

# SCANDIRUSTIC



**CREATING A COZY & HAPPY HOME**

**REBECCA LAWSON & REENA SIMON**  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BENJAMIN EDWARDS

## LOFT STYLE LIVING

As part of the renovation of the property the kitchen has been relocated downstairs to create a spacious inter connected kitchen/living space with a double height ceiling. The open plan space has the warehouse/loft living feel that the couple were searching for but the use of reclaimed materials, soft lighting and layered textures means it is also a warm, cosy space. In winter the couple curl up on the sofa under throws and blankets and light their contemporary style black wood burner which sits in the corner of the living room.



# SCANDI RUSTIC MEETS INDUSTRIAL

A converted Victorian schoolhouse full of charming original features, with sprawling views of Box Valley in Bath and an unexpected rustic interior which is cosy and welcoming.



## RAW AND RECLAIMED

At the heart of the couple's open plan living space is a large kitchen island clad in reclaimed wood with a smooth concrete worktop made by Mike. It serves as a natural gathering point with rattan bar stools adding texture and offering an inviting place to sit. The kitchen units sourced second hand from EBay are painted white to creating a calm backdrop that allows the other textures in the kitchen to stand out.



Young Wiltshire based couple Mike Read and Kate Lawley have worked tirelessly over the past few years to convert an old Victorian School house into a home that is a peaceful haven designed to nurture all five senses.

When they first viewed the house back in 2016 they had been searching without much success for a period renovation project. As soon as they stepped inside and saw the unusual mezzanine layout and soaring high ceilings of the old school house they knew they had found their project. Although the property was dated and in a poor state of repair they were confident they could turn it into the warehouse/loft style space they had always dreamed of living in.

The property is set on a hill and the front door is actually at the back of the building. As you come into the house you enter into a mezzanine level from which the bedrooms lead off. However, when they first viewed the house the kitchen was actually located on this level. Their architect Nicole du Pisanie of Stonewood Design inspired them to rethink how they could use the space and create one large open plan living/dining space downstairs.

With the kitchen relocated and the space opened up, you get the full benefit of the view out over the Wiltshire countryside afforded by the huge original stone arched windows. It is the connection to the outdoors and the





vastness of the view beyond that makes the house feel so spacious. The first thing that struck us when we visited was a sense of calmness, the aroma of earthy candles which filled the air, with gently dimmed lights and soft background music making for an extremely inviting home.

The couple carried out much of the renovation work themselves with the help of Kate's Dad who is an experienced and talented carpenter. The couple actually lived with Kate's parents whilst undertaking the renovation, returning home from work and heading straight to the schoolhouse to spend long evenings working on the project.

They taught themselves many of the skills needed to complete the project. For example, after watching videos on YouTube Mike tackled the task of making a concrete worktop for the huge kitchen island that is the focal point of the kitchen. It was made off site in a friend's garden and was so large that it took 8 people to carry it into the house when it was complete. It is wonderful handcrafted items like the worktop that make this such a personal home full of character.



#### SEPARATION OF SPACES

The open plan living space is subtly divided into separate relaxing, living and dining areas by an open timber staircase designed by the couple and built by Kate's father. The thick rustic wooden steps and dark metal frame echo materials used elsewhere in the house. The staircase adds an industrial edge to the interiors of the old schoolhouse which is further enhanced by the large crittal style window of the master bedroom which looks out over the living space.