

BOOGIE WONDERLAND

Disco lights, lava lamps, even a vending machine – this play pad takes the pure joy of Christmas and makes it last all year

* PHOTOGRAPHY Jared Kuzia
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BANQUETTE

'The vending machine acts just like a pantry, but one that people get so excited by!' says the designer Alina. Filled with snacks, sunglasses and toys, it requires quarters to access its treasures, but a bucket of coins is left nearby.

Harmonia **dining table**; Shell **chairs**, all Modernica. **Banquette** in Leather Pace in Toffee, Maharam. **Wall** in Galerie Colisée, Élitis. **Vetra pendant** in Amber, Marset. **Vending machine**, eBay

LIVING AREA
'The ceiling height is low so I wanted to choose a light that managed to make a statement but didn't block the TV,' Alina says. 'Its circles relate to those on the breakfast table.'

Accent **chair**, **coffee table** and tall **side table**, all Lawson-Fenning. **Ceiling light**, Marset at Casa Design. **Curtains in** Thread fabric, Designs of the Time



it's only in our festive December issue that we can get away with featuring a home where the dial is set so firmly to hedonism; where the tenets of disco weave their way around every corner, pillar and vintage pinball machine. Where Austin Powers' questionable brand of 1960s sophistication is a key influence, and where the boundary between brilliant and bonkers is so blurred as to become almost obsolete. 'It's a very fine line!' says Alina Wolhardt, founder of studio Wolf in Sheep Design and the creative behind this Boston party pad. 'And at times I was scared this was going to be too much. But you can't do a scheme like this half-heartedly – it was go big or go home.'

In fact, although the space – actually one floor dedicated to entertaining in a four-storey townhouse that the owners have otherwise decorated more conservatively – has an arcade, chequerboard floors, a palette of primary colours, black lights, lava lamps and, yes, even a vending machine, there is a remarkable amount of restraint here: a careful editing that keeps the overall effect firmly in the realm of contemporary design rather than being pastiche. 'I wanted to make sure there were enough neutral backgrounds,' Alina says. 'And I chose to consider the brick wall as a neutral because it is original to the building. The window treatments then have a rusty colour that blends into the brick, the painted ceilings pick out the terracotta tones and the mustard accents became a running and complementary theme throughout.'

The space, on the first floor of the building, is accessed via an elevator, and the owners wanted a part of their home that was devoted to adult parties – witness the poker table and large TV ideal for sports games in the living area – and kids' sleepovers alike. 'One of the owners grew up with a grandfather who has a part of his home decorated like a diner – it served ice cream and popcorn whenever the kids stayed over. So in the back of their minds they just wanted a space where grown-ups and children could play.'

Thanks to Alina's careful editing – she reined the owners back from some of their original ideas, such as covering the sofa in paisley – this apartment-within-a-home has become a family favourite, the spot where they eat breakfast together on weekends. 'It's really cosy and comfortable,' Alina says. 'And because of all the different light options it's so easy to change the mood and make the space what you want it to be.'

What this project does so well is to take the joyfulness we want for this season and find a way it can endure all year. 'There should always be an element of surprise and it's fascinating to discover the unexpected,' says Alina. She could be talking about the vending machine; the hidden bar accessed by a wall-mounted phone that acts as a door handle; or any of the disco light settings that can suddenly be switched on to get everyone partying. 'So we always think, what will we do that will wow?' Now that's what we call festive.

the download

THE DESIGNER

Alina Wolhardt, founder of Wolf in Sheep Design, a long-time friend of this home's owners, so they all felt comfortable to push the decor to its limits. Alina credits her dual upbringing of Japanese and Danish with a knack for understanding details (the Japanese influence) and using design to evoke a feeling of comfort (a Scandinavian specialty).

THE PROPERTY

Entirely open plan, this apartment-style project is actually the first floor of a four-storey townhouse in Boston. Accessed by a lift from the garage below or main living spaces above, it has a large living area (with concealed bar), party kitchen, breakfast nook, arcade and cloakroom.

ONE OF THE OWNERS GREW UP WITH A GRANDFATHER WHO HAS PART OF HIS HOME DECORATED AS A DINER - IT SERVED ICE CREAM AND POPCORN WHENEVER THE KIDS STAYED OVER



GAMES AREA

'The top of the poker table flips over and becomes a regular table,' Alina says of this crowd-pleasing design feature.

Davenport table, Blatt Billiards. Flow Slim chairs, MDF Italia at Casa Design. Vintage artwork, already owned by the homeowners; for similar, try Saatchi Art

KITCHEN

'I used primary colours throughout the space but toned them down,' Alina says. 'The reds are terracottas; the yellows are mustards and the blues are teals.'

Cabinets made by Trickett Woodworks. VP2 Flowerpot pendants, & Tradition.

Ceiling in Aztec Brick, Benjamin Moore. Pillar covered in Tuscany

carpet, Missoni at Stark.

Floor tiles, Arto







HIDDEN BAR

'The Austin Powers slogan was hand-painted by an artist who specialises in signage and became another unexpected moment in a series of them,' Alina says of the bar that is opened by using a wall-hung phone as the door handle.

Yeah Baby! motif by Kenji Nakayama of Need Signs Will Paint. **Walls** in cherry wood panels. Custom **sofa**, Landon Cole

ARCADE

'This space was one of the primary must-haves in the brief,' Alina says. 'But I wanted this to be more interesting than just games machines.' Switching on the black light allows the neon signage to be amped up. 'It really glows,' she says.

Arcade games, already owned by the homeowners; try eBay for similar. Similar Carrara and Nero Marquina **floor tiles**, Starel Stones



CLOAKROOM

'The mirrored mosaics graduate from gold to silver, but as they were expensive we only did them on two walls,' says Alina.

Prism Rosa marble **floor tiles**, TileBar. **Lights**, Visual Comfort & Co. Mirrored **mosaic tiles**, DiscoverTile. Similar **bathroom fittings**, Burlington



ENTRANCE

'The beaded curtain was a must - it's so 1970s!' Alina says. 'The owners found the Groovy sign and I just felt it set the tone perfectly.'

Walls in Aztec Brick, Benjamin Moore. Beaded **curtain**, Etsy. **Groovy light**, sourced by homeowner; for similar, try London Neon

WHEN WE MIX PATTERNS WE TRY TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE SCALE - WE ALWAYS VARY THEM, WHICH STOPS THEM FROM SEEMING TOO BUSY

