

HOMES & GARDENS®

SEPTEMBER 2013
£3.99

DREAM SCHEMES

Be inspired by the world's most elegant rooms

NATURE'S BOUNTY
COOKING WITH AUTUMN FRUITS
THE BEAUTY OF DAHLIAS

Style Solutions

- NEW LOOKS WITH DAMASK
- DECORATING WITH MAPS
- USING MUTED MINERAL SHADES

SMART BUYS
PATTERNED FLOOR TILES
PAINTED KITCHENS
CHIC WALL PANNELLING



ISSN 0950-0804



ENTRANCE HALL

A gentle palette of creams and taupes gives the wide hall a calm look that sets the decorative tone for the rest of the house.

Hagga Stripe rug, from £356.40sq m, Kestrel at Sinclair Till Flooring Company, 020 7720 0051, sinclairill.co.uk. Artwork by Donald Sultan, sourced by Sera Farnham, 001 646 344 1444, serafarnham.com ▶

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Featuring airy open-plan spaces, streamlined furniture and contemporary artworks, the Hampshire home of Chloe and Richard Foxe offers polished urban style in an idyllic pastoral setting

WORDS SERENA FOXSHAMER | PHOTOGRAPHS | NEDICTE AUSLET



KITCHEN

Instead of a formal dining room, the Foxes opted for a relaxed eat-in kitchen, transforming the setting with leather bar stools (left) and a striking pendant light designed by Helen Green.

Camargue solid oak dining chairs in Linen Grey, £169 each. Oka, 0844 815 7590, okadirect.com.



There was a time when the words "rural idyll" evoked a vision of rusticity: low beams, flagstones and a dresser festooned with gaily painted mugs thrown in for good measure. But taste moves on and, nowadays, well-heeled urbanites crave a place where paddocks, ponies and pastoral peace sit happily alongside the perks of modern design – unfussy furnishings, open-plan spaces and enough bathrooms and iPod docks to keep picky city guests happy.

Chloe Foxe and her husband Richard exemplify this new breed of country dweller. A hard-working pair of Londoners with two young children, they knew exactly what they did not want their rural retreat to look like. "Nothing too dark or formal," says Chloe, adding, "chintzes and lots of overblown prints are not for us," nor was "a hodgepodge" of furniture. What the Foxes did want, however, strikes you as soon as you arrive at their

LIVING ROOM

Here, dark colours and challenging contrasts have been replaced with a mix of textured walls and calming shades (also right), which offset the bespoke furniture and fittings to great effect.

Coffee table and light fittings. Helen Green Design, 020 7552 3344, helengreendesign.com. Artwork by Karrooz Aram, karrooz.com.

LIBRARY

Once a formal dining room, the library (left) was designed as a masculine retreat, where specially commissioned chairs and oak cabinetry evoke the feel of a gentleman's club.

Similar armchairs. The Commander in Deep Moss brushed linen cotton, £585 each. Sofa.com, 0845 400 2222, sofa.com.





MAIN BATHROOM

Garish yellow and black were replaced with minimal decoration and a delicate small-print wallpaper to create a calm-inducing space.

Wallpaper: Crabapple in Pink, £120 a roll, Knowles & Christou, 020 7352 7000, knowles-christou.com



"In the 1920s, the then owner radically altered the interior, resulting in the well-lit sweep of rooms that flow across two floors"



Hampshire house: subtly textured walls, calm colours and a brace of artworks which would not look out of place in a Chelsea apartment all set the tone for an interior that is, says Chloe, "neither too urban or too countrified".

It is a look that also reflects the skills of their designer, Natalia Miyar, who inherited the title of head designer at Helen Green Design after the eponymous founder died last year. Natalia not only grasped the Foxes' wish for a look that balances bespoke with high street, she also understood their ideal of a non-rustic hideaway with a pulled-together, calming style. "I think town dwellers now want to enjoy country life with more comfort and polish," explains Natalia.

It helped, too, that the house needed no structural work. In the 1920s, the then owner, gripped by modishly Modernist ideas, radically altered the interior, resulting in the well-lit sweep of rooms that flow across two floors unhindered by beams or rustic nooks. It was this unfussy layout that drew the Foxes here after a fruitless trawl of Cotswolds properties. For the next nine months, an intensive top-to-toe redecoration plan was put in play to create a symphony of tones and textures, with linens, fine wools and velvets being set against pale lilac, grey or smokey blue. There was just one internal reorganisation, with the formal dining room being converted into a den for a modern country gentleman, replete with wing-back chairs and sleek gadget-concealing oak bookcases. A vast dining table was then installed in the equally expansive new kitchen.

In keeping with the pulled-together look, every piece was bought especially for the house. Sofas and tables, light fittings, even milk pitchers were sourced to suit the proportions of each room, while **New York art consultant Sima Familant tracked down the striking paintings**. When a particular object proved elusive, British craftsmen were commissioned. So, a coffee table with storage that does not overpower its setting was specially fashioned, as was a shapely green glass table lamp and bedside tables in subdued limed timbers, all of which chime with the town-meets-country air of the house.

Urban comparisons, however, stop at the front door. Step outside and you find a paddock with glossy ponies and a well-stocked kitchen garden. Shadow-splashed downland stretches ahead like a Paul Nash painting. "It is this sense of space and freedom that we value the most," says Chloe. "At weekends we're all outside, whatever the weather, walking the dog on the Downs or fishing in the chalk stream." Chintz and beams may be out, it seems, but the essential ingredients of the rural dream remain the same. ■

GUEST BEDROOMS

The choice of smart, angular headboards (opposite page) gives these rooms a contemporary feel. Lampshades in a contrasting colour help to add definition to the schemes.

Similar lamp (opposite, top), Chamonix Crystal lamp, £522; oval shade in Charcoal silk, £105; both Vaughan, 020 7349 4600, vaughandesigns.com

FAMILY ROOM

In this welcoming space, the Foxes mixed bespoke and off the peg pieces, which allowed them to keep to their strict budget.

Blind in Florence in Frost, £96m, de Le Cuona, 020 7584 7677, delecuona.com. **Ingrid rug**, from £356m, Kashi at Chaplins, 020 7099 0946, chaplins.co.uk



UTILITY AREA

A butler's sink and brick-effect tiling are practical choices for this hardworking room.

