

The pick of the crop

2020 has been a good year for interiors books

IN the era of Instagram and Pinterest, it might come as a surprise that the chunky interior-design monograph remains such an important resource. Yet well-thumbed books, such as Roger Banks-Pye's *Inspirational Interiors* and *A Life Of Design* by David Hicks, have become an important part of their aesthetic legacies.

Not all interior-design books, however, are aesthetic totems. They also offer a brilliant way to celebrate something that has been overlooked, notably Bevis Hillier's book, *Art Deco*, which was published in 1968 and had a transformative effect on the way the style was perceived (as well as coining the term itself—before that, it was known as Art Moderne). This year, the glittering prize in that category undoubtedly goes to Lulu Lytle for *Rattan* (£50; Rizzoli), which explores the role that this malleable, but robust fibre played in some of the 20th century's most memorable interiors and images, appearing in everything from depictions of *Titanic's* Café Parisien to a portrait of Churchill, Stalin and Truman at Potsdam in 1945 ('*Sitting comfortably?*', October 14).

Another type of interiors book sets out to capture the gently shifting sands of taste. That is the purpose of the second volume of Pippa Paton's *Twenty First Century Cotswolds* (£35; www.pippapatondesign.co.uk), which reveals how it is possible to reinvent everything, from barns to listed historic buildings,

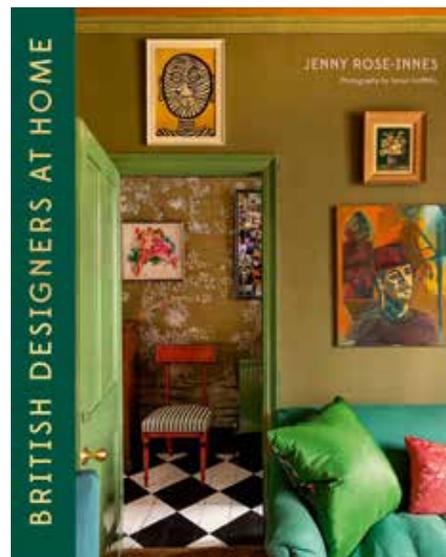
by combining the spirit of their rustic past with the excitement of contemporary design. The result is a bold, luxurious and distinctive aesthetic that is an exciting option for those in search of a new type of rural idyll.

The third category comprises books that offer an opportunity to have a sticky beak at other people's houses. Now that *Hello!* magazine has exhausted the art of the celebrity snoop, several new books gather together designers happy to open their doors. Creative souls are rarely more eloquent than when talking about their own homes, perhaps because they are examples of their work

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that are blissfully free of a sometimes vexatious element in any project—a client (closely followed by the electrician). One excellent new example is *British Designers At Home* by Jenny Rose-Innes (£30; Hardie Grant),

which offers readers an enjoyable tour of the homes of some of interior design's brightest lights, including Emma Burns and Roger Jones of Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler, Nina Campbell, Veere Grenney and Rita König. In *At Home In The English Countryside: Designers And Their Dogs* (£40; Rizzoli), the American author Susanna Salk takes the format one step further by adding a four-legged ingredient. Here are Anouska Hempel, Paolo Moschino and Kit Kemp, who don't only reveal their homes, but also their canine friends. Designers, dogs and interiors... what a heady mix. 🐾



Lulu Lytle's book, *Rattan*, celebrates the role that rattan played in 20th-century design