand laid, then oiled to a gleam in situ. I happy cried when it was finished. Upstairs, a thick pile, 100 per cent wool carpet was meticulously colour-matched and hand-dyed to a Farrow & Ball paint chip – 'Mizzle' to be precise.

But my path to this place of peace has not been without its twists. Over the years, I've swapped cities, counties and countries in pursuit of home, rented many a dodgy apartment, and moved almost once a year. But every abode taught me something about the effect of my surroundings on my health, wealth, happiness and hormones, and I grew to understand just how deeply these things are connected. The ultimate recognition being that home-making is never frivolous, it is absolutely fundamental to becoming your best self.

*'Happy Inside: How to Harness the Power of Home for Health and Happiness'* by Michelle Ogundehin (Ebury Books, £18.99). Series two of BBC2's 'Interior Design Masters', in which Michelle is head judge, airs in January 2021



Another Robin Day sofa, also reupholstered in velvet from Dedar, sits below a collection of Fornasetti plates. The pendant lights are from the 'Beat' collection by Tom Dixon and the ceiling is painted in a pop of 'Yellow Pink' from Little Greene



**Left** Ikea cabinets are topped with marble from Salvatori and fitted with Superfront doors. The lamp is the 'IC' by Michael Anastassiades for Flos, and the wallcovering is the 'Turner Tile' by Anaglypta (also above) **Study** A black laquer desk from Orchid Furniture is placed beside a Soho Home sofa. The 'Hume' table lamp is from Habitat ▶





**Left** An 18th-century French mirror and a Calder-esque mobile decorate the guest bedroom

**Bathroom** Cabinets and sinks from Saneux are paired with taps from Bristan's '1901' range

**Bedroom** The headboard was created using embossed tiles from H & E Smith. The bed is dressed in a duvet cover from Georg Jensen Damask, as well as pieces from Society Limonta, Larusi, Caravane and Merci. The pendant lights are a discontinued Habitat design, fitted with Lee Broom's 'Crystal Bulbs' See Stockists page for details [ED](#)



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