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the great escape

Feature by Natalie Flaum
Photography by Colin Poole

Leaving the rat-race behind for a quiet life in the country led the Bryan family to their luxury home; a new-build with classic looks.



142

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One year ago, Debra and Richard Bryan plus their children, Emma, now 11, and Edward, ten, moved from London to Gloucestershire to lead a peaceful lifestyle and purchased a new-build property constructed with historic relevance and great attention to detail.

Property developer/builder Richard Deacon built the house in the style of British architect Edwin Lutyens, who pioneered architecture in India when it was part of the British Empire. He also designed several English country houses thereafter. "Richard is well-known in this area for building one-off properties to a very high standard," Debra says. "Passers-by don't notice this is a new-build as it doesn't look out of place on a street lined with period-style homes," she adds. Richard reflects on this further, "There's a huge demand for this type of place in the area, so I'm inclined to specialise in building properties with a 1920's-1930's feel. They've proved to be a very popular choice."



above Silver Bombo stools bring a contemporary twist to the classic design while being an ideal perch for breakfast or guests to chat over a glass of wine.

left Inspired by a design seen in a magazine, the split-level island is the centre of attention, offering space for food preparation, storage and dining.

143

WOODCHESTER

Cabinet Makers

right Two archways ensure easy access to other parts of the home, including the smart, formal dining room and picture-lined lounge.

below An innovative use of space below the flat-screen TV, an old fireplace is utilised as a storage solution for wine, cookbooks and tableware.

“Whenever we entertain, people tend to gravitate towards this room and we love spending time here as a family.”



For the kitchen, Richard enlisted the expertise of Tim Buckingham at Woodchester Cabinet Makers. “Richard was very decisive and great to work with. He was specific in his choice of appliances and had them all delivered to our workshop where we spent time fitting them within made-to-measure cabinetry,” recalls Tim. “When I first visited the house, it was a shell. I met the electrician and plumbers and discussed where the first fix of electrics and plumbing works should go. When the walls were plastered and decorated and the floors down, we installed the cabinetry in a dust-free environment. The final coat of paint was applied by brush on site – we never spray as that tends to look plastic. We pride ourselves on our natural wood and hand-painted finishes,” he adds.

To complement the Shaker-style scheme, a split-level island was created, inspired by one seen in a magazine. The beauty of this kitchen is in this unit, which draws the eye to the centre of the room, while the granite over-hang provides a seated area for stools.

Its lower section features baskets produced by local craftsman and third generation thatcher Richard Kale, whose family has been creating fine hand-woven products since 1882, made from willow gathered on the banks of the River Severn. “We supply him with the oak frame and he drills holes and weaves the basket within it,” Tim explains. “Having looked at many imported manufactured pieces, they’re absolutely nowhere near the same fantastic quality,” he adds.

Since moving in, the Bryans have acquired a new addition; golden retriever Pippa, and made a few adjustments to the kitchen. “I asked Tim to create dividers for the wide drawer that runs along the hob. He did this according to the sizes of my utensils,” says Debra. “There’s a section for ladles, spatulas and tongs plus a smaller part for ice-cream scoops and peelers. He even housed my knife block. It’s so convenient to have all my essentials to hand when cooking,” she adds. Another favourite of Debra’s is the Fisher & Paykel DishDrawers. “I hadn’t used them before, but they’re fantastic. They eliminate the need to lean over in order to reach them. Plus, they speed up efficiency when entertaining as you can be filling one up as the other’s in use,” she explains.



kitchen profile

Property developer Richard Deacon commissioned Woodchester Cabinet Makers to design a hand-crafted kitchen to sit sympathetically within a stylish new-build property. A crisp paint tone of Lime White was chosen to enhance the fresh, classic look while the best appliances ensure top functionality in a setting ideal for cooking, eating and relaxing.

**Woodchester Cabinet Makers, Unit N6a Inchbrook Trading Estate, Woodchester, Gloucestershire GL5 5EY.
Tel: 01453 835580. www.woodchestercabinetmakers.co.uk
Expect to pay from £20,000.**

bottom left One of Debra's favourite elements in her new kitchen, the Fisher & Paykel DishDrawers make light work of cleaning up after a hectic dinner party.

below Imitation beams deliver character into the new-build property and complement the oak floor that draws the eye along the length of the room.





The kitchen has been such a success that Debra has invited Tim to design and install oak cabinets in the study. "Last year, we had 60 guests to the house to celebrate Richard's 50th birthday, where we arranged to have a catered buffet laid on the island so that guests could pass through the kitchen and be served food," Debra smiles. "Whenever we entertain, people tend to gravitate towards this room and we love spending time here as a family. It's such a spacious area and really is the hub of our home," she concludes. ■

opposite page Whether catching up with family or relaxing with a good book, the open-plan living area is a comfortable spot to enjoy garden views beyond.



above An array of large windows allows for the dedicated cook to wash food while keeping an eye on visitors soaking up a summer's day sun outside.



above Fresh seasonal produce can be sliced and diced without damaging the durable Nero Assoluto worktop with its distinctive flecks.



left From a handy coffee machine to steam ovens and a warming drawer, the very best appliances are a wise investment and make life so much easier.

below Keep special bottles of bubbly and the likes of Chardonnay stored at the optimum temperature thanks to a 32-bottle capacity beverage cabinet.



useful information

Property developer/builder Richard Deacon.
Tel: 07770 481949. Email: rjdeacon@btinternet.com

Appliances

KM5753 hob, £1159; DA5320D hood, £2247; H4270 oven, £790; DG4060 steam oven, £1387; EGW4060-14 warming drawer, £525; H4020BM microwave, £1165; CVA2860 coffee maker, £1032, at Miele. Tel: 0870 755 4466. www.miele.co.uk

DD605IH DishDrawer, £715, at Fisher & Paykel.
Tel: 0845 066 2200. www.fisherpaykel.co.uk

320FNRS Definition fridge freezer, around £2799, at Amana. Tel: 0844 499 0101. www.amana.co.uk

KF18WA40 wine cabinet, from £984, at Siemens.
Tel: 0870 840 3300. www.siemensappliances.co.uk

Fixtures & furnishings

KBX11055 sink, £244; KBX11020 Kubus sink, £189; Triflow Doric tap with hand-spray, £529, at Franke. Tel: 0161 436 6280. www.franke.co.uk

Nero Assoluto granite worktop, around £450 per sq. m., at Bristol Marble Company Ltd.
Tel: 0117 965 6565. www.bristolmarble.com

Handmade solid oak dining table and chairs, prices on application, at Gateway Antiques.
Tel: 01993 823678. www.gatewayantiques.co.uk

Silver Bombo bar stools, £295 each, at John Lewis.
Tel: 0845 604 9049. www.johnlewis.com

Dunster French oak floor, around £64 per sq. m., at Woodpecker. Tel: 02920 888223.
www.woodpeckerflooring.co.uk

Orangery wall paint, price on request, at Farrow & Ball. Tel: 01202 876141. www.farrow-ball.com

Woven baskets, price on request, at Richard Kale.
Tel: 01452 720109. No website available.

Burlington chair, £850; Henley table, £250, at Laura Ashley. Tel: 0871 230 2301. www.lauraashley.com