



View across the dining area through to the kitchen

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# DECK THE HALLS

*Steve and Yvonne Hall are ringing the changes as they plan to spend the festive season in a beautiful apartment in Prestbury, writes Janet Reeder*



HIGH fliers Yvonne and Steve Hall are ringing the changes this Christmas by inviting their family to a slice of stately home living.

Their festive season will be spent in their luxurious new Prestbury apartment, part of Butley Hall, a splendid Grade II listed pile that has its origins in medieval times.

It's a stunning development that appealed to the couple on many levels, not least being able to enjoy a trendy apartment lifestyle close to the smart restaurants and amenities in one of Cheshire's most desirable villages.

Nor did they wait until the New Year to be out with the old and in with the new. Over the months the development took time to complete the couple junked all furniture from their previous home in Torkington Road, Wilmslow, and replaced it wholesale with the help of interior designer Lisa Keates of Keates Interiors.

Says banker and MD of a manufacturing and pharmacy businesses Yvonne: 'We had no real vision for the apartment. It was Lisa who worked with us, very much from the embryonic stage with ideas and themes and suggestions for all of the rooms. So we didn't bring one piece of furniture with us when we left our home in Torkington Road.

'We were able to move all that furniture on and start with a clean canvas and it has been a great partnership from the beginning to the end of the journey.

'It's a much smaller space because we had a big house before but this is still a very large apartment and the way we've worked it with Lisa, it just fits ▶

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIRSTY THOMPSON



Steve and Yvonne writing their Christmas cards



The kitchen



Master en suite bathroom



our lifestyle. I feel revitalised. It's out with the old and in with the new, albeit you're in a very old charming building.'

Yvonne and Steve give Cheshire Life a tour of the apartment with Lisa and fellow designer Sara on hand to talk through the finer details of the refurbishment.

While the period origins of the property have been respected, the top floor apartment, which is one of seven in the converted manor house, has a very contemporary mood and purpose. L'Antic flooring in the communal spaces gives the feel of original wood but has been used to cushion any noise and it gives a soft, warm feel.

The main sitting room has a modern designer look with its huge grey sofas and beautiful dining table which has been decorated for Christmas by Lisa in on-trend shades of copper and frost.

'The sofas were made bespoke by a local upholstery company in Warrington called Mirmac,' she explains.

'The adjacent sofa in complementary Mark Alexander fabric is by London-based Wychwood

Designs and the coffee table by Robert Langford, which is based in Chelsea Harbour.

'But one of the first things I'd suggested for the project is investing in some sculpture. We designed the fireplace around these two niches. They are by a local artist who is based in Bowdon - Barbra Myers. She does these limited edition solid bronze casts in different scales, some 10ft tall right down to this size. Her work is just beautiful and the atmosphere they create is incredible.'

One of Yvonne's favourite pieces is a Porta Romana lamp on a side table in the sitting room. 'Their tagline is "destined for the most beautiful homes in the world"', says Lisa.

Of course, it is the dining table which plays a central role over the Christmas period and the design from a Portuguese company called Frato perfectly suits Yvonne and Steve's lifestyle, not only because they enjoy entertaining family and friends but they also have a connection with Portugal having a home on the Algarve, which Lisa and the team also refurbished mid-way through the Butley Hall project.



An eye-catching centrepiece for the table was created by Lisa using inexpensive simple glazed tagines. She removed the tops and used foraged Portuguese laurel and rosehip, pheasant feathers and guinea fowl feathers for an on-trend look.

They perfectly compliment the classic Villeroy and Boch plates and Stuart crystal glassware which also adorn the table.

Another important statement piece for this room is the striking chandelier by UK-based Ocher.

Explains Lisa: 'They hand make everything, even the framework which is quite a lot of UK companies now farm out to china then just assemble everything over here. So it's nice to see a company still using British workmanship.'

From the living space we enter the kitchen, installed by Knutsford-based Hetherington Newman, stopping to check out a framed photograph of trees.

'Artwork images are from Shutterstock (a photography website) and then we just bespoke framed them, so it is a quite a cost-effective way of getting some impactful artwork,' reveals Lisa.

'This is a key elevation because your eye is drawn

into the kitchen so you needed something there.'

The kitchen space itself has a real wow factor thanks to the incredible marble topped island work surface and huge marble splashback.

Says Yvonne: 'It took a very long time and a lot of work sourcing this. This is a single slab piece of marble and from the same block as the backsplash, there two slabs that have been butterflyed out so you get this symmetrical veining on it. It was very complicated and it took a long time to get the perfect piece of marble but it was worth it.'

Lighting here is relatively inexpensive from Coach House (a company that sources furniture and accessories from China) but the classical profile ties in perfectly with a period property without relinquishing any of the clean contemporary feel.

Kitchen chairs around the worktop were upholstered bespoke by Wychwood and all appliances are Gaggenhau.

'Everything in the property can be operated with iPad or mobile phone from anywhere in the world as well,' says Steve, a former corporate director in the banking sector and non executive director. ▶



Master bedroom

'Lights, heating televisions, radios alarms CCTV everything. And we can keep our eye on the property while we're in Portugal'

The apartment boasts three large bedrooms all with en suite bathrooms, which have been decorated in a cool contemporary style.

Clever touches include specialist wallcoverings that have been inlaid into guest wardrobes to give the effect of hammered metal. In one of the two guest bedrooms there's a stool made by Mirmac who came to the rescue when the stool that Lisa had originally ordered was discontinued.

The second guest bedroom was part of the old hall and has been designed around the ancient beams, which because the originals couldn't be rescued, had to be replaced. Here the bed is by Robert Langford, the ottoman and wardrobe are from Coach House and lamps are by Andrew Martin. Soft furnishings again by Mirmac.

Steve and Yvonne save the best until last. The gorgeous master bedroom with its beautiful luxurious bed, dressing area and fabulous bathroom complete with flatscreen TV and Fired Earth bath is worthy of any notable grand house.

There's a dressing room that was created by Hetherington Newman in a special silver oak finish and inlaid with faux shagreen that's a real style statement.

Says Lisa: 'The wall lights are just to break it up because when you have a big dressing area like this sometimes it can just look like rows of wardrobes.'



Festive decorations



Mirror



Lamp

In the bedroom itself - another dramatic statement. Silver leaves mounted on the wall that were sourced from a design show in Paris.

'They were so new at the time they didn't even have any codes for me. The idea is they are tumbling along the walls and they then rest on the units there,' explains Lisa.

'The chair is Wychwood and the bed again was something I saw at the shows as a new product being launched in London. We changed quite a lot of things. It was a proper four poster and we shortened the post, while the headboard was a hard sharp contemporary shape that we redesigned and put the deep buttoned upholstery.'

'The throw was made for us. It's a faux fur made into a throw for the bed. The lamps are from a company called Heathfield and Co and I just loved the a sense of a feather and reference to feather pillows being there.'

Yvonne and Steve have lived in the property for over six months now and say the whole experience has been a breeze .

'It was a very close working relationship. Lisa spent a bit of time with us, getting to know us, and getting to know about our lifestyles and what we like. That's why it was quite effortless.'

'And on the day we moved in, they just took all the pressure away from us. We had a big install team who just brought everything in, placed everything and checked everything... so all we had to do is provide copious amounts of tea during the day and alcohol to celebrate at the end!' ♦



The Chinese armoire in one of the guest bedrooms is stunning but this one decorated on the double doors with butterflies, fruit and flowers in shades of grey and black is perfect for bedroom storage and works well for folded clothes or towels. £1,995  
Orchid Furniture  
[www.orchidfurniture.co.uk](http://www.orchidfurniture.co.uk)



The chandelier over the dining table makes a real statement and so will this. The Cori chandelier is striking and contemporary with an added attraction in that it uses 30% lead crystal for incredible light refraction, £295  
[www.chandeliersandmirrors.co.uk](http://www.chandeliersandmirrors.co.uk)

# GET THE LOOK

*Contemporary luxe is the mood of Yvonne and Steve's new Prestbury apartment, achieved by clever use of lighting and accessories*

Faux fur looks so inviting on the bed in the master bedroom. it's so soft and sumptuous. This one is by the Fine Cotton Company and is priced at £250  
[www.thrfinecottoncompany.com](http://www.thrfinecottoncompany.com)



The beds in the apartment really have the wow factor and so does this cream velvet upholstered bed with silver leaf detailing, £1,995  
Nicholas John Interiors  
[www.nicholasjohninteriors.co.uk](http://www.nicholasjohninteriors.co.uk)



Take a leaf from Lisa and use this stunning Ginkgo metal leaf lamp to add glamour. The natural splendour of the ginkgo plant's leaves form a spectacular display around the stem and the intricate details are captured by the shiny silver aluminium finish, £204  
Artisani  
[www.artisani.com](http://www.artisani.com)