

MANOR

Spring 2016
Issue 9 | £3.95

SOUTH WEST



We are
one

MANOR celebrates
its first year with
prizes to be won

Spring in our step

Chocolate

Deliciously ethical Cornish confections

Save our seas

Surfers Against Sewage's Hugo Tagholm's mission

PLUS
CULTURE
DESIGN
FOOD
ESCAPE
SCHOOL
PROPERTY





Perfect harmony

After 30 years spent working in the City, **Sarah Stuart** needed a life change, and Penzance fitted the bill. Through chance, she discovered Chapel House, and was so drawn to it – despite it being too big for her own personal needs – that she decided to buy it anyway and convert it into a highly acclaimed boutique hotel. The six-bedroom hotel's clean architectural lines and Stuart's choice of local wares and suppliers have created the perfect blend of traditional and modern, bringing out the very best in this Georgian townhouse and making it a great place to be and spend time.

MANOR interrogates Sarah as to how Chapel House Penzance came about.

Describe your life prior to Chapel House?

Before I moved to Penzance, I had worked for a small charity for eight years, having left the City in 2005. I joined the charity for an easier life-work balance but it didn't turn out that way and I ended up as Interim CEO. I loved the work I did but had been effectively doing two jobs for over a year and was running on empty. That, combined with the collapse of a long relationship, meant I started to re-think my life and realised that London didn't feature anywhere.

What made you decide that a boutique hotel in Penzance did?

I think Penzance is a fabulous place but I would suggest it chose me rather than the other way round. I came down for a four-week break at the end of 2012, when I wanted to rethink my life, because I knew I could just relax – I love West Penwith in winter. I rented a house on Chapel Street, just three doors from Chapel House, and while there got an email from an estate agent offering Chapel House. I'd never been inside before but it was love at first sight and I knew I really wanted to buy it, even though living on my own in a huge house just wasn't practical. So the plan started to emerge. I sensed that the right offer in Penzance would bring people here – and it has. Like me, most guests love it!

Sarah bought the house in February 2013 and its renovation started in July 2013. The project took two years. She used all local contractors.

The architect was Loci Architecture; construction lead was Catling Construction; the bathrooms were supplied and fitted by Cornwall Wetrooms; the Kitchen and Bootroom by George Robinson Kitchens; and beds and bespoke furniture by Ben Williams.

There was no interior designer – this was done by me and I also played a role in restoration: stripping paint layers from the original features, which meant I was on site all the time and became part of the team.



I'd never been inside before but it was love at first sight and I knew I really wanted to buy it.



“

Guests love the mix of old and new, and the fact that they have the ultimate in comfort but lots of space and a lack of clutter.

Was it a satisfying process?

Yes – I love a project and I still miss not doing it anymore. I had a great relationship with my architect and builder, and there are some fabulous craftsmen locally. It went on for longer than expected and, of course, ran over budget but it was huge fun and really rewarding.

Why did you choose to go with a pared-down style?

The house was crying out for this approach. It has perfect Georgian proportions – large rooms, high ceilings and beautiful original details. It also faces the sea and is filled with light. It needed little ornamentation to become a calm and relaxing place for people to stay but which also celebrates its architectural beauty. I already had lots of antique furniture contemporary with the age of the house, which worked well, but I find that mid-20th-century furniture, which is also simple and has clean lines, works perfectly together.”

What did you layer onto this? How did you complete each room?

Some of my existing furniture worked immediately but I realised that what looked big in a London house was dwarfed in the high ceilings of Chapel House’s drawing rooms. I found an amazing 3m-high corner cupboard originally from a London church (St Giles in the Fields) that sits beautifully in the drawing rooms. The bedrooms needed some contemporary touches and I was lucky to find locally some original Ercol pieces but also sourced modern chairs from Iroka, a local furniture supplier. Ben Williams, a local furniture maker, designed and built all the beds and bedroom cupboards. The artworks in the bedrooms are my own pieces but the drawing rooms and hall are curated by the Newlyn School of Art and used to display the work of students on their mentoring course. It’s our way of supporting the local creative community.

And how has all your hard work been received? Who does the hotel appeal to and why?

We have a wide variety of guests – they are people who appreciate being able to relax as if they’re staying at a friend’s house. What people like is that we have taken a lot of effort to make sure everything is there for our guests so they don’t have to ask, but without ending up with cluttered rooms. Chapel House has a very ‘chilled’ feel about it and our guests say that when they walk into the house they feel instant calm.

What are your own favourite aspects of Chapel House? What goes down particularly well with guests?

My favourite aspect of the house is the sea light; it is all pervading and everywhere you go there is either sea or sky in sight. Guests love the mix of old and new, and the fact that they have the ultimate in comfort but lots of space and a lack of clutter.



If we were to stay, which room would you recommend, or what in particular should we look out for?

My favourite is Room 2 – it has a double-aspect sea view and combines original features with modern touches. The room has a handmade super-kingsize bed, an ensuite wetroom with a monsoon shower, and an Ashton & Bentley bath in the room, which also has a woodburning stove. Perfect for a lazy winter weekend afternoon.

Prices for bed and breakfast (with tea, cake and an early evening drink) range from £150/night to £190/weekend night in high season. The more nights booked, the lower the nightly rate.

chapelhousepz.co.uk

A discerning palette

In February, Farrow & Ball launched nine new colours, which prompted us to look to colour for our Shopping for Space spread – nothing too bright and gaudy but calmer in keeping with the muted pastels, soft neutrals and rich dark tones that F&B have added to that famous palette of theirs. Compiled by Amy Tidy.



Farrow & Ball



Farrow & Ball



Coco chair,
Oliver Bonas,
£575



HAY cushion,
Amara, £59



House doctor vases,
Amara, £10 each



Lamps,
Marks and Spencer,
£30 each



Tom Foolery sofa,
Sofa Workshop, £2,399



Baci Milano tumbler,
Amara, £8



Dyberg Larsen pendant,
Amara, £64



Anna New York Coasters,
Amara, four for £78



HAY chair,
Amara, £149

HAY chair,
Amara, £139



Vases,
RJR John Rocha at Debenhams,
set of three, £25



Clock, Next, £35



Marks and Spencer



Miss Clementine 2-seater sofa,
Sofa Workshop from £1,735