

MINDFUL MOMENTS

Colours and scents of the forest and heathland inspired the relaxing atmosphere of this restored 1960s bungalow in the Netherlands

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Living room In this space, a new cream-coloured 'Beauty' sofa by Antonio Citterio for Flexform joins vintage 'Erasmus' sofa sections by Afra and Tobia Scarpa for B&B Italia, with their original 1960s upholstery. The two artworks on the wall are original pieces by Belgian artist and sculptor Pol Bury and the floor lamp beside them is the 'Studio' by Laura Bilde for Handværk. The coffee and side tables are all vintage finds picked up at markets and fairs, while the sisal rug is from Ikea ►



We often leave the Amsterdam office on Thursday evening and, after a one-hour drive, we spot our bungalow in the middle of the Veluwe forest and instantly relax,' says Dax Roll, one half of the creative couple behind interior design firm Nicemakers. Since founding their studio eight years ago, he and Joyce Urbanus have been incredibly busy, so it's no surprise they both found themselves dreaming of an escape from the capital.

When it came to what they wanted from their new home, the pair were on the exact same page: somewhere immersed in nature, where they could slow down. So clear was their vision that they both stumbled upon the ideal property separately. 'Dax was away for work when I came across the house,' explains Joyce, 'but as it turned out, he had also spotted it while on his trip. It was perfect - located on a sandy path, in the middle of a large forest, with the special surprise of a heather garden. The way the sunlight fell through the trees, the bird calls and the scents, it was enchanting.'

Dating back to the 1960s, the bungalow was in almost completely original condition when Dax and Joyce first moved in. The atmosphere was ideal, but the layout required tweaking. To create a more natural flow, the couple enlisted the help of family and friends and, in one eventful weekend, demolished the central, glass-walled hallway that once divided the living room from four small bedrooms. Now, the place is airy and open-plan, with framed views appearing like living artworks at every turn.

'Everything is connected, but each space still retains its individuality,' says Joyce, who explains that, apart from a sofa and bed, nothing in the house was bought new. 'There is still so much to be found in the world that is beautiful,' she explains. 'Our choices were never guided by the fact that pieces should fit into a certain era, but we were inspired more by the 1960s way of thinking about design - simplicity, functionality and clean lines.'

An enviable collection of vintage finds, picked up on trips across the Netherlands and Belgium, had been ready in storage at Nicemakers' Amsterdam office, just waiting for the pair to buy this property. Along with a few items left behind by the previous owners, the furniture, lighting and accessories underline the authenticity of this home.

'Recently,' adds Joyce, 'I was listening to the lyrics of *Every Age* by José González - "Take this seed, take this spade, Take this dream of a better day, Take your time, build a home, Build a place where we can all belong" - and thought how the song perfectly articulated what this house means to me. It has given us a place to rest.' nicemakers.com

Dining area The wooden table once belonged to a boat owner, who refreshed the top with high-gloss yacht varnish every year to build up the gleam. The chairs are vintage finds - discovered at Design Icons, a trade show in Amsterdam - reupholstered using 'Soft Wood' fabric by Dedar ▶





Kitchen Made of American walnut, the cabinets and island were designed by Nicemakers and constructed by Eginstill. Frans Pahlplatz, the owner of Eginstill and a close friend of the couple, invited Dax to help build all the solid worktops, making this space feel very personal. The bar stools are reupholstered vintage finds ▶



Breakfast terrace The two daybeds, covered in handwoven textiles from Pakistan, are ideal for lazy days. Above them hangs an artwork made of felt that Dax and Joyce bought at the Design Icons trade show. The wooden piece on the wall is by Dutch artist Jan Murk de Vries and the chair is a vintage design, believed to be Danish from the late 19th century. The travertine coffee tables, which have delicate brass and copper inlay, are also vintage finds, while the leather pouf is from HK Living ▶



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Entrance The pivoting glass door that welcomes people into this property is a new addition designed by Nicemakers, while the travertine flooring is an original 1960s feature. Above the vintage chair hang two prints from OODE gallery in Amsterdam. The pendant light is a mid-century piece by German firm Doria Leuchten **Exterior** Dax Roll and Joyce Urbanus, co-founders of interior design firm Nicemakers, outside their home, with its heather garden **Opposite** A cosy spot to relax, the leather chair used to sit in Joyce’s grandparents’ living room. Through the opening is the bathroom, with a glass-topped table from the 1960s and a metal chair found in a second-hand shop nearby ➤





Bathroom Also a dressing room, with wardrobes made from old Ikea cabinets, this space is vast. Custom-designed by Nicemakers, the vanity unit complements the marble sink and 'Supernova' taps from Dornbracht. Dax collected the three artworks from various vintage stores and the plush rug is by Massimo Copenhagen ▶



Main bedroom The bed is the 'Groundpiece' by Antonio Citterio for Flexform and the bedside table is a vintage find, picked up at the Paul Bert Serpette flea market in Paris. The bedspread was handmade by Studio Natural in Latvia, and the cushion is upholstered in 'Tiger Mountain' fabric by Dedar. In the corner of the room, a low vintage table and lamp are placed beside the Bette bathtub, which is encased in a wooden surround designed by Nicemakers. See Stockists page for details [ED](#)