

CHRISTMAS HAVEN



A historic building is restored and filled with new memories.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMMA LEWIS / NARRATIVES
TEXT & STYLING BY ALI HEATH / NARRATIVES



WITH ONLY WEEKS BEFORE CHRISTMAS, FESTIVE ACTIVITY BUZZES THROUGHOUT THE HOLDEN HOUSEHOLD,

as Deborah and her two children add final holiday touches to both their decorative home and their lifestyle store, Nest Home & Cafe, in the village of Ripley in Surrey. "It is a gorgeous time of year, the village comes alive and everything around us takes on a special magical appeal," says Deborah.

Deborah had been searching for a family home with adjacent accommodation for her mum and space to launch her own antique, tableware and interior business. The Grade II listed, former coaching inn dating back to 1537 met all expectations, with a shop space to the front and an adjoining derelict barn that could be easily converted for her mum. Their home, a Tudor property with later Georgian extensions, unfolds as you enter; an intriguing warren of nooks and turns, with unexpected details and spaces beyond each corner. With four bedrooms split over three floors, the house juxtaposes cottage-style beams, carefully restored paneling and low ceilings at the back, with lofty ceilings and elegant sash windows to the front.

"A great sense of history can be felt within the walls; Lord Nelson is believed to have stayed here when it was a coaching inn, and it was once owned by Henry VIII," Deborah explains. "I feel like the custodian

A warm sitting room vignette shows how well the decorated Christmas tree blends in with Deborah's antique paintings and textiles. An orange wreath and a vintage clock help to complete the homey look.



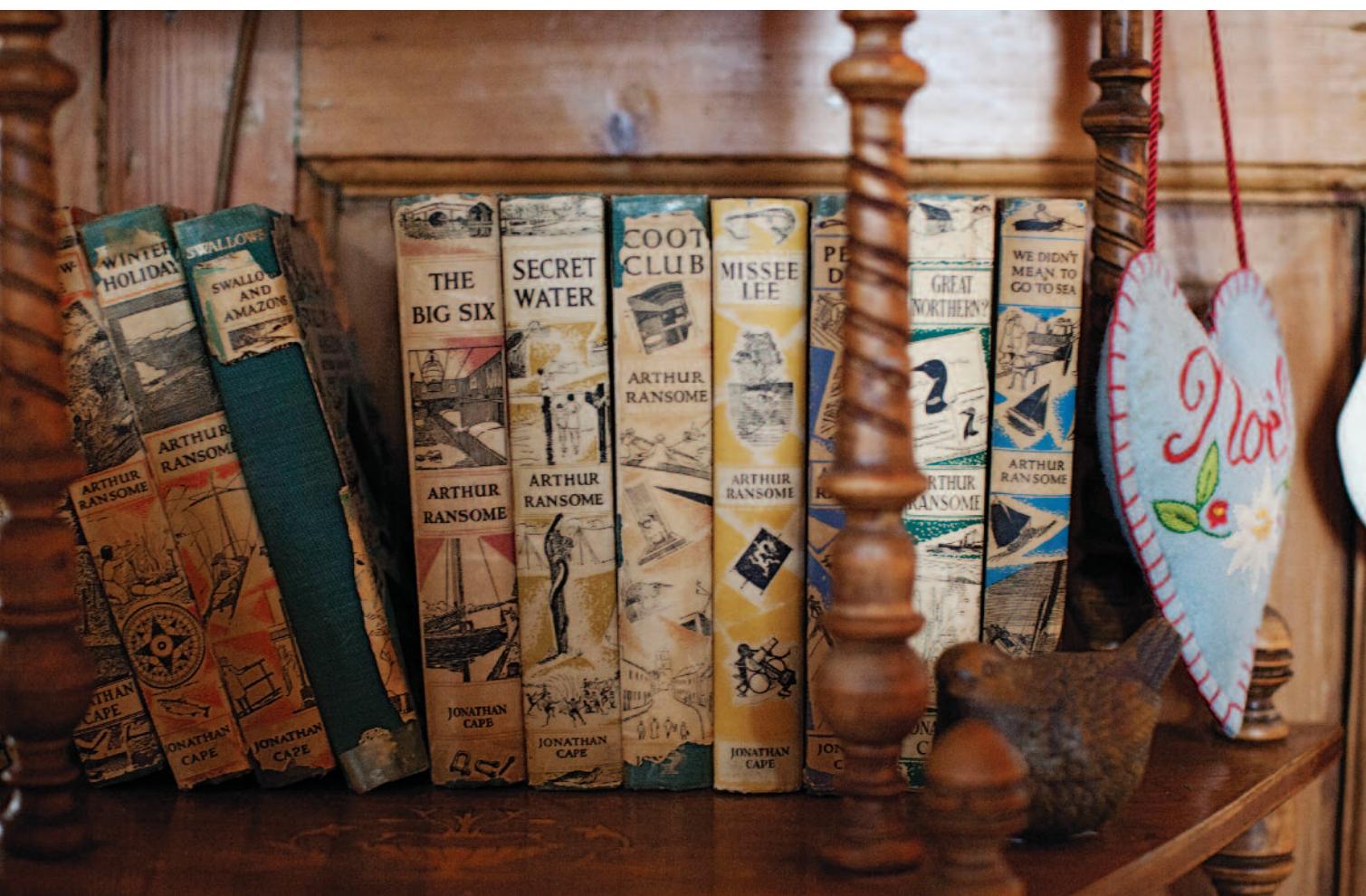
with an overwhelming sense of duty to preserve the provenance, combined with a strong desire to help move it into the next phase of its life with care and integrity. It is a prominent house within the village, and I love the sense of community, belonging and responsibility that comes with it."

The restoration work in the main house was an intense process for the first year. "We stripped back walls and floors, totally rewired and replumbed the house and installed new bathroom suites on all levels," explains Deborah. With a background as Home Collection buyer for Ralph Lauren, Deborah has an inherent talent for combining color, texture and pattern with treasured antiques and heirloom pieces—each with its own story to tell. She created a welcoming aesthetic that is eminently stylish, yet very relaxed and homey.

"I love the quirky and colorful, and our home is full of finds with a sense of warmth, luxury and integrity. Pieces only make their way into our home if they are truly loved," she says. A color palette of greens, reds, burnt oranges and deep purples sits happily alongside abundant faded florals and textured linens.

"I adore the emotional response you get when you find something unique and with soul. I am a definite collector and cannot resist old fabrics and trims with the enchanting knocked-back patina that only comes as a result of age. It makes a room feel lived in and real, like a personality that has developed over time, rich with experience. The things around me make me happy. It's about emotional value not actual worth," says Deborah.

Treasured pieces include an inherited wing chair, a favorite of her late father's that Deborah had re-covered in a much loved Ralph



FACING PAGE: Clockwise from top left. During the holiday season a desk in the corner of the sitting room becomes home to wrapping paper, Christmas cards and all manner of festive trimmings. The stunning tartan curtains work perfectly against their paneled backdrop.; Beautiful Juliska glass baubles—available from Deborah's store, the Nest—add simple elegance to the family Christmas tree. The baubles match the exquisite Christmas tableware.; A cluster of charming tea lights adds a touch of sparkle and holiday glamour.

ABOVE: A collection of antique books rests happily in a bookcase adjacent to the fireplace. The faded jackets are a reminder of Deborah's love of aged patina and warm hues.

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Deborah layered the rich, plum-hued family room beautifully with years of collected antique treasures that combine to create a cozy, welcoming space in which to relax.



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FACING PAGE: Clockwise from top left. A gorgeous hydrangea wreath, sparkly fairy lights and glowing candles create a warm ambience in the fireplace of the family room.; Deborah's treasured wing chair rests before the fire, and a stack of unopened gifts waits for the holiday to begin.; A festive twig advent tree adorns a quiet corner of the richly plum-hued family room.; A small tower of gorgeously wrapped presents sits by the family-room fireplace.; The Christmas crackers and gift purse were created by Sarah Moore, while the wrapping paper and ribbons came from Deborah's store, the Nest.

Above: The gorgeous country-style kitchen complete with cozy Aga takes on a festive glow at this time of year. The large wooden table has an integral post supporting the lower ceiling. Dressed for Christmas, the table showcases Deborah's love of china and glassware both old and new.



THIS SPREAD: Clockwise from top left. Pretty vintage lamps and decorative storage jars filled with colorful red and white treats add a festive touch to the corner of the kitchen.; Festive Christmas cookies begin to take shape on the pastry cutting board.; The exquisite Juliska Christmas tableware was designed by Deborah's brother. The "Winter Frolic" Christmas pattern is the result of a collaboration between Juliska and renowned ceramic artist Deborah Sears of Isis Ceramics, described once as 'the finest hand in all of England.' The result is a uniquely glamorous collection, which also offers strong everyday functionality.; A beautiful old wooden cupboard painted a stunning apple green is home to some of Deborah's extensive collection of china. As Christmas approaches, the kitchen fills with the delicious aroma of mince pies and sumptuous treats baking.



Lauren tartan. A prominent figure in the world of tableware, Deborah's father was responsible for bringing Villeroy & Boch to Britain, and had 40 tableware shops across the UK.

"I have definitely inherited Dad's infatuation with china and love to mix old designs with more contemporary pieces, both at home and in our café adjoining the shop, which is now located just across the road from home," says Deborah. Following in the family tradition, her brother started his own tableware brand called Juliska, based in the USA. In Britain, Deborah's shop has become Juliska's main UK supplier.

When the last Christmas orders are wrapped and delivered locally in Deborah's 1971 Fiat 500, the family can relax and begin their own traditions. A six-foot tree, from nearby Oxenford Farm, is dressed simply by the children, and the house is brought to life with an abundance of wreaths, garlands, twinkling tea lights and roaring fires. "With five working fireplaces, it is a magical space," says Deborah.

"On Christmas day we open homemade stockings all together in front of the fire, and it is a happy blend of excited children

and over-exuberant dogs. My mum always reads the Christmas story, and we enjoy a long and relaxed walk with our dogs, before coming back home to prep for a late Christmas lunch. It's a true family affair with everyone helping to dress the table with our favorite china and silverware pieces," she says.

"The house will always hold a special place for me, as it marked the start of fresh beginnings for us all. It is our haven and the most perfect place to spend Christmas." 



THIS SPREAD: Clockwise from top left. The master bedroom, complete with beautiful fireplace, antique furniture, vintage textiles and exquisite throws and cushions from Nest, creates a calming space for Deborah. The high ceilings show the Georgian influence and create a feeling of grandeur within this elegant scheme.; Antique furniture, vintage linens and sumptuous pillows create a welcoming and restful guest bedroom ready for Christ-

mas arrivals.; On the top floor of the house, Deborah has created a magical retreat for her children. Colorful pillows, wrapped presents and a Christmas cracker adorn Emily's bed.; Hugo's bedroom on the top floor of the house is a cozy escape. A world map covers one wall, adding drama and a sense of adventure.; A Jan Constantine robin cushion and an old copy of *The Night Before Christmas* add festive spirit to Hugo's bedroom.



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FACING PAGE: Pretty silverware and china treasures add a touch of glamour to the master bathroom. The elegant master bathroom designed by Deborah is a relaxing retreat filled with warm hues and treasured finds.

THIS PAGE: Clockwise from top left. Pretty silverware and china treasures add a touch of glamour to the master bathroom.; The entrance of the Holden's family home shows the later Georgian additions. With Ripley situated exactly half way between London and Portsmouth, it was a popular staging post for sailors. Many local nautical references remain today in the village.; Deborah, Emily and Hugo sit together with their beloved Labrador, Bella, and Jack Russell puppy, Digby.

