

DECORATING TIP *'We chose the colours of the walls by painting lots of postcards, then pinning them up to see how they looked'*



1 BREAKFAST ROOM High-backed **chairs** from What Not Antiques (01483 306358, whatnotantiquesltd.co.uk) are teamed with an oak **table**; Dwell (0845 675 9090, dwell.co.uk) sells similar **2 SITTING ROOM** Furniture Village (0845 085 0480, furniturevillage.co.uk) supplied the **sofa**, and the **coffee table** is by Wesley-Barrell (01993 893100, wesley-barrell.co.uk). Christie had the **curtains** made up by Fenestra Interiors (01483 277722, fenestrainteriors.com) **3 KITCHEN** The **cabinetry** was installed by Stephen Anthony (023 9248 6478, stephenanthonydesign.com), while the polished French limestone **flooring** is from Artisans of Devizes (01380 720007)



space for entertaining, and a minstrel's gallery overlooking a grand hall with a roaring log fire.' With the plot purchased and planning permission secured, the couple took a back seat as over the next 19 months, their team achieved exactly that.

However, instead of the galleried hall being used solely as a reception room, Christie and Richard employ the double-height space as a formal dining room, too. 'There is a balance between installing features for effect, and creating usable living areas,' Christie explains. 'You don't want to rattle around

in rooms that are too vast, because you lose that all-important feeling of intimacy.'

Scale was also influential in the design of the kitchen. Christie wanted a pitched roof and exposed trusses above the breakfast room, with French windows opening onto a verandah. Also, to create the illusion of freestanding cabinetry, she had the units painted in three different colours. 'I didn't want it to look like a fitted kitchen,' she explains.

'We really pushed the boat out and decided to go for the best design we could find,' Richard adds. 'As

a result we spent twice our initial budget, but we don't regret it at all. Quality is so important.'

Among the many outstanding features of the house, underfloor heating has been combined with a wooden floor. Heating can warp wood, but Christie and Richard used extra-thick oak that is designed to withstand its effects. 'The antique-limestone floor in the kitchen and hall was even more expensive,' says Richard, 'but again, it was well worth it.'

A lot of the furniture and accessories were hurriedly bought as the couple's first Christmas ►