

MANOR

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SOUTH WEST

The
food
Issue

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As I see it...

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Mid-life critical

Nathan Outlaw

Seafood supremo

The Black Farmer

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Design for life

Beyond colour, cushions and curtains, good interior design brings architecture and the lives lived within it into perfect harmony. Words by Imogen Clements.

Define ‘interior design’, I challenge you. The term has become rather vague, such that no-one really knows what it means. Doubtless soft furnishings come to mind, but there’s a lot more to it.

To get an idea of the scope behind good interior design, start with the architectural structure of a space – the shell – and then imagine, layer upon layer, the constructing of a fine work of art where all the details (layout, lighting, surfaces, textures, aspects) combine to meet ergonomic, practical and aesthetic requirements, but which also, through that last sprinkle of magic, deliver a certain thrill in the occupier: an intangible, emotional response that they get just being in the space and feeling at home. Not a small task.

“There’s a difference between interior design and interior decoration,” says Matthew Robinson of JAM Interiors. “As interior designers we work closely with the architect, key contractor and client. The design of the interior should be built into the design and build process such that the architect can get on with creating the structures while we can focus on delivering the internal features that best complement it. It goes well beyond – and starts a long time before – cushions and curtains.”

A case in point is a recent project, a beautiful four-storey home set on the bank of the River Dart, images

of which we feature here. “The house was inherited by three siblings and their families. It was a house that they’d all holidayed in regularly and spent many happy times there. When they inherited it, what started as vague thoughts around a new kitchen (design thoughts always tend to start with the kitchen) ended up as a complete rebuild.”

The architect appointed was BBH of Dartmouth. It was a multi-family brief. The house needed to accommodate all three siblings and their families together but also independently with friends or alone with children and in some cases grandchildren. There were many people to please and scenarios to cater to, and this was not an easy plot on which to do it. The building was an unusual shape: tall but narrow, it presented various design challenges in order to make the best use of each floor. BBH recommended JAM to the client as a company that could get a handle on them.

“Fortunately, the siblings had similar ideas of what they wanted,” says Matthew. “What they definitely didn’t want was a blue-and-white-striped, typical seaside home. The ideas that they sent through were much more in keeping with a high-end London apartment – a relaxed but quite sophisticated family home. This fitted well with my first impression of the house. The shape and positioning on the river bank, together with the

