

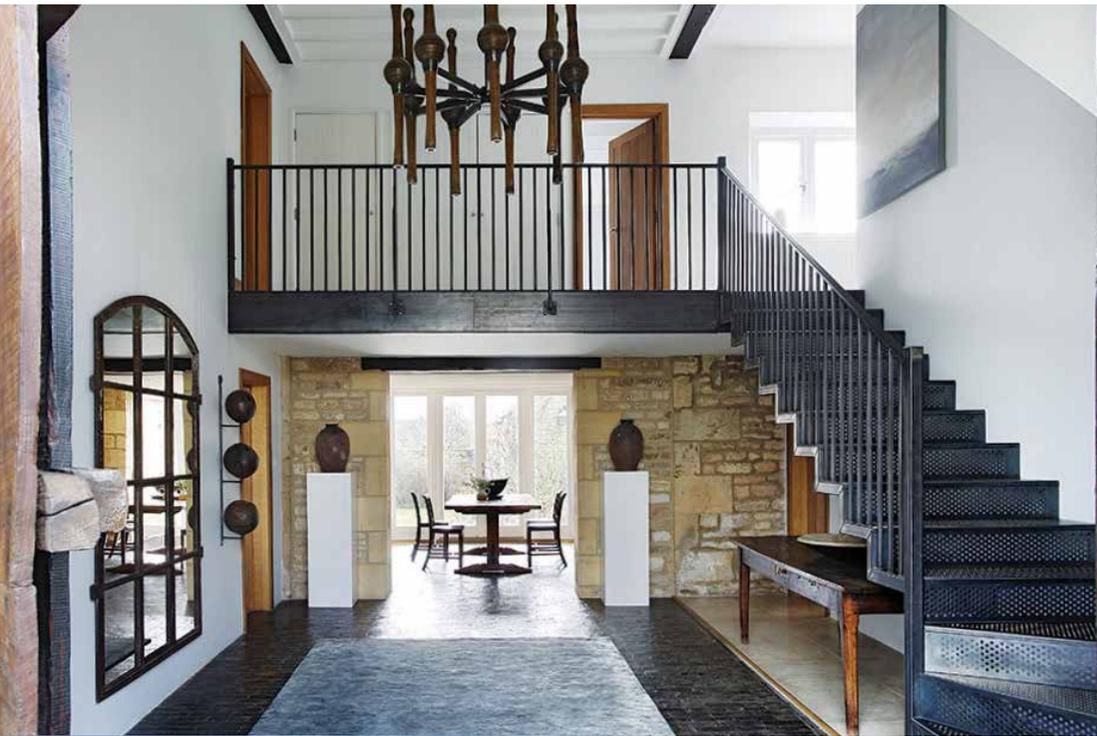
# HUSHED TONES

In this converted Cotswolds barn, designer Pippa Paton has combined modern design with natural materials to create a minimalist haven that maintains its rural identity

TEXT KASIA MACIEJOWSKA | PHOTOGRAPHS ELSA YOUNG | LOCATIONS EDITOR DAVID NICHOLLS



OPPOSITE The exterior of the nineteenth-century barn. THIS PAGE Original barn doors behind a set of french windows from an earlier conversion open into the hall, where a chandelier designed by Pippa featuring a set of skittles used by Man Ray hangs above the staircase



A set of wooden skittles suspended from the ceiling is not a centrepiece that you would expect to greet you upon arriving at a house in the Cotswolds' Windrush Valley. From the outside, the converted barn fits right in with its idyllic village setting, but on entering, its one-off features begin to reveal themselves in turn.

Said skittles, which date from the nineteenth century and were used by Man Ray as props in his photographs in the Twenties, have been placed by the interior designer Pippa Paton in a chandelier frame of her own design and set by an artisan blacksmith. Light strikes each skittle to cast a long shadow onto the surrounding walls. This transforms the hall, with its chestnut-coloured barn doors, inky black stone floor and contemporary, industrial-style pressed-steel staircase, into something akin to an immersive installation during winter evenings and dark nights. An iron grid mirror, like an old industrial window, counterbalances the staircase opposite. Meanwhile, two ancient-looking earthenware pots

THIS PAGE FROM TOP An window-shape iron mirror reflects the look of the industrial pressed-steel staircase, while a 'Mohair Slate' rug from The Rug Company adds softness and leads into the dining room. The barn's Cotswold village location. OPPOSITE The refectory table, farmhouse chairs and mirror in the dining room were pieces the family already owned, which Pippa has integrated into the scheme





mounted on white plinths draw the eye through to the welcoming dining room, reached by crossing a deep-piled rug that echoes the hues of Peter White's landscape hanging on the stair wall.

The owners, who work in London and have grown-up children, tasked Pippa with creating a minimalist haven in a nineteenth-century barn. One challenge she faced was that it had been previously converted from barn to house using an unfortunate predominance of pine. The second – more welcome – challenge was the instruction by the owners that anything newly brought in should fit with the building's former agricultural life. Through their materials, references and previous functions, all the features Pippa introduced are in keeping with their new home's history and the region's rural identity. They also, by no coincidence, sit seamlessly within the owners' collection of sculptures, ceramics, antiques and natural ephemera.

Pippa's trick is to set textured treasures in a pared-back context. Modern white sofas in the sitting room, off the entrance hall, contribute to a sleek impression (some feat in an inherently rustic building) and frame a large piece of nineteenth-century wooden threshing machinery inset with flint stone teeth, which Pippa encased in a custom-made glass coffee table at the owners' request. An off-white rug, white Chase Erwin curtains, Lucas Ferreira abstracts and a Guy Stevens stone sculpture continue the monochrome framing effect. The blanched look dissipates when sitting on the sofa, as it faces an exterior wall of exposed golden Cotswold stone, where a miniature triangular window sweetly remains from the barn's original design. Tan leather lounge chairs bridge the gap between minimal and natural.

This dual quality is Pippa's triumph here, where the mental clutter of the working week is encouraged to fade away. The designer explains, however, that even the owners' London home has everything tucked away out of sight in clever storage.

The work on the barn took Pippa a year to complete, until November 2015. Beyond the dining room, the family room's grey sofas are offset by one of the barn's few bright accents in the form of lacquered coffee tables and velvet cushions. As Pippa explains, 'I tend to stick to a similar palette in my work so the eye perceives the harmony of a whole space, but in here we did something fun that works against the neutral background.' Painting all the wood-beamed ceilings downstairs white added a sense of height and brought in continuity throughout, including in the Bulthaup kitchen, which was in place before Pippa arrived.

Upstairs, the double height main bedroom holds a bed made from a single tree that grew nearby. Above the bed hovers a mezzanine bathroom with glass walls that

**OPPOSITE BOTH PICTURES** In the sitting room, clean lines and bright white contrast with textured elements and artefacts. A white L-shape sofa from The Sofa & Chair Company and tan leather chairs from Fredericia surround a custom glass coffee table that houses a piece of nineteenth-century wooden threshing machinery. The fossils, cogs and tools on the mantelpiece were found in the garden. **THIS PAGE FROM TOP** The Bulthaup kitchen. A breakfast area adjoining the kitchen, with a table from Bulthaup





allow the eye to pass from the bed up to the roof's highest beams and from the shower out through the window across the picturesque valley. The Dornbracht shower called on Pippa's design team's most innovative problem-solving skills, as it required figuring out how to get water into a ceiling-piped fitting when there is no ceiling, but a pitched roof metres up. They designed a wall-mounted water piping solution encased behind the shower's back wall. The facing wall is a restored stable door. William Holland's burnished copper bathtub and matching hand basin add luxurious touches and bounce light around. Multiple switches control the discreet spotlights for different moods.

The overall effect of the interiors is one of hush; a muted palette means star pieces can shine even when the simplest material and design. The abundance of wood and stone, in the downstairs rooms especially, makes for an unpretentious ambience that belies the high-end design work behind its exacting composition □

*Pippa Paton Design: pippapatondesign.co.uk*

THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP in the mezzanine bathroom, a restored stable door adds texture to William Holland's burnished copper bathtub and basin (also bottom right). A chair by Tyson London under the stairs to the mezzanine level, OPPOSITE. The main bedroom has a throw in Sahco's 'Medusa' and pendant lights from Artrac Lighting

