

DISCOVERIES



1. THE CHINESE BEDROOM AT EASTNOR CASTLE. 2-4. QUEEN MARY CHINOISERIE, SEEDPOD, AND JAPONICA BY WATTS 1874. 5. EASTNOR'S EXTERIOR AND GROUNDS.



DEBUT

Prints Charming

Heritage textile house Watts 1874 mines England's historic Eastnor Castle for patterns

Eastnor Castle, an early-19th-century estate designed by Robert Smirke in England's Herefordshire County, looks every bit the stately fortress one might expect of a historic manor, with imposing battlements and surrounding moat. But beyond its Norman Revival walls are rooms that blend kaleidoscopic verve with the warmth of a country cottage. That eclectic look—the result of generations of shifting Regency, Victorian, and Italianate tastes—has now inspired a collection of wallpapers and textiles by venerable British fabric company Watts 1874, which just celebrated its 150th anniversary.

Founded by three English architects, Watts first came to prominence in the Queen Anne Revival era, embodying the highly ornate interiors of the day. Current creative director Fiona Flint saw that company legacy reflected in Eastnor's patterned wall coverings and tapestries, a mix she cheerfully calls "a little bit mad." The Moorish motifs in the Great Hall felt ripe for reimagination. So too did the chinoiserie

stretching across the Chinese and Queens bedrooms, the latter named for Mary of Teck (wife to King George V), who spent the night there in 1937. "I wanted to celebrate these incredible, very beautifully drawn seedpods and flowers," says Flint, who zeroed in on specific botanical elements to develop digitally printed motifs, some in punched-up, contemporary colorways. "We've made the japonica blue," she notes. "That's unheard of."

These days, Eastnor courts nobility of the Hollywood variety. Shiv Roy's extravagant wedding on the hit HBO series *Succession* was shot at the castle, which is also available to rent for nonfictional nuptials or visits. Thanks to Watts, those of us who can't pop across the pond can still surround ourselves with the Eastnor look through the transportive power of textiles. watts1874.co.uk —CHARLOTTE COLLINS

1. MILO BROWN. 2, 3, & 5. COURTESY OF WATTS 1874. 4. JAN SEDLACEK.