

WORDS BY MATT TURNER PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF COTSWOLD HOUSE

COTSWOLD HOUSE CHIPPING CAMPDEN



Ian and Christa Taylor's ongoing expansion of Cotswold House continues with the opening of eight new suites and a purpose-built function room by interior designers A&J D'Alton.

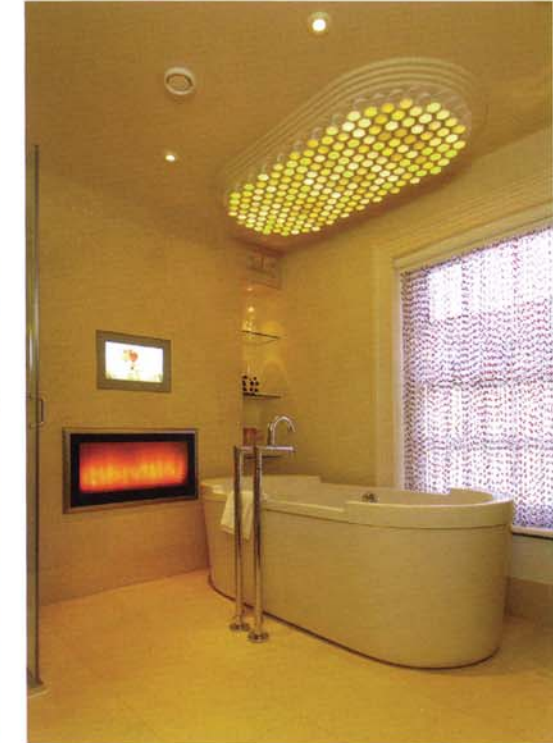
When Sir Terence Conran rolls into the picture-postcard Cotswold town of Chipping Campden to acknowledge the opening of a few new hotel rooms, you know those rooms are going to be a bit special. So it was when the Cotswold House hotel recently unveiled the new suites in its conversion of Montrose House – an 18th Century Cotswold property in traditional stone which was until recently a private house with an extensive, mature garden.

In fact Cotswold House has been an ongoing labour-of-love for its owners Ian and Christa Taylor since they acquired the property in 1999. At that time they inherited a run-down 15 bedroom hotel. They began by completely revamping these rooms, ten of them on the first floor, five on the second. They have since added a further four duplex suites in a cottage annexe at the back of the building, acquired the Old Grammar School building on the opposite side

of the high street and transformed it into a luxurious private apartment; completely overhauled and extended the gardens as well as adding a new conference / function area: the Montrose suite. In all of these renovations and improvements, the couple have scoured the country for artists, suppliers and designers, both local and national, to help realise their vision. For the new Montrose suites, they have worked closely with interior



ABOVE: Glass sculptor Neil Wilkins has created bespoke works for the new Montrose House bedrooms. RIGHT: Huge carved baths from Limestone Gallery feature in some of the new rooms. Others feature colour-changing light features.



designers A&J D'Alton to assemble a formidable team to work on the project. Some are talented individuals like lighting designer Bruce Monro and glass sculptor Neil Wilkins. Others are noted suppliers to the hotel industry including Hypnos and Ammique (beds); Fox Linton (bed throws and cushions), and Limestone Gallery (stone baths). Of the three deluxe king rooms, one has a balcony overlooking the Montrose gardens, and all have spacious bathrooms with underfloor heating. Ground floor deluxe king rooms accommodate huge limestone baths, separate shower and steam cubicles, and a bathroom fireplace featuring 50 candle effect lights.

The Montrose Suite meanwhile complements the hotel's dining room and newly-extended brasserie, offering a dining, wedding, business and conference facility. The maximum capacity of the suite is 100 guests with partitioning enabling smaller groups to gather for more intimate meetings and private dining. "We have made a substantial investment in the development of the hotel," says Ian Taylor. "Our criteria was to create bedrooms and facilities that would be way beyond our guests' expectations." So why didn't they use the space to add a spa? After all every hotel has to have one nowadays don't they?

The hotel's website is refreshing in its honesty: "Frankly we think they are overrated - all those scented candles and whale song music. Who needs it? Once you experience a room in Montrose House, the last thing you'll be yearning for is to be slapped with evil-smelling mud and encased in clingfilm. What's relaxing about that? True relaxation, we think, is a hotel room that exceeds your wildest expectations; where everything is just that bit better than you expect." With rooms featuring colour-changing light features, huge carved limestone baths, plus Ammique beds which hold guests in the optimum sleeping position, we're inclined to agree.

ABOVE FROM TOP The Sezincote suite lounge, one of the new bedrooms, and the Sezincote Suite patio MAIN PIC The deluxe King bedroom features a freestanding bath, flatscreen TV and designer furniture.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

COTSWOLD HOUSE
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www.cotswoldhouse.com

- 30 bedrooms
- Juliana's Restaurant, Hicks Brasserie
- Montrose Suite function room