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# BOUTIQUE CHIC

WHEN LEE DOHERTY RENOVATED HIS NEW HOME, HE USED SOME OF THE WORLD'S FINEST HOTELS AS HIS INSPIRATION

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1 & 2 SITTING ROOM A triptych of black-and-white canvases mirrors the panorama from the windows opposite. Astrid armchair, £2,700; Twiggy coffee table, £1,250, both The Inspired Maker (01225 460055, theinspiredmaker.co.uk). Interior designer Claire Collins (01225 329758, conceptinterior.co.uk) sourced the New Beem corner chaise, price on application, HB Group (0121 559 9111, hbgroup.co.uk). Heal's (0870 024 0780, heals.co.uk) Rigo design, £160, is a good match for the chrome floor lamp



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MEET THE OWNER

Lee Doherty, who is an aerospace executive, plus Bud the whippet  
**PREVIOUS HOME** 'It was 1987 and I was in the RAF when I bought my first house in Northamptonshire,' says Lee. 'I sold it just six months later and didn't buy again until I moved to Bath in 2001.'  
**CURRENT PROPERTY** An apartment within a Georgian townhouse in Bath  
**ROOMS** Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, cloakroom, two bedrooms, bathroom  
**PURCHASED 2005 PRICE** £340,000  
**RENOVATION COST** £50,000 **VALUE** £420,000



Through his jet-setting job, Lee Doherty has stayed in some of the most luxurious hotels in the world, and has come to appreciate good interior design. 'I love the look of the Delano in Miami, the Bulgari in Milan and Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons in Oxfordshire,' he says. 'So when I set about renovating my home in Bath, I used them all as inspiration.'

Lee first visited this Georgian city in the early 1980s. 'It was a cold, but nevertheless beautiful day, and I immediately thought, "This place is absolutely stunning";' he recalls. 'The architecture, the green spaces, the bars and restaurants were all so appealing, and I've wanted to live here ever since.'

This apartment is Lee's second property in Bath – his first had proved far too small for entertaining, which prompted him to start house-hunting. 'When I saw this place, its hillside location was easily the most striking thing about it,' Lee says. Indeed, the large sitting and dining rooms offered panoramas across the city, but the interior was far from captivating. 'It was traditional and dated,' he continues, 'but I decided that, done properly, the apartment could be a wonderful home, and it certainly offered all the space I needed for dinner parties, so I bought it.'

The property's period look was something Lee wanted to preserve, but he was also keen to bring the decor up to date. He had a concept of how his new home should feel but knew he needed help, and it was another hotel, this time right on his doorstep, that would guide him to it. 'I'd been to the Queensberry Hotel in Bath for lunch,' says Lee. 'Its smart yet relaxed schemes were just what I was going for.'

Lee got in touch with the designer responsible for the look, Claire Collins, and together they worked out the colour palettes and other visual details, with Lee moving out as the builders moved in. Next, the walls ►





## Modern Bath home

between the kitchen, dining and sitting rooms were knocked through, and the apartment was rewired and replumbed, ready for a new kitchen and bathroom suite to be installed.

'Because the living spaces were now quite open-plan, I didn't really want the kitchen units to look too utilitarian, with handles and knobs everywhere,' Lee explains. 'I was after a sleek look, albeit on a budget.' Unusually, the extractor fan was the first item he settled on, and the rest of the kitchen evolved around that. 'I love its angled shape,' says Lee. 'I was sick of banging my head on my last one, which protruded at a 90-degree angle from the wall.'

Claire's design for the fireplace in the dining room sums up Lee's brief of 'a modern twist on a traditional theme', as does the furniture that Lee has carefully hand-picked. For example, a contemporary L-shaped sofa joins the Arts and Crafts-style armchair and walnut drinks cabinet in the sitting room. 'The cabinet belonged to my nan,' says Lee. 'It had stood next to a window for 40 years and was parched white. When Nan passed away, her house was cleared and the cabinet was thrown into a skip. I rescued it and had it restored by a French polisher.'

When it came to colour, Lee was guided by a simple philosophy. 'I wanted something quite light but with a degree of warmth,' he says. A natural stone tone was selected for the walls throughout the apartment, with a paler, off-white shade used for the woodwork, window shutters and the ceilings.

Even the bathroom adheres to this neutral scheme, its swirling marble tiles and wall-mounted taps chosen to recreate the look of the magnificent en suites at the Bulgari. But this was also the room that saw Lee's ongoing problems with his builders coming to a head. 'They were great at knocking things down, but getting them to work to a decent standard was a constant battle,' remembers Lee. 'When they messed up all the tiling in the bathroom, it was the final straw and I had to ask them to leave. When they'd gone, the first time I flushed the toilet it overflowed – they'd managed to block the u-bend with debris.'

Left with a snagging list that ran to eight pages, Lee brought in a new team of craftsmen to finish the job. 'Despite everything, I'm delighted with the final result,' he says. 'Thanks to Claire, I've achieved what I set out to do – combine traditional elements with a modern feel. It's an elegant home to come back to, and while I still spend a lot of time in hotels, this is my favourite suite in the world.' **BH**

**BEST BUY** *'I was told my metal-topped  
I adore it all the more – every little*



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*dining table might mark, and it has, but  
imperfection brings back a lovely memory'*



**1 & 2 DINING ROOM** *The palette sets a serene tone in this space, where guests are treated to picture-postcard views.* **Stone III emulsion**, £27 for 2.5 litres, Paint & Paper Library (020 7823 7755, paintlibrary.co.uk). For a similar **table**, try Pondicherry, £695, The Conran Shop (0844 848 4000, conranshop.co.uk)

**3 MASTER BEDROOM** *Soft furnishings add colour to an otherwise muted scheme.* Cushions and throw made from **Silk Velvet fabric in Plum**, £84 per m, De Le Cuona (020 7584 7677, delecuona.co.uk)

**4 BATHROOM** *With a step leading up to the tub, bathing is an indulgent affair.* **St Paulo polished marble wall tiles**, from £55.47 per sq m, Mandarin Stone (01600 715444, mandarinstone.com)

**5 KITCHEN** *These dark-wood units are functional and stylish in equal measure.* **Tiko cabinetry**, £141.57 for a 600mm base unit, Magnet (01325 7440941, magnet.co.uk). **HD8795-M extractor hood**, around £800, AEG-Electrolux (0870 535 0350, aeg-electrolux.co.uk)



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