

STY'S THE LIMIT

TINA IACOVELLI OPENED UP A FORMER PIG SHED
TO CREATE A STUNNING FOUR-BED BARN CONVERSION

FEATURE LOTTIE POTTER | PHOTOGRAPHY COLIN POOLE



DINING AREA

This room is light and spacious due to the double-height ceiling and abundance of white.

For similar chairs try Antique White Carver chairs, £125 each, J'Adore Décor. The Natural Jute rug, from £84, Modern Rugs, is a close match to Tina's



SITTING AREA

Pale greens and fresh whites complements the natural wood and lends a relaxed feel.

The Linea Oxford Grey sofa, from £279, House of Fraser, is similar. Burghley chair, £299, Lloyd Loom of Spalding; painted in Pavilion Gray modern emulsion, £39.50 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

Tina Iacovelli is never happier than when she's scouring flea markets, car-boot sales and antiques fairs for vintage knick-knacks. 'As an interior designer I'm always on the look-out for bargains,' she says. 'In fact, my mantra is: "Always buy designer style on a shoestring".'

From stylish kitchen dresser shelves picked up at a salvage yard to a shabby-chic footstool unearthed at a car-boot sale, Tina's flair for discovering thrifty treasures is evident throughout the beautiful barn conversion she shares with her partner, Gary Thomas. 'My favourite local market takes place at Malvern County Showground in the summer,' she says. 'I often come home with an unexpected gem. On my last visit, I was looking for a pair of vintage pink 1950s ballet pumps and an old violin. Instead, I ended up with a beautiful Lloyd Loom chair and some antique crockery.'

The barn was bought as a project. 'Gary spotted it for sale in our local newspaper,' says Tina. 'We felt renovating it would be a great

thing for us to do together, and we weren't put off by the fact that it needed a lot of work.' The property was originally built as a pig barn during the 1830s so it had plenty of character, but it had been converted (unsympathetically) into a house in the 1970s. 'All the beams were stained black, making every room feel dark, and the kitchen was full of brown units,' says Tina.

Despite the tired 1970s decor the pair could see the property had huge potential and renovation work quickly began in earnest. The barn's layout went from a series of dingy rooms into a light-filled, open space with a kitchen-diner which flows into the sitting area.

As well as replacing the kitchen and bathrooms, the entire barn needed rewiring and replumbing. 'We did as much of the unskilled, labour-intensive work as we could in order to keep costs down,' says Tina. 'Although we left things like sorting out the plumbing to the experts, I did most of the painting, while Gary waxed all the floors and managed the project.' The couple's input didn't stop there. 'The barn's



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

1830s pig-shed conversion
LOCATION Worcestershire
ROOMS Sitting area/kitchen-diner, snug, four bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom, one-bed annexe with home office

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY
'Before this, I lived in a four-storey Georgian townhouse in Worcester for 12 years,' says Tina.



KITCHEN
Grey worktops provide contrast to the white-painted cabinets, preventing the scheme from looking too stark. Shaker kitchen doors, from £30 each, B&Q. The Scandinavian Redwood Pine console table, from £150, Taylor Made Pine, is a match



I

impressive glass-fronted entrance, which was built and glazed by a local carpenter, was Tina's idea. 'It lets so much light flood in,' she says.

Preferring interiors that are bright, calm and neutral, Tina decorated the barn using soft greys, crisp whites and pale greens. Beautifully complementing the stripped-back wooden floors and beams are a selection of natural-coloured fabrics and hard-wearing materials such as sisal and rattan. The overall subtle look perfectly suits the barn's rustic elements and Tina's love of French-country house style.

As well as having a good eye for design and decor, Tina has a knack for cleverly turning old

items into stylish pieces. The designer-looking footstool in the sitting area is covered with hessian sackcloth she bought for only 50p. 'I made cushion covers out of it too,' she adds. 'We also love our wooden ladder, which I came across at a car-boot sale and bought for just £7.'

It's these clever homespun touches, combined with elegant rustic charm, that makes the couple's home so welcoming and unique. 'The barn does feel very us,' says Tina. 'Doing this place up was a massive undertaking but luckily everything worked out,' she says. 'We're thrilled all our hard work and bargain hunting has paid off. Not bad for a former pigsty!' 25



1 MASTER BEDROOM
This room is a symphony of soothing neutrals with a vintage vibe. Eleanore Boudoir Antique French wardrobe, £1,900, Homes Direct 365

2 BATHROOM
The couple's double sinks are both practical and stylish. Gremio countertop bowl, £45, Aqua Bliss, is comparable

3 GUEST BEDROOM
Pristine white linen and stripped-back timber exudes classic country chic. Try the York rail end handcrafted bed, £300, The Bed Warehouse Direct

DESIGN TIP 'It's important to use your imagination to see the potential in everything – even worn-out, discarded objects. I love coming up with ways of giving new life to old pieces'



SITTING AREA
Cushions made from old hessian sacks and muted hues create a laid-back rustic atmosphere. The Wolseley ottoman in wool tweed, £369, Made, is a close alternative

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 161



2



3