

# Light and SHADE

How do you brighten up a boxed-in space? Easy, say Wiorel and Yvonne – install double-height glazing and offset with chic, monochrome décor

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## Home profile

**THE OWNERS** Wiorel and Yvonne Scheumar, who run their own construction company, and their daughter Emmi, three.

**THE PROPERTY** A three-storey converted bakery in Cologne, Germany. On the ground floor, there's an open-plan kitchen/dining/living area, with steps that lead to a mezzanine TV room, bathroom and a multifunctional space that can serve as a playroom, guest room or office, plus a courtyard. Upstairs are two bedrooms, a bathroom and roof terrace and in the basement a larger bathroom and what will eventually become a sauna.

## VIEW FROM KITCHEN

Designed by architect Jochen Reetz, the oak-and-metal staircase forms a sculptural element in the centre of the open-plan living area.





#### DINING AREA

Initially, Wiorel and Yvonne chose a different dining table, but because it didn't quite suit the room, they moved it to their company's office and bought this vintage one instead. **GET THE LOOK** The set of Master chairs are by Philippe Starck and Eugeni Quitllet for Kartell. These are Väsman deck chairs by Ikea and the Bistro table by Fermob, seen in courtyard beyond.



## DINING AREA

The floor is poured asphalt, while the ceiling is covered in grey acoustic panels.

**GET THE LOOK** The Tripp Trapp child's chair is from Stokke. This display cabinet is by Habitat.

'BECAUSE  
THERE'S NO  
HALLWAY, ON  
ENTERING' THE  
HOUSE YOU GET  
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HEIGHT AREA



**KITCHEN**

The cabinetry was designed by architect Jochen Reetz and is made of high-pressure laminate and oiled oak. 'We love our island,' says Yvonne. 'One of us can be preparing dinner and the other enjoying a drink, while Emmi is either drawing or "helping" us.'

**GET THE LOOK** The appliances are from Gaggenau and the tap is from Bora. These are Revolver bar stools by Leon Ransmeier for Wrong for Hay. The ceiling lights are from Molto Luce.





## LIVING AREA

The walls throughout the house are plastered rather than painted, which gives them a nice patina. Their grey is complemented by elements of warm wood and black metal. **GET THE LOOK** The Mags sofa is by Hay. The rug is by Habitat. The cushions are from Ikea.



# ALL CHARCOAL WALLS,

asphalt flooring and expansive windows – as first homes go, this one sets the bar pretty high. Owned and conceived by Wiorel and Yvonne Scheumar, it's located in Cologne, Germany. Once a working-class area, this neighbourhood's charming post-war architecture is now home to a swathe of hip boutiques and cool eateries, creatives and young families – just like this one.

'It's such a dynamic place to be, we knew we wanted to live here,' says Yvonne. 'But that was about the only criteria we had – the rest was up for grabs.' The couple had considered a few properties before they spotted this building on the internet in 2012. A former bakery, it was in a particularly poor state and located in an inconvenient backyard surrounded by neighbouring buildings. Undeterred, Wiorel and Yvonne put in an offer and immediately secured the services of architect and designer Jochen Reetz. His brief? To create a cosy, embracing home that was filled with natural light.

Unfortunately, this wasn't quite as simple as it sounds. Local building regulations greatly restricted what Jochen could achieve, so it was decided that the best option was to work within the property's original dimensions. 'After many long discussions, the building department allowed Jochen to add in an atrium,' Wiorel explains. 'It was a great relief, as otherwise we would have had huge problems getting enough light into the building.' With the plan in place, the bakery was dismantled in October 2013, leaving only three boundary walls intact. A pre-fabricated timber structure was then installed: 'This went up very quickly,' adds Wiorel. 'Plus, it only required three hours of crane work, which helped keep our new neighbours happy!'

Despite pretty much starting afresh, the duo were conscious not to neglect the history of the building. 'It was our idea to retain the bricks from the bakery,' Yvonne explains. 'We cleaned each one by hand and

re-laid them in the new atrium and courtyard. It was quite a task, but it's nice to think that the material of the old structure has been used in the new.' This exterior brickwork also provides a striking contrast to the sleek interior, which has been configured so that most rooms have access to or overlook one of these outside areas. 'They give us so much natural light all day,' Yvonne says. 'In summer, we open up all the sliding glass doors to create extra living space. It's fun to see the neighbours' kids and our daughter riding their little bikes from inside to out.'

Although the main building work took only six months to complete, the family moved in before it was finished, when just one bedroom and bathroom were habitable. 'We wanted to grow with the building and to get a feel for it before buying things, such as sofas or dining chairs,' says Wiorel. 'We even lived in darkness for a while because we couldn't find quite the right light fixtures.' Although the couple are still on the hunt for a large artwork to hang behind the sofa, furniture has been kept to a minimum. What's made the grade is a mixture of flea-market finds, pieces from Ikea and Habitat, plus a scattering of designer brands, such as Hay and Kartell.

One thing Wiorel and Yvonne didn't need to think about, though, was the colour scheme. The dramatic grey and black palette may be an intimidating choice to many, but it was an easy decision for them. 'We don't like to live in white rooms,' says Yvonne. 'We feel much more comfortable in darker spaces.' Add to these shades elements of warm wood and graphite metal and you have an interior that looks both cosy and exclusive. 'We wanted to create a hideaway for all occasions,' Yvonne explains. 'Sometimes, we close all the curtains, light a candle and enjoy the cave-like feeling.'

So what's next for this young family and their first home? 'After months of building and living on-site, we're just looking forward to a normal life,' says Yvonne. 'This place has given us a new-found energy and we're enjoying being here. We're also awaiting the birth of our new baby (a boy) and are very excited and imagining how our life will be when we are four – or even more!'

Learn more about the Scheumar's construction company at [scheumar.de](http://scheumar.de). See more of Jochen Reetz's portfolio at [diiip.net](http://diiip.net)



**LIVING AREA**

'All you need to turn a house into a home are cosy places, perfect lighting, inspiring books, a bathtub – and a well-stocked kitchen!' says Yvonne.

**GET THE LOOK** Both the rocking chair and mirror were flea-market finds. The Alseda pouffes are by Ikea.







## LIVING AREA

The ladder leads to the mezzanine level, where the couple go to watch TV.

## Home truths

**WHAT'S THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?**

*Wiolet:* Always be on time. *Yvonne:* There are no details – every little counts.

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?**

*Wiolet:* *Built to Last* by Jim Collins – it identifies 18 visionary companies and sets out to determine what's special about them. *Yvonne:* *Search Inside Yourself* by Chade-Meng Tan. It's about developing emotional intelligence through mindfulness.

**IF YOU COULD LIVE**

**ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD, WHERE WOULD IT BE?**

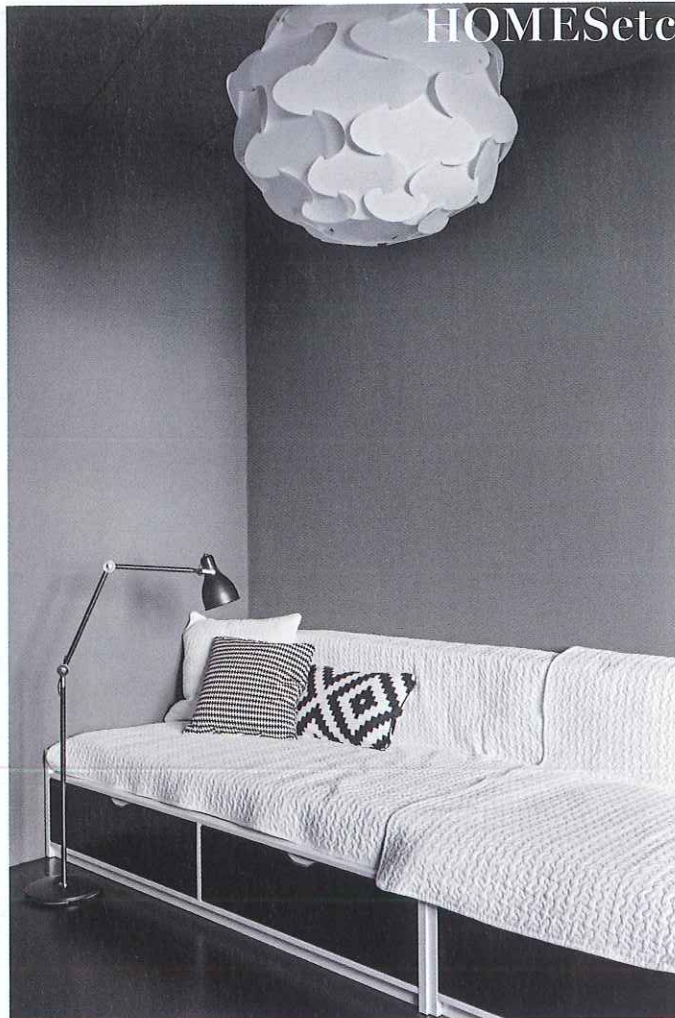
*Both:* In the Scottish countryside – it's so beautiful.

**CATS OR DOGS?** *Both:* Dogs, although we don't currently have one.

**WHAT'S ON YOUR BEDSIDE TABLE?**

*Wiolet:* Business books. *Yvonne:* Books about holistic nutrition.





**FIRST-FLOOR ↑  
BATHROOM**

This is the most used of the house's three bathrooms. It's designed to be highly functional, so includes twin basins and a walk-in shower, rather than a bath.

**GET THE LOOK** The sanitaryware is from online retailer Reuter and the Loop tiles in the shower area are by German company Jasba.

**GUEST ROOM/ ↗  
PLAYROOM/OFFICE**

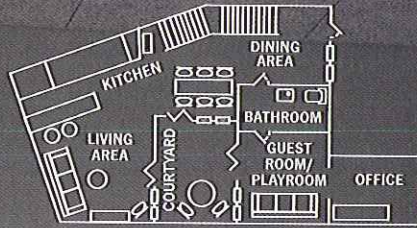
This multifunctional space may be called the *joker-raum* in German, but it's still dressed in an on-trend fashion.

**GET THE LOOK** This is Ikea's *Fillsta* pendant; *Stockholm* cushion, centre; and *Lappljung Ruta* cushion, right.

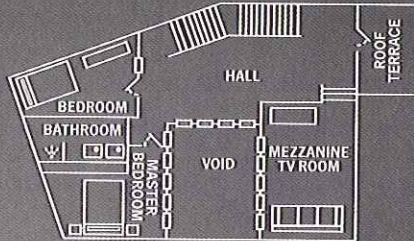
‘WHEN IT  
COMES TO  
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ASK YOURSELF  
WHAT’S REALLY  
IMPORTANT  
FOR YOU (NOT  
WHAT’S COOL  
OR HIP) AND  
FOLLOW YOUR  
HEART’



The blueprint



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

MASTER BEDROOM

The furniture comprises a bed, side tables and pendant lights – the bare essentials.

**GET THE LOOK** The pendants were picked up at a flea market and the side table was a present from Yvonne's father. The soft furnishings are from Ikea.

See more great houses at [housetohome.co.uk/house-tours](http://housetohome.co.uk/house-tours)

