

ENCHANTED GARDEN

Surrounded by lush gardens and mulberry trees, rolling fields and sprawling vineyards, this old farm building was the ideal renovation project for landscape architect and interior designer Giuseppe Baldi

Interview TESSA PEARSON *Photography* FABRIZIO CICCONI/LIVING INSIDE
Styling FRANCESCA DAVOLI





Kitchen/dining area A gleaming resin floor reflects the sunlight that streams into this peaceful space, and contrasts beautifully with the well-worn wooden ceiling beams. Old dynamite boxes from Secondalina and a wooden stool form a suitably rustic showcase for a simple display of potted plants **Stockist details on p223** ▶



*'I LIKE TO
USE PLANTS,
EITHER IN POTS
OR HUNG ON
THE WALLS AS
IF THEY WERE
PICTURES'*



Kitchen and dining area Mismatched vintage chairs from Secondalinea surround an old table made from walnut wood, which has been dressed in antique hand-woven hemp fabric. A counter and worktops made from polished pigmented concrete add further texture to the simple scheme. Under the window, reclaimed steel pipes serve as striking plant pots
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Living area At the far end of this open-plan space is an inviting sofa draped in linen from Borgo delle Tovaglie and surrounded by tall leafy plants. The Moroccan rug is by Battilossi; the cushions were handmade in Uzbekistan
Portrait Homeowner Giuseppe Baldi and his girlfriend Jessica Cardini
Detail A painting by Riccardo Secchi hangs on a roughly plastered wall
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My home is in a small village about 60 kilometres from Bologna, where the broad plains of northern Italy meet the Apennine mountains. It's an agricultural area; from my window I look out onto an ancient garden and the rolling fields and vineyards beyond. There are no hedges or walls, just old oak and mulberry trees and wide open spaces. I grew up here; the house has been in my family for several generations. I moved back from Reggio Emilia in 2006. I wanted to be in the countryside and I needed more space to explore my work as a landscape gardener and interior designer. It was the ideal location: an old warehouse in the middle of a 16th-century farm, with a large garden where I could try out ideas – and it was south facing, which is crucial for a gardener.

I restored most of the house myself. It was hard, but I get great satisfaction out of knowing that I did so much with my own two hands. I wanted to create a 'real' house, using traditional materials and avoiding all things synthetic. I based the aesthetic on the principles of wabi sabi, a Japanese philosophy that celebrates the beauty of imperfect things. This allowed me to embrace the

building's uneven walls, ancient woodwork and crooked structure. I complemented these well-worn features with reclaimed fixtures and furniture, and I tried to give each room in the house its own identity. For example, despite being small, the bathroom is very cosy and filled with woodland plants that flourish in the shady, humid conditions. In each room, every plant, every material is making its own special contribution.

My main aim – in a house or in a garden – is always to create harmonious environments that bring wellness into people's lives. Each space should be unique, personal, intimate and inviting, and I feel that my home is just that. Living here is peaceful; I love the light and the silence, the winter sunshine that pours into the house and the tall trees that shade the garden in summer. When I'm not outside, I'm in the kitchen. My girlfriend, Jessica, is a great cook, so we're always experimenting with new recipes and we love to have people round for dinner. There's nothing better than eating outside in the garden when the weather is warm. But inside or out, it's always a relaxing place to be. I wanted to design and build a home that would be good for the mind – I'm very happy with how it turned out.' ►

*'THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE
INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR IS A PRIORITY.
I LIKE TO SEE IT AS THE GARDEN
GENTLY ENTERING THE HOUSE'*





Bedroom The antique bed is dressed in linen gauze and lit with a 'Read Me' lamp made of old books, both from Borgo delle Tovaglie. Reclaimed wooden boxes from Secondalinea serve as storage; Moroccan rugs from Battilossi add softness to the pared-back space
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