

height of style

Euan and Deian's sophisticated apartment went from one level to two and is now the spacious home of their dreams

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LIVING ROOM

This social area is where cocktails are mixed, songs are sung and friends join in with the frivolities.

Royal Blue sofa, Roche Bobois. Vintage turquoise sofa, Two Columbia Road. Butterfly cushion, Liberty London. Gold pedestal, Jonathan Adler. Heal's mid-century cabinet, sourced from Hayloft

When you know, right through to your very core, that you've found the home you want to buy, you pull out all the stops to see it through.

No one understands this commitment to a property better than Euan MacLennan and Deian Rhys who, during the same year (2008), got married and bought this penthouse apartment with views for miles.

At the time, it looked nothing like it does now. In fact, half of it didn't even exist. But the pair were adamant it would be theirs. 'Well, I needed a bit of convincing,' admits Euan. 'I was desperate to live somewhere with outside space. And back then, this flat was just a single floor. But Deian is pretty visionary and he saw the possibilities.'

The secret to the apartment's potential was a dusty, but vast, attic space, jammed with the communal water tanks for the entire five-storey house. Even though an attic might not seem like an attractive acquisition, this one offered the possibility of an extra level to their home. Euan and Deian approached the other residents in the building, requesting to buy the attic and to design an alternative hub for the tanks.

In theory, it was an exciting proposition, but the reality wasn't as straightforward. The pair lived in the flat for five years, while continually pushing for permission to extend. They barely touched a paintbrush, knowing that if plans went through, they would want to radically make over the space. It was an exercise in patience, perseverance, and more than a little uncertainty.

Then, in 2013, a few months before planning permission was about to expire, the residents finally signed on the dotted line. 'From that point it was full steam

home profile

THE OWNERS

Deian Rhys, a lawyer, and his husband, Euan MacLennan, herbal and sustainability director at Pukka Herbs.

THE PROPERTY

A two-level apartment on the top of a Victorian terraced house in southwest London. On the first floor is a hallway, kitchen, living room, study and bathroom. The top floor has two en-suite bedrooms, a dressing room and a central courtyard.

ahead,' says Deian. 'We interviewed three architects and David Money, who has a strong contemporary design ethos, ended up being our guy. From our initial mid-century brief to him, using the Royal Festival Hall as inspiration, David creatively brought the linear themes into the flat. We love the individuality and simplicity of his approach.'

The pair moved out for a year while the work went ahead – and again, it was a test of their commitment and nerve. Not only did a pitched roof extension have to be built at the back of the flat to rehouse the water tanks, the fact that the property is five floors up proved an exercise in logistics. 'We had a ton of scaffolding running up the outside of the building so we could transport heavy materials like granite blocks and even, eventually, the grand piano!' says Euan.

Slowly but surely, the design took shape and one floor became two, with the second

level evolving into a light-filled sequence of bedrooms and bathrooms overlooking a courtyard. 'Because it's at the top of the house it's so peaceful,' says Deian. 'We added full-height glass doors to maximise light and the views of London are incredible.'

When planning the apartment, it was important to achieve a fluid feel with interwoven rooms blending together. 'The open-plan aspect makes the flat extremely sociable,' says Deian. 'I can be cooking in the kitchen while talking to someone in the living room. We also wanted a mid-century look with the furnishings, from the zingy yellow kitchen to the accessories we've chosen. Plus, a lot of wood everywhere adds a cosy finish.'

After waiting for so long to accomplish their vision, the couple describe their moving-back-in-day as nothing less than 'joyous'. Euan laughs at the memory: 'There was an element of disbelief, though, that it had actually happened.'

Now, there is always much laughter in this home, and it's not unusual to find Euan and Deian gathered with friends in the living room, where a beautiful teak cabinet sits, adorned with bottles of spirits, waiting for Euan to mix cocktails. The piano is tuned ready, and vintage portraits observe from the wall. 'This home has taken dedication,' says Deian. 'But we both agree it's been worth it.' All good things come to those who wait.

See more of architect David Money's work at davidmoney.com

LIVING ROOM

A mirrored wall panel enhances the open-plan feel and adds a contemporary contrast to the period fireplace.

Coffee table, Oka. Rug, Jonathan Adler. For similar foxed glass go to Rough Old Glass



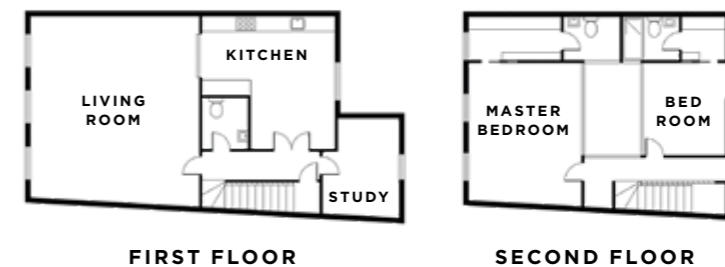
KITCHEN

Sunshine-yellow units and a marble splashback and worktop create a modern-retro look. The dining area (right) has built-in storage around the entranceway.

Bespoke units in RAL's Saffron Yellow, David Money. Arabescato marble, GMI (stonework.co.uk). Table, The Conran Shop. For similar 1960s chairs, try Pamono. Pendant lights, Foscarini



PLANS



BEDROOM

Natural wood and earthy greens deliver a relaxed ambience.

Bedside table. Jonathan Adler. For a similar **blanket**, try Melin Tregwynt. **Artwork** by John McAsey

COURTYARD

Sliding doors connect the master bedroom to this suntrap.

Garden **furniture.** Habitat. **Pots.** Arne Maynard Garden Design

home truths

WHAT MAKES YOU SMILE?

Having created an oasis of nature at the centre of our home, says Euan. I am happy with our own little ecosystem there. Seeing the butterflies is wonderful.

PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT SO FAR?

Changing my career from a lawyer to working in medicine and plants, a job that fascinates me every day. I had to learn biochemistry to degree level.

FAVOURITE TREAT?

A Manhattan cocktail with the oil from a freshly zested orange and infused with aromatic bitters and an oaky bourbon.

BEST PRESENT FROM YOUR HUSBAND?

A 1981 red Mini City called Dash. My sister was our chauffeur at our wedding in it.

FAVOURITE APP?

Technology and I don't make comfortable bedfellows, but I'm trying to revive my schoolboy Latin using Duolingo and I do use Instagram (@thebeardedherbalist).

WHO DO YOU ADMIRE?

David Attenborough. He combines a sense of wonder with wisdom, and knowledge with simplicity of communication.

**MASTER BEDROOM**

The oak finishes were stained to give them a darker hue.

Headboard by David Money. Habitat's Derwent **bed** is similar. **Rug.** John Lewis & Partners

