

Exterior

The large arched picture window allows light to flood into the dining area.

Windows, bespoke by George Barnsdale; painted in Pigeon Green, Farrow & Ball

A COTSWOLD CHRISTMAS

This Christmas, the Barnes family are welcoming guests to their 18th-century Grade II-listed barn conversion, set in 500 acres of stunning Cotswold countryside



Dining room

The giant windows can be flung open after dining, giving the garden a connection to the house. Live edge bespoke dining table, similar at Rough Living. Hans Wegner wishbone chairs in natural ash with black seat, Where Saints Go. Paper decorations, votives, candles, glass candlesticks, and lanterns on table, all Pipii

Kitchen

The ceiling battens were left exposed to enhance the rustic feel. Marlborough terracotta parquet tiles, Artisans of Devizes. Rattan stools; sheepskin seat pad in Ivory, all Cox & Cox. Aged brass rise and fall lights, The French House. Votives and lanterns, Pipii. Chocolates, Bettys. Metal tea tin, Lakeland

“ I STILL WALK IN AND THINK WE’VE CREATED THE MOST WONDERFUL PLACE. EVERY SINGLE PIECE IS JUST AS I’D WANT IT IN MY DREAM HOME ”

This Christmas marks a turning point as Jo Barnes and her family welcome their first guests to celebrate the festive season at Anthology Farm, a pair of Grade II-listed barns in the Cotswolds.

It hasn't been an easy journey to get here. In 2016, after a decade of uncertainty, the family farm in Staffordshire was compulsory purchased to make way for HS2. For Jo's father-in-law, John, it was particularly emotional as his family had farmed there since 1921. 'It was a difficult time,' says Jo. 'Not only had we lost the farm, but my mother-in-law Rosemary and I had to close our businesses, a farm shop and wedding venue, and start again.'

Fortunately, a farm came up 70 miles down the road in Gloucestershire and the family jumped at it. 'We could see the potential immediately,' says Jo. 'Farms have to diversify these days to survive. The land was perfect for John and my husband Henry to farm and we knew the barns would make a fantastic holiday let.'

Anthology Farm is comprised of two barns, set in an L-shape. The previous owners had used them as office space and the buildings were full of small meeting rooms, long corridors and dark wood partitions. They opted to move the huge staircase in the middle of the main, bigger barn. Replacing it with a simpler one, set discreetly to the side, opened up a dramatic, double-height space that became the dining room.

The huge, arched picture window at the back was updated and double-glazed, and most of the windows were changed to suit the heritage style of the barns.

'We were really keen to expose some of the brickwork. It's lovely, honey-coloured local stone from the Doddles Hill mines opposite the farm and we felt it would add real character to the property,' says Rosemary. 'Even though it's a huge space, the light bounces off the walls and makes it feel really cosy.'

The family decided to engage an architect, as well as interior design company Run for the Hills (runforthehills.com), to work on the project. 'As soon as I saw the barns, I knew I wanted to be part of this project,' says Run for the Hills founder Anna Burles. 'Jo did the right thing bringing us on board at the beginning, as we could ensure the architectural design also worked for the interior design. It succeeded because everyone collaborated so well together.'

The family knew they wanted the interiors of the barns to be neutral and monochromatic, but they also briefed Anna to add some eclecticism. 'We deliberately gave every bedroom and bathroom its own personality,' says Jo. 'We wanted them to be cosy, stylish and comfortable, but not too fussy.'

Jo and Henry stayed in the main barn last New Year with their daughters. 'The children thought it was magical,' says Jo. 'I particularly love gazing out of the picture window in the dining room over the Cotswolds. It's an amazing view, especially when tinged with a little Christmas frost. We love the place so much; it's got everything my dream home would have.'

Anthology Farm is available to rent through Unique Home Stays, uniquehomestays.com



AT HOME WITH

Owners Jo Barnes and her husband Henry, their two children Ophelia, five, and Imogen, three, Henry's parents, Rosemary and John, and their chocolate labrador Nema. John and Henry farm the land while Jo and Rosemary run the barns, Anthology Farm, as a holiday let.

House The Grade II-listed converted barns on their farm, which date from 1740, have nine bedrooms and can accommodate up to 18 people. The Barnes family bought the farm in 2016 and the barn conversion was completed in 2019.

“WE WANTED TO EXPOSE SOME OF THE BRICKWORK INSIDE TO ADD TO THE RUSTIC FEEL AND CHARACTER”



Living room

A neutral colour scheme and abundance of natural textures maintains the essence of the barn. Bamboo pendant light, Design Vintage. Bentley coffee table with removable trays, DI Designs. Sofa and chairs, Isla range, sofa.com. Cushions, H&M. Floral cut-out zinc tealight holders, Pipii. Moss stitch throw in Forest Green, Nkuku



Dining room
 A mix of styles, from the industrial mirror to the opulent chandelier, add eclectic charm. **Artwork**, specially commissioned, Croft Design Studio. Beaded **chandelier**, similar at The Forest & Co. Dark wood Jacobean sideboard, belonged to Rosemary's grandmother, similar eBay

Living room
 Jo was keen to keep the arrow-slit ventilation windows that would originally have allowed just enough air into the barn to dry the grain stored there. **Cushions**, H&M. Glass **lantern** (on wooden plinth), Lakeland





Bedroom
 The beams were stripped back and lightened by Back from Black. Vintage Dutch **wardrobe**, similar at Vinterior. Floral **wallpaper**, Sandberg Nippon Wallpaper Collection, Pine Green, Wallpaper Direct

Bathroom
 Neutrals are offset by Moroccan-style flooring. Oakham black pattern **tiles**, Walls and Floors. Millbrook roll-top bath, The Cast Iron Bath Company; painted in Elephant's Breath, Farrow & Ball. Moroccan Nola **towels**, Nkuku

Bedroom
 Jo brought the scheme to life with a touch of colour. Blue Isaac fringed **armchair**, Sweetpea & Willow. Gold **boxes**; bark star **garland**, all Pipii. Morri **tealights**, Nkuku



Bedroom

Exposing the roof structure created an airy, open feel and adds the wow factor.

Antique Hadschlu Old Gold rug, Woven. Beaded Lisbeth chandelier, similar at Graham and Green

“ IN THE BEDROOMS, WE ADDED TOUCHES LIKE BRIGHT BOTANICAL WALLPAPER AND BLUE FRINGED ARMCHAIRS TO ADD TO THE SENSE OF PLAYFULNESS ”

Entrance

Jo was pleased the original barn doors were sturdy and could be repaired to provide guests with a dramatic entrance. Exterior **door frame** in Pigeon Green; internal **door frame** in Clunch, both Farrow & Ball. **Star** on door, Hobbycraft. Frosted faux mountain spruce **tree** and **tree lights**, all Lights4fun. Find similar **baskets** at Garden Trading

ON OUR DOORSTEP

Visit... 'Sudeley Castle & Gardens (sudeleycastle.co.uk/events/spectacle-of-light), a favourite place to go to at Christmas. The children love the Spectacle of Lights show.'

Shop at... 'Burford Garden Company (burford.co.uk), which is full of beautiful seasonal foliage displays and decorations, then have a hot chocolate in the café.'

Go for a meal at... 'The Craven Arms (thecravenarms.co.uk) at Brockhampton. It's a 16th-century inn and restaurant, and the food is always excellent.'

