

# White Christmas

*A pale palette and a dusting of gold and wood accents look completely charming in Heike Lind's restored farmhouse*

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PHOTOGRAPHY  
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COCO FEATURES



## SITTING ROOM

There's a wonderful mood of bohemian grandeur in this space with the diverse collection of antiques, including tarnished gold mirrors and an old French door (left). Bubbles wool rug, £727, Rug Vista, is similar. Ullerslev sheepskin, £30, Ikea. Mirrors and lights, from a selection at Brocante Charmante. For a similar armchair and sofa, try Sofa.com



Heike Lind might easily have passed her future home without a flicker of interest. Such was the lack of appeal from the street. 'It wasn't a beauty,' she reminisces. 'The charm only became apparent after entering the courtyard and garden.' Having married her partner, Otmar, the couple decided their life at the centre of Essen had run its course and a slower pace in the countryside beckoned. 'We wanted our own house and a vegetable garden,' says Heike. The old farmhouse, built in 1900, was in need of serious renovation which impacted the sale. 'The negotiations dragged on because we had to include the restoration costs in the purchase price but we saw the potential to create something very special.'

The property also afforded the opportunity for Heike and Otmar's new business venture to take off. 'I spent 18 years



## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY**

A restored farmhouse

**LOCATION**

Germany

**ROOMS** Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, utility room, cloakroom, three bedrooms, bathroom, dressing room**PURCHASED** 2012**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'We lived in a flat in the middle of Essen,' says Heike.





**FAVOURITE ITEM** *'I particularly  
love the French chandeliers and  
antique gilded mirrors'*

**DINING AREA**  
Benches around this  
farmhouse table make a  
cosy alternative to chairs.  
Farmhouse table, from  
£399, Country Life  
Furniture. Fashion Stone  
floor tiles in Clay, £34.69sq  
m, RAK Ceramics, would  
work. Source similar antique  
Gustavian benches at Etsy





#### KITCHEN

A nook behind the cooker provides easy access for utensils. The extractor fan has been fitted in the old chimney. Stensund white grooved panel kitchen, from Ikea. Argyll wall light, £65, Soho Lighting at Elesi

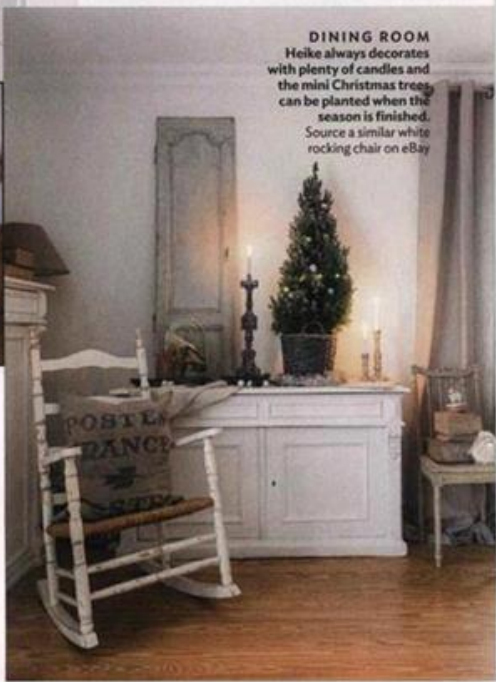


#### DINING ROOM

Heike always decorates with plenty of candles and the mini Christmas trees can be planted when the season is finished. Source a similar white rocking chair on eBay

working in advertising and public relations but the long daily commute to the city and lack of time for things that are important to us prompted us to change our lives,' says Heike. 'For five years now we have been running Brocante Charmante (brocante-charmante.de). It's an online store for everyone who loves antiques, far and wide. Over the years I have collected many antique treasures so it became obvious that I should turn this hobby into a profession.'

Alongside their growing business, the pair made a committed effort to remodel the house, a project that has been ongoing for the last decade. 'Many of the rooms were blocked up and dark so we installed new coffered doors with glass windows. We created four interior wooden transom windows, which bring light into the hallway and other rooms. The dining and living room are now connected to the brocante store. We took down a portioned room within the kitchen and upstairs ceiling heights were raised, while the threshing floor, which was also part of the property, was





#### MAIN BATHROOM

The elaborate gold frame of a mirror makes a striking contrast to the contemporary black vanity and crisp grey palette.

Try Regal Smoke Matt tiles, £18.90 each, Topps Tiles. Source a similar mirror at French Antique Company. Take a look at the Feiss Valentina wall light, £126, Kes Lighting



#### MAIN BEDROOM

An exposed brick wall provides a dramatic backdrop for the bed, where beautiful cotton bedding catches the eye.

Try Burdock king size bed frame, £245, Button & Sprung, and Vintage Etienne bedspread, £110, The White Company



opened up to serve as storage for the antiques, the basement becoming home to Otmar's wine collection.

Heike, who has a particular fondness for French antiques, has let them dictate the mood of her interior style. 'I love the way the French combine opposites and the tension it provokes. Ceremonial mirrors paired

with wood or zinc, or old chandeliers combined with mid-century furniture,' she says. 'I often swap in new pieces that have captivated me – a house needs to change and evolve alongside its owners.'

The renovated house has become a Christmas beacon for family and friends. 'Christmas is a special holiday for us, which we traditionally celebrate together with the family,' says Heike. 'We all gather around the festively decorated table and a Christmas goose is part of the evening feast. I use decorations made of natural materials, the whole house glows in candlelight and the smell of homemade cookies and cakes wafts through. For me, this home is the epitome of Christmas.' 5