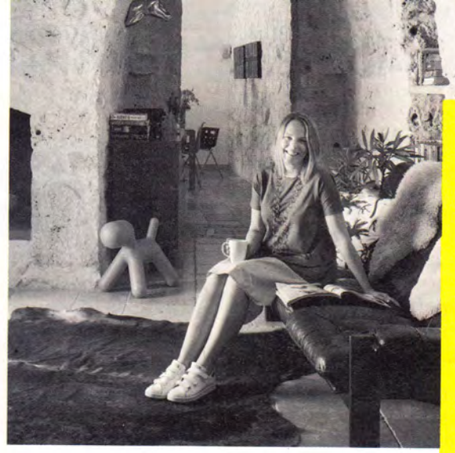


WHO LIVES HERE?
Interior designer Mel Massey (*mel-massey.com*), her husband Simon and their two boys Henry and Freddie.

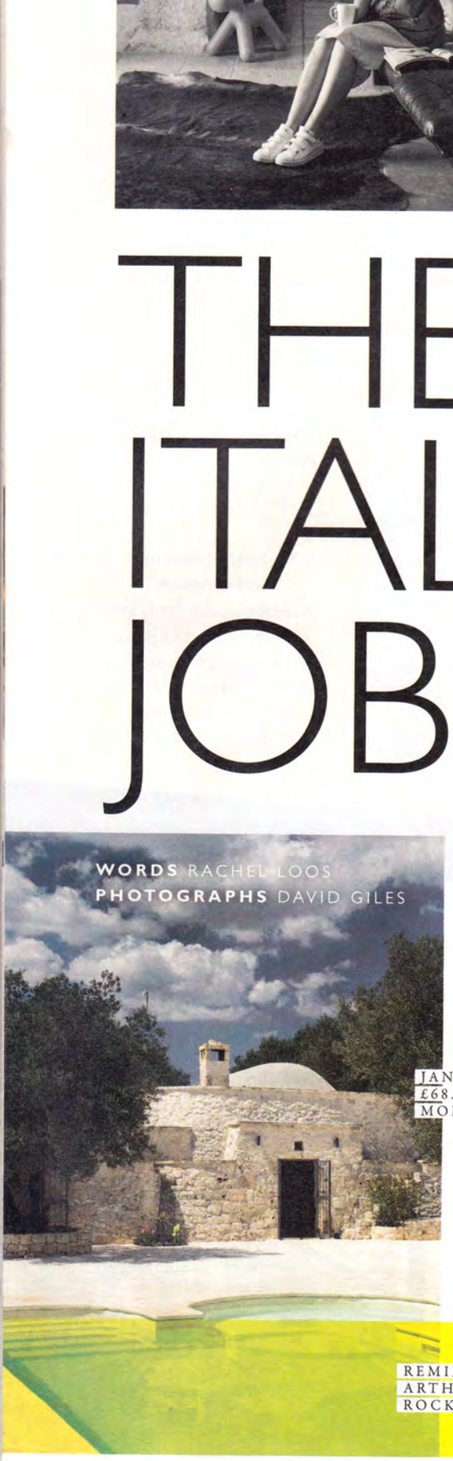
WHERE IS IT?
Puglia, in Italy's 'boot'. On the hunt for an affordable holiday home, Mel and Simon headed for this corner of Italy that's famous for its pretty hilltop villages and great food. The 300-year-old traditional stone house, called a trullo, had been extended by a builder but the couple still had to get the three-bedroom property rewired and replumbed, put in the kitchen and bathroom and design the outside. Mel furnished it in her trademark way of mixing old and new, with stuff bought in London and then driven down in a van. 'It was the cheapest way to do it,' she says. The renovation took four months and the family head over about five times a year. 'It really is our home from home,' she says.

HOW DO I BUY A HOLIDAY HOME?
Mel was able to buy her holiday home, which cost €355,000 (£310,000), because her grandmother bequeathed her some money. If you don't have that kind of cash, try a company like *mortgageoverseas.com* which specialises in property outside the UK. Mel also rents it out through letting agencies for about 30 weeks of the year, to cover the cost of the upkeep.

THE ITALIAN JOB

When her grandmother left her some money, Mel Massey invested in a bolthole in Puglia and set about injecting some slick British-bought flourishes

WORDS RACHEL LOOS
PHOTOGRAPHS DAVID GILES



PARIS LEATHER SOFA, £1,799, DWELL.CO.UK

JANEIRO PINEAPPLE, £68.99, MAISONSDU MONDE.COM

REMIXED WALLPAPER BY ARTHUR SLENK – 01, £199, ROCKETTSTGEORGE.CO.UK

1. COOL CONTRASTS

As the walls give such lovely texture, Mel has gone for the smoothness of leather, the dark colour palette of the furniture also enhancing the look of the stone. Warming things up are sheepskin throws and a cowskin rug for texture on the smooth floor. The circular gloss tables (*dwell.co.uk*) inject a modern vibe and the accessories such as the palm-tree patterned cushion and birdcage inject pops of bright colour and fun.

2. IN THE MIX

Mel teamed her Radius dining table from *habitat.co.uk* with a mix of second-hand chairs. 'I didn't want it matchy-matchy but bright and colourful,' she says. The chairs are different shapes and sizes but kept broadly within the same neutral palette, with orange for a punch of brights. The light is a colour contrast to the table but picks out art elsewhere in the room. The vintage typographical artwork from *rockett stgeorge.co.uk* gives an interesting graphic look.

KARTELL FLY LIGHT, £187, HEALS.COM

FJORD DINING CHAIR, £99 FOR TWO, MADE.COM

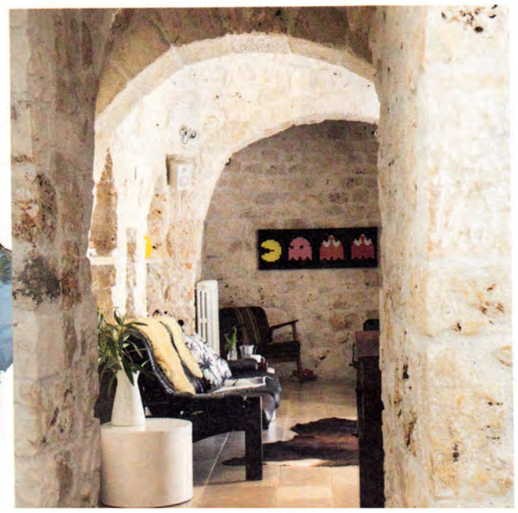
HOME ETC DINING CHAIR, £73.99, WAYFAIR.CO.UK

3. CORNER KITCHEN

Holiday kitchens don't need to be large, so you can get away with spending less than you would on one for your main home. 'And a big dining table in the same room doubles up as extra work space,' says Mel. She has kept the look relaxed with a cream-coloured fridge (check out *gorenje.co.uk*) rather than the usual stainless-steel look.

ORLA KIELY STORAGE CADDIES, £25 FOR THREE, JOHNLEWIS.COM

TREES CUSHION COVER, NOTONTHEHIGHSTREET.COM



4. LOOK HERE!

The brightly coloured canvas draws the eye down the corridor and through the living room, giving focus to the long space. ▸

SWIRL OF COLOUR CANVAS, £34.99, WALLART-DIRECT.CO.UK

SHEEPSKIN RUG, £95, HOUSEOLOGY.COM

LINEN PINEAPPLE CUSHION, £42, TROUVA.COM

NAPPER BED, £895, LOAF.COM

SMALL SILVER STARBURST LIGHT, £396, ALEXANDERANDPEARL.CO.UK

5. BE BEIGE

In the main bedroom, Mel has kept to a simple colour palette to match the stone walls – bar the shot of energising pink from the print – and mixed old and new for a cool look. The bed is from *loaf.com* and is teamed with glossy white side tables from *dwell.co.uk*, which also does a similar Sputnik-style pendant light in brass. The eyeball table lights were found on *ebay.co.uk* (see *wayfair.co.uk* for similar). The Eames rocking chair (*stonebutterfly.co.uk* does affordable replicas) helps create the laid-back vibe, as does the sheepskin throw over the bed and the goatskin rug (see *ebay.co.uk*) on the floor.

JACK FLOOR LIGHT, £300, TOMDIXON.NET

ASSISI STONE GREY MIRROR, £169.99, LA-MAISON-CHIC.CO.UK

7. OLIVE SOUL

The other side of the bedroom is painted an olive green (Card Room Green from *farrow-ball.com*) which gives the entire room a mellow feel. 'The colour reflects the olive trees outside,' says Mel. It also works well with the vintage-style chest of drawers and mirror, which are contrasted by the modern floor light.

8. SHADY CHARACTER

Mel and Simon built the shaded alfresco dining area, combining concrete pillars and a wooden top, which has been connected to the home's music sound system. The table from *bau-outdoors.co.uk* has been combined with Ikea chairs (sadly, no longer in stock).

GREYED ACACIA DINING TABLE, £262.50, MAISONSDUMONDE.COM

MORGAN DINING CHAIR, £69, BELIANI.CO.UK

6. LET'S ROCK

An original stone wall of the house has been made part of the bathroom for a characterful contrast to the plastered and tiled walls. The black tiles, bought locally, set off the stainless steel of the wall rack.

ADJUSTABLE SHOWER CADD £40, AMARA.CO

SILUETA NERO PLAIN, £26.40 PER M TILEGIANT.CO.UK

BOBBY LIGHT, £20, HABITAT.CO.UK

MIRRORED BEDSIDE TABLE, £255, OUTTHEREINTERIORS.COM

9. GROOVY BABY

The guest bedroom has a funky '70s feel thanks to the pendant light (the Kartell Fly again) and vintage print found on *ebay.co.uk*, both of which add orange to the colour scheme. Mirrored side-tables (see *outtthereinteriors.com*) inject a different design vibe but are linked to the rest of the scheme by the orange table lights. ■