

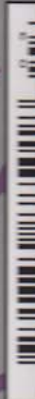
**design** et al

A BOLD STEP FORWARD

MARCH  
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£3.8

**GLAMOROUS  
INTERIORS FOR  
THE SERIOUSLY  
STYLISH**









# The Past Finds A Home In The Future

*A 17th Century timber framed building, newly constructed close to Windsor - U.K*

*Interior design by Nicky Dobree*

*Photography by Philip Vile*



















On first glance you would be forgiven for thinking that this home was in fact a timber framed seventeenth century building, but you would be only partially right. The house is actually a newly constructed property built using a seventeenth century timber frame. Acclaimed interior designer Nicky Dobree was commissioned to work on the project, which is situated close to Windsor, in part due to her experience with timber buildings. It was a challenge that she relished and one that she was keen to embark upon. "The clients had seen some of the work I had recently completed on *Grand Designs* I think and also the chalets I have worked on, which are of course projects based on timber framed buildings", she explained. "So it was an ideal scheme for me to work on. The home has a genuine seventeenth century timber frame, yet is constructed on a new plot of land". Essentially this makes the home a 'new build' though it has its roots firmly planted in the past.

The project took three and a half years in total to complete and Nicky was involved from the early stages of the project. "I think that is important to be involved in the

scheme at an early stage she continued. "To work closely with the fabric of the building and its structure before adding the layers to the interior." She defines herself as more than simply a decorator; Nicky Dobree works with the architecture and structure of a property and believes that the space speaks for itself. The challenge is therefore to interpret this space.

The clients had a clear brief and wanted her to create a home that was both comfortable and luxurious. Her challenge was to build a scheme that was sympathetic to the period and style of the structure, whilst combining elegance and modernity that one would expect from a sleek and beautiful home. And in fairness this is a balance that she has achieved perfectly. Her clients had some genuine seventeenth century artwork and tapestries and carvings dating back to the fifteenth and sixteenth century which are striking and perfectly at home in this setting, yet so too is the ultra chic Flexform sofa within the sitting room. This is after all a home and not a museum and to my mind the past has found a home within the present. The





eclectic mix, far from detracting from each other actually enhances the others attributes and original style.

The interior scheme feels comfortable, effortless and natural which is a reflection of the client's requirements. There are lots of windows so the space is light and bright and there is an excellent sense of flow between areas within the home. "We chose materials to reflect the light throughout the home, such as the long corian work surface in the kitchen and the tiling in the bathrooms," She explained. And the flooring throughout the ground floor, which was imported from France, was of course more than just aesthetically pleasing, it also has a dual function to enhance and reflect natural light throughout.

Simplicity was called for when dressing the windows and Nicky opted for classic, simplicity in fabrics with modern structured eyelet curtains. This once again adds to the glamorous and sophisticated appeal of the interior scheme, which for me defines the project as a real home.

Nicky describes the home as "Like a rich chocolate cake" and this analogy is one that I could immediately

identify with. In short it makes one feel immediate home, comfortable and cosseted. The glamour though understated is nevertheless clearly apparent and its appeal is timeless.

"Where there structural problems along the way," she asked her. "Of course there were." She laughed. "This is a timber frame building, none of the wall and floor is straight and there are beams everywhere. Can you imagine the challenges involved when installing a bathroom in a room that is of course part of the infinite charm and appeal of a project such as this," she enthused.

The project fits well into Nicky's portfolio because she has a lot of experience working with timber framed buildings and she does like to combine both old and new within her schemes, however she does not consider this to be her signature style, believing that each project comes from a concept determined by her clients, their personality and of course the way in which they live. After all our homes should be a true reflection of ourselves, and we are all individuals in our own right.



