

WELCOME TO OUR MANOR



Scan me to see Donna Ida talking through Langdon's renovation



Ida loves Langdon's original details, particularly the library's 'moustaches' above the alcove. To link with the pink vein in the marble fireplace, walls are painted in Jonquil by edwardbulmerpaint.co.uk. The pendant light is from purewhitelines.com. For a similar velvet footstool try sohome.com

Donna Ida and husband Robert Walton (AKA Bobby Dazzler) in the kitchen snug. It has a French bistro feel thanks to chequerboard flooring by mandarinstone.com and a single drop pendant light by pooky.com with shade by soholighting.com. The walls are painted in India Yellow by farrow-ball.com



Five hundred years of history, 20 bedrooms, one fashion designer owner: welcome to Langdon Court, the hotel-home hybrid revamped in record time by Donna Ida

WORDS: NICOLE GRAY PHOTOGRAPHS: BRENT DARBY

It's always been my dream to live in a country manor house,' says denim designer Donna Ida of Langdon Court, her 16th-century home in South Devon, which she recently renovated – at top speed.

'There's no time for fuss when it comes to decorating,' she says of the lavish home she has created in less than a year. 'You just need to trust your gut and go for it.'

Ida's plans for the 20-bedroom property don't end with a lick of paint. While she lives here with her husband Robert Walton, who is president of the Restaurant Association (or Bobby Dazzler, as she calls him) and their five chihuahuas, from next July there will be a couple of dozen guests, too, when she will be hiring out the property for special events.

Langdon Court is no stranger to guests, having been extended over the centuries by previous owners. It had most recently served as a hotel but had been empty for 18 months when Ida bought it: as all the furniture had been removed, 'we could focus all our attention on the aesthetics,' she says.

Combining the expertise of interior designer Geraldine Apponyi whom Ida met through mutual friend Kelly Hoppen with Ida's eye for design (her previous home was a converted curry house) and Dazzler's knowledge of the hospitality industry, they set about 'de-commercialising' the space to make it feel more like a home.

Wanting to respect the English manor-house aesthetic, Ida kept the original fireplaces, sconces and panelling throughout and used them as cues to inform the overall decorating scheme. For example, the pink vein running through the marble fireplace was the starting point for the library's colour palette, which envelops the room. The large sofa was upholstered in complementary pink floral offcuts Ida found at a fabric sale in Wimbledon. 'I had over 20 rooms to decorate, so I had to be budget savvy,' she says. 'I snapped up rolls of fabric that would have cost £150 a metre for just £20.'

On the first floor of the



In the kitchen, Ida opted for dark cabinets with light-reflecting marble work surfaces. The cabinets are painted in Obsidian Green by littlegreene.com and the walls in Portland, by edwardbulmerpaint.co.uk. The lighting is by soholighting.com

property is what it has been dubbed the 'owner's apartment', because it's where the couple will stay when the rest of the house is hired out for events such as weddings or for use as a film location. 'We didn't want a casual b&b for weekend getaways,' says Ida. 'We wanted an exclusive hotel that could be hired out for one-off experiences a few weeks a year.'

For the couple's first Christmas

in their newly revamped home, they are inviting friends and family to stay and test-run the space ahead of Langdon's official opening next year. Dazzler is planning to rustle up a breakfast of kedgeree for their guests in what they call the 'tea and toast room'.

'At first we kept getting lost here,' explains Ida, 'so we came up with a fun but fitting name for each area, such as the

pot-wash room and the morning room.'

As for the big day itself? After opening presents, eating lunch and watching an old Christmas film in the cinema room, Ida says, 'I will probably be asleep by 4pm.'

Langdon Court will open for bookings in July 2023. For further information visit langdoncourtmanor.com

HONEYCOMB DECORATIONS FROM ROCKETTSTGEORGE.CO.UK



In the entrance hall, Fernando the chihuahua poses by the artificial tree. 'All Aussies have a faux one at Christmas,' says Sydney-born Ida, 'it's too hot for a real one.' For similar decorations try libertylondon.com. For a comparable tree try thewhitecompany.com

Ida at the entrance to the Jacobean manor house. The door is painted in Light Olive Green by [edward bulmerpaint.co.uk](http://edwardbulmerpaint.co.uk). The wreath is from lavendergreen.co.uk



Victorian stained-glass windows feature throughout and depict scenes from Langdon's history. This one, in the entrance hall, is of explorer Sir Francis Drake, a former guest



'The house is too big for my chihuahuas [Emilio, Julio, Fernando, Eduardo and Gonzalo] - they get lost,' laughs Ida. So she and Apponyi came up with these 'chihuahua stables', which are painted in Oval Room Blue by farrow-ball.com



LANTERNS (TOP LEFT) FROM LIGHTS4FUN.CO.UK



The main bedroom in the 'owner's apartment' where the couple will sleep when hotel guests come to stay. The headboard is upholstered in Zig Zag by salvesengraham.com with border from love-your-home.co.uk. The bedside tables are vintage. The antique bench is from inanutshellantiquesandinteriors.co.uk