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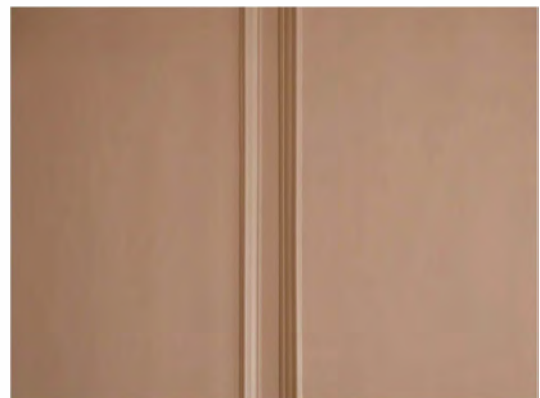
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This Is The UK's Most Stylish New Home & Venue

When fashion designer Donna Ida Thornton and her husband Robert Walton decided to open a private country manor house hotel, they wanted to create the kind of experience that would offer unprecedented access to some of the UK's best chefs in an unparalleled setting. Langdon Court will open its doors in June – here, the team exclusively reveal the venue to UltraLuxe and tell us what went into its creation.

BY GEORGINA BEASKEY





The Vision

We'd always wanted to move further into the country, and because Robert was in the hospitality industry, we decided to look for a small hotel, something with no more than 15- 20 bedrooms. I wanted to be far away from London and Devon has always been a county I love. As soon as we saw Langdon Court, we knew this was the one. It was exactly what we wanted.

It was beautiful on the outside but it was the tiered garden that sealed the deal. Plus, the interior was quite expansive, with large reception rooms arranged around an internal courtyard. It was completely empty, too, so we could really envisage how we wanted to use it. The property is a manor house, so it feels very exclusive, and our aim was to create a private hotel that felt like a luxurious and comfortable family home.



The Renovation

The property had been repossessed by the bank before we bought it, so it had been completely stripped down – there were only a few lights left. Luckily, the beautiful fireplaces and original features were still there. While it was unoccupied, lead had also been stolen from the roof which led to a considerable amount of water damage, so that proved a bit of a challenge. We completed the purchase in August 2021 and started work in January, with the builders on site by June 2022.



The project has definitely evolved over time – once we open in June 2023 that will only be a year, which feels pretty quick for a 2,000sq m property. The layout has remained largely the same but the rooms have been repurposed. For example, the previous owners' accommodation has been changed into two bedrooms with bathrooms, and we've created a new master suite for us on the first floor, with a dressing room and shower room. On the ground floor, the bar is now the morning room and the drawing room was previously a reception room. The library was a function room before and the beautiful Palm Court was a reception room with check-in desks.





The Food

The kitchen was done by Kettle Co. Kitchens and Williams & Sons with appliances by Bertazzoni. When we open, we plan on introducing a 12-seater chef's table, as well as an inner chef's nook and a bar in the kitchen. We're offering overnight dining packages with resident chefs, so you'll be able to have a gastronomic experience, whether it's with Robert or with Jamie Rogers from the nearby Twenty Seven restaurant. There will also be visiting guest chefs every month including Dipna Anand, John Williams MBE and Claude Bosi.

The food will be sourced as locally as possible – we don't really want to go outside a ten-mile radius. The kitchen garden we've been working on with Vegepod has already created a thriving edible food garden for guests, owners and staff and we want to grow as much food as we can. There will be beehives as well.





The Pop-Ups

Langdon Court will be used for a variety of experiences. Whether you're walking around the tiered garden to look at the roses, watching a Hitchcock film projected onto the south side of the building, or getting an ice cream from one of the follies, it'll be an incredible experience.

Expect plenty of pop-ups with our partners who have worked on the property too, including Love Your Home, Corston and Soho Lighting. We have lots of creative and fun ideas, such as outdoor film nights and open-air opera. We also want to open the gardens for the rose season so people can see them at their best.



The Private Hire

Langdon Court will host a select number of weddings each year. For the month of July there will be a beautiful marquee within the grounds that can hold 100 people but the house and gardens will also provide a number of intimate settings for smaller events. Langdon Court is fully licensed for civil ceremonies and can accommodate up to 24 guests overnight.

Visit LangdonCourtManor.com. Double rooms start from £345.

*Want to know more? We asked designer Geraldine Apponyi to talk us through Langdon Court's
impeccable design...*

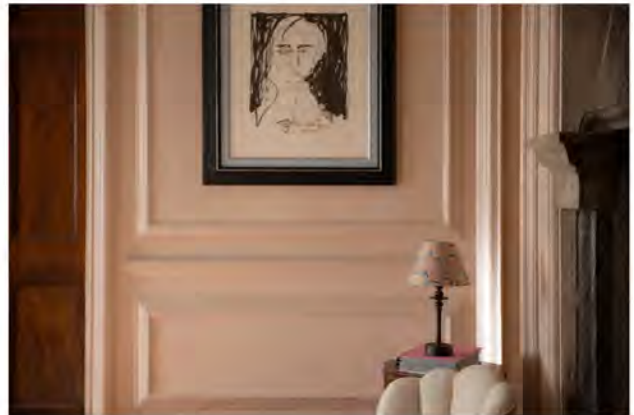


Langdon Court doesn't have one particular style. All the rooms are deliberately quite different, each led very much by the space, its planned use, and the architectural details already present. We mixed classic and contemporary furniture and lighting, as it was important for us to respect the heritage of the house without it feeling stuffy or old-fashioned.

We really wanted the interiors to be elegant and striking. Most importantly, though, they had to be warm and inviting, somewhere to relax and settle in. It was important for Langdon Court to feel like a home, not a hotel. There are spaces designed for spending the morning reading the paper with a coffee, and ones that will work better for evening cocktails. Each room has quite a specific ambience, so guests can move through the house during the day.

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We used a mixture of colours – but there's a definite thread running through the house of gold, mustard yellow and various greens, especially downstairs in the main rooms. The bedrooms are all different – each one has a distinct character and feel. Almost all of our paint colours came from Edward Bulmer, with a few Little Greene and one or two Farrow & Ball shades mixed in.



The patterns were largely dictated by fabrics we bought from an upholsterer that was closing down. It was right at the beginning of the project, before anything had been planned or designed, and I dug through rolls and rolls of it, going purely by what I liked and hoped would work. All of them have been used and many acted as the starting point for several of the schemes. I found it to be a very creative way to design.

We sourced a lot of pieces in nearby Ashburton. In A Nutshell is the shop we bought the most from, as well as The Shambles. As for fabrics, we used Pierre Frey/Le Manach,

Colefax & Fowler, Alhambra, The Cloth Shop, Warwick Fabrics, East London Cloth and Jean Monro. The wallpapers are from Lee Jofa, Colefax & Fowler and Pierre Frey/Le Manach. My main source for lighting was Soho Lighting, which supplied many of our standout lights, along with Corston for all our sockets and switches. Quite a few Pooky lights were also mixed in, and most of our antique chandeliers came from Norfolk Decorative.



We worked with Love Your Home to create most of the beds, sofas and chairs, and Niki's Soft Furnishings did the blinds, curtains, cushions and some custom-made upholstery. We used quite a few vintage and antique pieces as well, with accessories from Tallboy Interiors, Norfolk Decorative, Vinterior, The Henley Décor Fair, Tractor Shed Antiques, By Alice Home, Wallis Antiques and many other wonderful small companies that we have discovered via Instagram.

Visit Apponyi.co.uk.

Photography by NicoWills.com.

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