



A breath of
FRESH AIR

A ramshackle former livery stable has been stripped back and transformed into a distinctive and stylish home

FEATURE ANNE ARMSTRONG PHOTOGRAPHS DAVID PARMITER



MAIN The cabinetry was constructed by Ashwood Carpentry and The Potting Shed Man using wood bought from a timber merchant. The stainless-steel Falcon cooking range completes the look.

TOP RIGHT A holiday in a Moroccan riad influenced the choice of the greyish-blue wall tiles, discovered at Walls and Floors.

BELOW RIGHT "For me, flowers have become a substitute for art on the walls," says Hannah.





"I was keen to be adventurous and wasn't daunted for a moment"

ABOVE The half-height window treatment in the kitchen is reminiscent of a traditional French café.

RIGHT The impressive oak staircase was built and installed by Latvian company, Exwood. There is underfloor heating beneath the microcement flooring, and the walls are painted in Shaded White by Farrow & Ball. Hannah created a lighting feature from a collection of second-hand lamps.

Whilst house-hunting in historic Winchester in 2012, Hannah McIntyre came across an empty, ramshackle building, tucked away in a conservation area, amidst a jigsaw of characterful narrow streets, lined with period cottages. Built in the latter years of the nineteenth century, this unusual building came with an interesting history: once used as a livery stable, it had, by the 1940s, become a garage and storage unit with a dance hall above. As soon as she set eyes on its warehouse-like exterior, Hannah knew that she should buy it and transform it into something very special – a place where she could live and work, fulfilling her ambition to run a boutique bed-and-breakfast business.

Transformation of the building started by stripping it back to its bare bones. Hannah explains: "I spent most of the following year on site, collaborating with an architect and a small army of builders, plumbers, painters, plasterers, wood workers and electricians. At one stage, there must have been 20 or so people working here."

Hannah always had a clear vision of what she hoped to achieve. "I knew how I wanted it to look. I was keen to be adventurous, and I wasn't daunted for a moment, although my friends were apprehensive about the sheer scale of the renovation. I did some of the work myself, such as painting walls, and wood-worming and varnishing floors," she adds.

Creative flair is evident in every corner. Hannah's attention to the architectural and decorative details has been prodigious. Maybe it is in the genes – she is the daughter of Jane McIntyre, an interior designer and homeware retailer, who works in and around Winchester.

The wide, arched front door of this south-facing house opens on to the dramatic, beamed, open-plan dining hall, flooded with daylight coming in through a series of large sash windows. Although uncluttered, it feels warm, welcoming and comfortable, with a confident mix of old and new – a merging of the unexpected with the antique, vintage and traditional. For instance, the ground floor is laid throughout ▶



LEFT A mini stage, equipped with footlights, has been built for the antique Austrian grand piano. Both the beaten metal ceiling lights and the dining table made from recycled Spanish elm came from Winchester-based interior designer, Jane McIntyre.

BELOW On warm sunny days, an almost Mediterranean atmosphere filters into the little courtyard garden. Aspire Outdoors sells similar pieces of garden furniture.





ABOVE The sitting room is presided over by a handsome fireplace, above which is 'Maude', a striking piece of textile art by Jill Harrison. A similar fireplace is the 'Vicenza' by Chesneys. The walls are painted in Hague Blue by Farrow & Ball and the curtains are Passiflora by Jo Bound at Boeme. The three classically styled, bespoke sofas are from Jane McIntyre, and are covered in a durable linen-like fabric.





with fashionable microcement – a relatively new type of decorative finish – with underfloor heating, whilst the fine voile curtains at the windows are embellished with vintage lace. One of the big focal points of the house is the beautiful antique Austrian grand piano, which resides on a purpose-built mini stage and is occasionally played by Hannah, who used to sing professionally.

Fresh flowers play an important role in Hannah's decorating scheme, and she commissions her expressive displays from Hampshire-based florist Catherine Coombes. "I do believe in using flowers to decorate rooms – for me, they have become a substitute for having lots of art on the walls," she adds.

The choice of deep blue walls on the sitting room walls echoes the richness of a Dutch still-life painting, and produces a more intimate atmosphere in this area, a feeling augmented by the built-in library that flanks the arched doorway and an assembly of elegant sofas arranged around the impressive stone fireplace. Two sets of French windows provide ample light and open on to the sheltered courtyard garden.

There is a rustic simplicity in the kitchen, and Hannah's made-to-measure cabinetry looks fabulous – all achieved at a fraction of the cost of commissioning a high-street kitchen company. "I designed it myself, and had the cabinets built from wood bought from a local timber yard," she explains.

A bespoke curved staircase, constructed from stained oak, climbs to the upper floor, where there are two inviting bedrooms, both with imaginatively designed en-suite bathrooms. The ambience is a rough-luxe fusion, achieved by partnering reclaimed timber with softer, feminine elements such as the beautifully dressed beds. "I wanted to inject a bit of fun around the place by having bedrooms with high ceilings, each with a mezzanine installed with a roll-top bath so it feels as though you are bathing under the stars," she says. Hannah's penchant for industrial style reappears in the en suites, where she teamed up with an artisan builder to realise an idea of fashioning ordinary copper piping into eye-catching power showers and tap fittings. "These were a bit tricky to get right, but using ▶

ABOVE Beneath a soaring ceiling, Hannah's favourite bedroom features an oversized paneled headboard, inspired by those often seen in English stately homes. It was made by local artisan builder The Potting Shed Man, and painted in Elephant's Breath by Farrow & Ball. The walls have been covered in Dove Tale, also by Farrow & Ball. The bedspread is by Bella Notte Collection.



ABOVE A brightly coloured, patterned quilt introduces a dash of colour against walls painted in Setting Plaster by Farrow & Ball. Deborah Hursley, of Hursley Workroom in Winchester, made the cover for the soft headboard.

LEFT Working to designs devised by Hannah and The Potting Shed Man, a local plumber used merchant's copper piping to make the power shower and matching basin taps.

raw materials in this way is an affordable option for achieving a copper theme in a bathroom," she suggests.

As well as absorbing decorating ideas from her mother, Hannah takes inspiration from other sources, not least memories of times past. "I remember a picture on the wall in my grandmother's house. There was a bed with ruffled sheets and a big, open window with billowing sheer curtains. I had that image in mind when deciding how to decorate the bedrooms. I am also inspired by interiors I see whilst on holiday abroad. I like Moroccan style, hence the wall tiles in the kitchen," she says.

Hannah has certainly made an amazing job of adding yet another layer to the history of this lovely old building, and now it seems she has found her perfect métier as a professional host. "I adore my home, I like meeting people and I love to cook." Moreover, she loves living in what feels like a village in the heart of a small-scale yet commercially thriving city. "It really is an ideal place to live," she smiles. ■

