

at Home

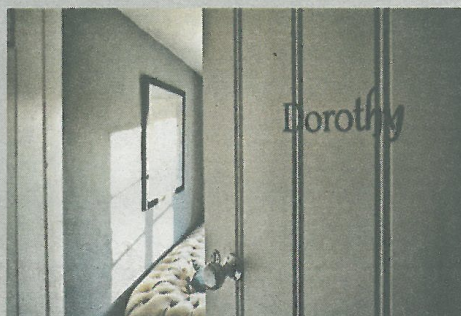
SCOTLAND *on* SUNDAY

DECEMBER 18, 2011

INSIDE
32 PAGES OF
PROPERTIES,
INTERIORS
AND IDEAS

WARM WELCOME

Interior designer
Joanna Berryman
prepares for Christmas



She has decked out the 17th-century cottage in a charming country style for the festive season. "Christmas is one of the most beautiful times of the year. You can really go to town on the decorations. The only thing I don't like to have in the house is tinsel. Years ago, it was one of those things we would pick up as kids at Woolworths, but I just don't like the synthetic look," Jo explains.

"Instead, I love to go for florals, natural laurel leaves, and you can always add sparkle by using silver and gold sprays," she says.

"There is a wonderful local florist called Twig in Tetbury, which makes divine wreaths and bouquets for Christmas," Jo explains. "There are so many things you can make yourself too. My daughter has been making angels for the Christmas tree using fir cones, pipe cleaners and a little clay head. It's wonderful to see her get so involved."

Jo is increasingly in demand as an interior designer and has had a busy year, working on projects ranging from a bijou apartment in Chelsea to

a footballer's pad in South London and a townhouse in Maida Vale. "The thing I love most about my work is the relationships I build up with people. It's a very personal thing to do someone's house. You really need to understand them and what they would like. You never know how the relationship will unfold. People are kind of borrowing my eye for things. I don't have one uniform or determined style, not like Kelly Hoppen or someone who uses one look. I like eclectic, different things."

"I love the process of curating different pieces, finding artworks, antiques and then putting them in the right place in someone's house."

"I often change things in my own house, selling pieces and adding different things. But I think that is part of the process of keeping things interesting in life. You have to be able to change your surroundings."

Jo has also launched her own pop-up Matrushka store on London's King's Road and has just finished working on a range of scented candles, which ♦♦

Clockwise from top left: the Christmas tree and garlands have a country charm; the impressive stone fireplace gets a subtle seasonal makeover; glass baubles give a festive touch to a chandelier; each room is named after a character from a book; this claw-foot bath is the centrepiece of one bathroom; interior designer Jo Berryman on her concrete outdoor sofa



"The thing I love most about my work is the relationships I build up with people. It's a very personal thing to do someone's house"

go on sale at the end of January. "It took a long time creating the right product, making sure that these were not the type of candles that could give you a migraine. I have called one of the candles after my mother, Monette, as well as Mae and Maude.

Jo also uses her Cotswolds house as a rental property. "I was approached by the company Mr and Mrs Smith, which specialises in exclusive and bespoke hotels and lodgings, after they had seen the house in a magazine," she explains.

After looking for a property for around eight months, Jo bought the house in 2009. "It was one late autumn day when I saw it and immediately fell in love with it," she says.

"It needed a lot of work, not so much structurally but I completely changed the interior. I didn't want it to look chintzy, so I got rid of the curtains and put in shutters at all the windows. I added a bathroom next to the upstairs

bedroom, and I also introduced a stairwell from the hall," she says.

"I have found some wonderful pieces for it – a copper bath that I sourced from a nearby antiques market and also a unique-looking concrete chesterfield sofa, which sits outside. It kind of gives the house a bit of an *Alice in Wonderland* feel," Jo says. She also restored the flagstone floors and put in country classics including a wood-burning stove and an Aga.

For Christmas, Jo is planning a simple menu. "I'm going to make roast beef, simply cooked, marinated overnight in olive oil with rosemary and garlic. Then I love to make my own recipe of blood orange cabbage, goose-fat-roasted potatoes, brussel sprouts and honey-roasted parsnips and carrots.

"My daughter Nico loves to get involved, and she will be making mince pies too. For pudding, my mum is going to bake one of her famous Christmas



'I love the process of curating different pieces, finding artworks and antiques'

cakes, and we'll also have some apple crumble and custard.

"I have a beautiful Spanish lace tablecloth that I am using for Christmas day, and the table will have a lot of holly and mistletoe on it too."

A real tree, flowers and festive foliage, as well as homemade decorations and home cooking all emphasise the natural feel Jo loves. She also adds that fragrance in the home is important at Christmas time.

"My favourite candles are Diptyque Baies, and also I love those that smell of Cire Trudon, Spiritus Sancti. Church frankincense and incense," she says.

It certainly feels like a place where Santa could drop in at any time. *

Didmorton House can be rented through Mr and Mrs Smith (www.mrandmrsmith.com); Matrushka (www.matrushka.co.uk)





My favourite things

What is your favourite Christmas film?

White Christmas.

What is your favourite Christmas drink?

Mulled wine.

What music do you like to listen to at Christmas?

Elvis Presley's festive compilation and carols sung by King's College Choir, Cambridge.

What is your favourite post-Christmas holiday destination?

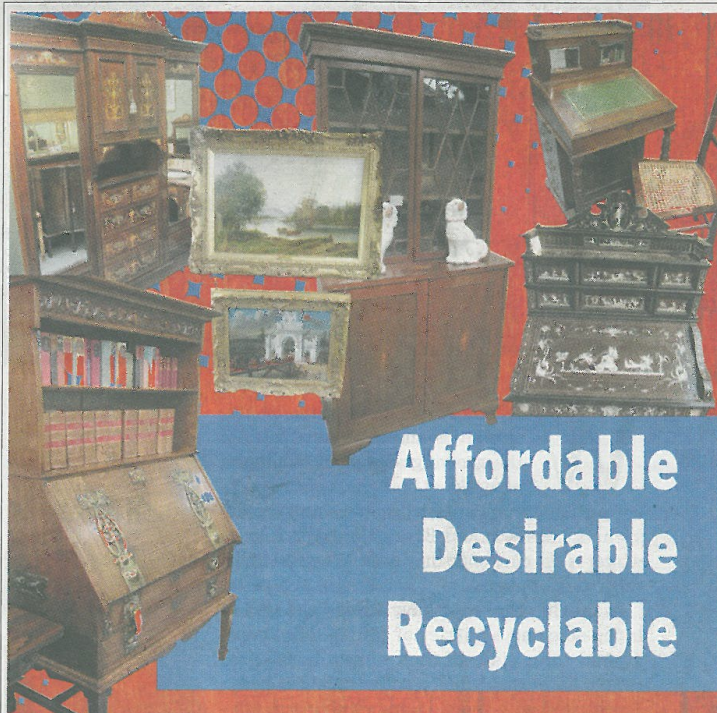
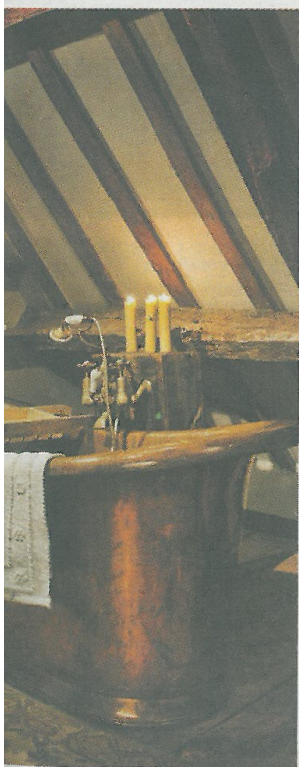
Las Alamandas eco resort, in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, is a perfect hideaway.

What are your favourite Christmas flowers?

Deep red amaryllis.



Clockwise from far left: the dining room with exposed stone wall, large wooden table and church seats; the kitchen mixes modern with traditional features; the Aga adds to kitchen's country feel; wooden beams in one of the bedrooms; a wood-burning stove is a new addition; a fabulous copper bath lends decadence



**Affordable
Desirable
Recyclable**

All Kinds of Everything

The Scottish Antique & Arts Centre



Abernyte Perthshire PH14 9SJ 01828 686401
Doune Stirlingshire FK16 6HG 01786 841203

Apple, iPad, Kindle, Amazon, eBay, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube