

25BH
DETACHED RENOVATION



FAVOURITE ROOM 'I just love the kitchen – the aesthetics have come together so well'



After six years spent working abroad, Kate and Adrian Camp decided to return to the UK. 'We really enjoyed living in America and Switzerland but it just wasn't home and we missed Marks & Spencer, beans on toast and Radio 4,' says Kate. 'Also, we have three daughters to think about and wanted to see more of our families. When we came back in June 2008, it was sunny, Wimbledon tennis was on and we fell in love with England all over again.'

On their return, the Camps rented a property in Berkshire. They liked the location so much that they began searching for a house locally. 'I drove around the streets to check out the areas,' says Kate. 'I turned into this road and immediately liked it because of the attractive houses. There was a pleasant, village feel yet it had easy access to a mainline train station and to the motorways.'

By coincidence, just as Kate discovered the street, a house there came onto the market. The couple had wanted a period property that would accommodate their growing family. This place was detached, built early-19th century and had a generous-sized garden. The drawbacks were that the three-bedroom property was not

big enough, had a cramped layout and looked as though it had not been updated for 40 years.

'I couldn't immediately fall in love with it because it was poky and dark and in a hodgepodge of styles where bits had been added on over the years,' says Kate. 'Adrian was more keen than me because he could see its potential and he loved the garden. I had a good feeling about the place and realised it could become a wonderful family home. We decided to plunge in, much to the horror of our parents, who wondered whether we'd ever manage to turn it into a dream home.'

The couple bought the house in 2008, then rented a property close by while the builders moved in. The Camps redesigned the interior, shifting the kitchen to the rear of the building and creating a sitting room from an existing study at the back. 'I love the window seat in this space,' says Kate. 'I also enjoy being in the kitchen when the French doors are opened and the garden is in full view.' They built a two-storey extension, which forms part of the kitchen-diner and the sitting room downstairs, and made a master bedroom and en-suite bathroom upstairs.

The staircase was moved into the hallway, freeing up space for a children's playroom at the front of the property and the area housing the former kitchen was turned into a study and a utility room. Upstairs, the Camps rejigged the layout and thanks to the new extension, it gave ▶

SITTING ROOM

The woodburning stove gives the room a cosy feel.

Built By Built's (01243 537533, builtbybuilt.co.uk) bookshelf unit, £600, is similar. For a cream stove, try the enamel Carron, £799, The Greener Company (07852 315542).

Victorian needlepoint footstool, £395, The Antiques Warehouse (01252 317590, w3b-ink.com/antiqueswarehouse). Garden Trading's (0845 608 4448, garden.trading.co.uk) log basket, £34, is a good match

HALL

Kate has made use of the under-stairs area.

Venetian chair, £130, eBay (ebay.co.uk). The Mardin rug, £490, Oka (0844 815 7380, okadirect.com) is similar

KITCHEN

Freestanding units and an Aga create a rustic look.

Cabinets painted in Aqua Blue and Calico by Neptune, £35 for 2.5 litres (01793 881144, neptune.co.uk). Three-oven cream gas-fired Aga Twyford, from £4,995 (0845 712 5207, aga-rayburn.co.uk)



DINING AREA

The dining area opens onto the garden.

For a comparable pine table and chairs, try the Tetuan dining set, £140, The Great Furniture Trading Company (0845

653 2070, greatfurnituretradingco.co.uk). For a similar storage unit and baskets, see the Silbury Console, £399, The Cotswold Company (0844 984 0003, cotswoldco.com)

MADELEINE AND NATHALIE'S ROOM

The two eldest daughters share this Scandinavian space.

Try a tree **wall sticker**, £38, Wall Glamour (01653 696621, wallglamour.co.uk). A pretty effect can be created with the Valentina **bedspread**, £45.99, Diane Ford Soft Furnishings (07935 097430, dianefordsoftfurnishings.co.uk)

**ANNA'S BEDROOM**

This room is made more special by the fact that this is the bed Kate slept in as a child.

Summer Palace wallpaper, £28 for a 10-metre roll, Laura Ashley (0871 230 2301, lauraashley.com). Try the **Girls Patchwork quilt**, £99, Feather & Black (01243 380600, featherandblack.com)

**FAMILY BATHROOM**

The family bathroom is a smart but child-friendly space.

Bespoke wooden vanity unit, £490, Surrey Furniture (01932 355332, surrey-furniture.co.uk). **Freestanding bath**, from £1,640, Heritage Bathrooms (0844 701 8501, heritagebathrooms.com)



BEST BUY 'I love the marble sink unit in the family bathroom, it was a bargain on eBay'

MASTER BEDROOM

Crisp bedlinen in calm colours help make this a serene space.

Try the mocha **duvet set**, from £7, John Lewis (08456 049049, johnlewis.com). The Single Gosford **wall lights**, £63.50 each, Jim Lawrence (01473 826685, jim-lawrence.co.uk) are a good alternative



them four good-sized bedrooms, two of which are en suite, as well as a family bathroom.

However, not everything associated with the build ran smoothly. 'We moved in in September 2009 but the place was still unfinished. There was no guttering, which meant that the walls were damp and the roof leaked. Then we saw water from the shower pouring through the light fittings of the room downstairs and also, unbeknown to us, the boiler was leaking carbon monoxide. Luckily a plumber discovered it in time – it was all very scary,' says Kate. 'We used an architect but the whole thing turned into a nightmare because the firm he worked for went bust and then towards the end, the builders went out of business, too,' says Kate. Luckily, the couple managed to find other tradesmen to finish the job and there were no more disasters.

The house had few original period features, but Kate and Adrian managed to keep the old floorboards in the study, using reclaimed pine flooring for the rest of the building. They opted for a cool, neutral background throughout.

When it came to the look of the interior, Kate did not want a set theme, preferring to use pieces she and Adrian liked rather than trying to adhere to a particular look. It has been a long and arduous route to a family home. 'I'd definitely do it all again, though,' says Kate. 'I loved having to choose the colours and the furnishings as well as planning the kitchen and bathrooms. I'd like to think the finished result speaks for itself.' 📌



EN SUITE
A floral tiled panel makes a pretty feature.
Chelsworth 72-tile panel, £1,495, Fired Earth (0845 366 0400, firedearth.com)

BE INSPIRED BY THE CHAIRS IN THE CAMPS' KITCHEN-DINER

Grey Angled chair, £65, Cath Kidston (0845 026 2440, cathkidston.co.uk)



Ercol New Chiltern chair, £179, John Lewis (08456 049049, johnlewis.com)



Hoop Windsor chair, £105, CPW (01797 225014, cpwfurniture.co.uk)

GET THE LOOK