



Jess Lavers

# A Week In the Life Of Jess Lavers

**BIID Registered interior designer Jess Lavers has always loved the design world and has a long standing history of working in this sector. After a previous career as a jewellery designer, Jess went on to study at the KLC School of Design and founded her own practice, Jess Lavers Design, in 2011.**

**Jess has lived in both India and Africa, and as an avid traveller, she is inspired by design from all over the globe and has a deep love for colours, patterns, and unusual textiles. Her genuine personality combined with her passion for design ensures that all clients receive the highest level of professionalism.**

## Monday

I can't do anything without my daily cup of Earl Grey which I sip on whilst listening to the morning news in my lovely Notting Hill apartment. I jump in the car and head on down to the studio, which is strategically positioned in Chelsea – just off the Kings Road. It's a co-working space full of creative start-ups, and the bright, airy environment makes for a great atmosphere.

Each Monday starts with our team meeting where we review our pipeline of work over fresh coffee and talk through the progress of all our projects. We are lucky enough to have a great variety of work so we are continually challenged and fully engaged.

Today we are focusing on our Queens Gardens project – a beautiful Grade II listed

building near Paddington overlooking a leafy square. Our developer client has recently acquired the entire building and is creating luxury apartments set out over the five floors of the building, which will come to market early in 2017.

I am keen to achieve a timeless look in the communal parts and then to give each apartment an identity of its own. At the moment, I am working on some initial ideas for the concept – I am imagining dark herringbone floors, cast iron radiators, sleek, modern kitchens with Carrara marble worktops and gloss cabinets, geometric patterned fabrics, luxuriously deep buttoned headboards, antique distressed mirror panels inlaid into the wall panels in the corridors, and oversized antique French crystal chandeliers. We use pinterest to





Jess at work in the studio

▲ pool our initial ideas as it helps us build the scheme before we transfer everything into a client presentation. I want to keep building the concept but suddenly the day has run away with me and I need to get to my physio appointment this evening. Where did Monday go?

### **Tuesday**

Today I am heading to Kempton Park Antiques Market which calls for an early start! I am sourcing furniture for a client who is keen to find a farmhouse style dining table and some benches to match. As a regular visitor I have my set route and really enjoy chatting with the dealers and searching for hidden gems. Even though I am here to search for my client, I usually come across something irresistible for my own home. I love painting, gilding and re-upholstering items myself, so there is often a little project waiting for me.



Hunting for antique treasures at Kempton Park Antiques Market

Success! I leave the market having bought an old French refectory table and two old church pews for my client. I'll dress the pews with blue and white ticking cushions to give my client's contemporary kitchen the eclectic look he has asked for.

The afternoon is spent at my desk trawling through the endless emails and admin that every designer spends their time on constantly! Tonight is a very special evening as a childhood friend takes me to see Coldplay at Kensington Palace Gardens. I'm looking glamorous in my plastic poncho to ward off the rain! It's an unforgettable night of music and fun.

### **Wednesday**

Wednesday I head straight to the amazing Barrecore studio on Kings Road. As a member I try to fit in as many classes





The Mayfair Bar at the Connaught Hotel

▲ as possible per week. I love this form of exercise and it keeps me sane and balanced as well as fit!

The rest of the day is spent in a meeting with my management consultant who keeps me on track. These meetings tend to be long and intensive, as we talk about everything from how best to manage my staff to marketing strategy. After absorbing so much information the only option for tonight is a Thai takeaway, Netflix and a huge glass of wine.

#### **Thursday**

One of the great things about being a designer is the enormous scope of the job – one minute I'll be in high heels and lipstick for client presentations and the next, like today, I am on a dusty building site in a hard hat and hi-vis vest. Today I'm at



The project in Queens Gardens

Queens Gardens to meet the build team, the developers, and the project manager. We take a tour of the entire building and my super-efficient assistant, Dominique, busily takes photos of the whole site for us to refer to when we are back in the studio whilst I'm visualising the finished project. I love being on site when the project's a skeleton, picturing how it will all be when we've worked our magic.

We then head straight to another site nearby for our next meeting. The build on this family home in a pretty mews near Paddington is finally coming to a close and we are beginning to measure for curtains. This is a quick and easy job as I have a fantastic relationship with our curtain team who we can always rely on to do an amazing job. Once back in the office, we download our site photos and set to the curtain schedule for the mews house.

Tonight I'm meeting a friend at the

exquisitely designed bar at the Connaught Hotel – a real jewel of a design by the phenomenally talented late David Collins. After a couple of delicious rose and champagne cocktails, I bump into an old client whose Notting Hill townhouse I designed a few years ago. He very generously takes me to the Mandarin Oriental for dinner which is a massive treat and I fall asleep dreaming of the 1920's glamour of the Connaught. What a day.

### **Friday**

Thank God it's Friday! It's been a long week and today we are busy installing a family home in Notting Hill. This is always the most exciting part of any project, because you see all your hard work coming together – but boy, it can be tiring!

Today is no exception and the challenge of the day is how to get the upholstered double divan bed base up to the second floor master bedroom as it won't fit up the

stairs! Five phone calls later, I have two men standing on the roof of the building who drop straps down the exterior walls and winch the bed (by hand, with extreme manpower!) up the walls, over the balcony and then carry it through the French windows. The artwork is hung, cushions are plumped, rugs are down, throws are thrown and we hand over to a very happy client. At last it's the weekend and time to wind down and relax.

### **Saturday**

Saturday is spent with my boyfriend wandering along Portobello and stopping into Fabrique for the perfect cup of coffee and one of their famous Swedish cardamom buns. We both buy panama hats at the market ready for our next holiday in Greece and then meet some of our friends for a lovely al fresco supper. Some relaxation before it all begins again!

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Putting together the scheme for Queens Gardens