

# ELLE DECOR

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## Signature Spaces

Fresh Fall Looks

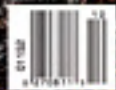
Personality-Packed Rooms

Ultimate Kitchens

Tamara Mellon's  
Superchic London Lair



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# GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

IN JUST SIX MONTHS, DESIGNER  
MATTHEW PATRICK SMYTHE TOOK A 1790S COLONIAL  
WITH POTENTIAL AND BORNED  
IT INTO AN IDYLIC WEEKEND RETREAT  
TEXT BY LINDA GARMY, PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WATSON  
FOCUSSED BY ANITA SAHIE









A round wooden table, a green leather chair, a brass lamp, and a framed abstract artwork are featured in this room. The room is a blend of modern and traditional design, with a focus on functionality and style. The bookshelf is a key element, providing a space for reading and display. The overall aesthetic is clean and sophisticated.







objects that accentuate his classic, understated taste: a covered built-wood buffet dish recently found in London's Portobello Road, a set of historical prints of Paris's amusements purchased at the Cliché-courti Flea market, dishes acquired at the Whitebeck Antiques Fair in upstate New York, and a curious semicircular writing desk from Two-Studio in Sag Harbor. In the living room, he shows off two reproductions of busts by neoclassical French sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon—one of George Washington and the other of Thomas Jefferson—which add a dramatic flourish to the setting.

For a property within the village limits, Smyth's house has a surprisingly large garden, not to mention an old-barn and curved swimming pool. Now that he has removed the home's interiors to suit "for another 100 years," Smyth has begun to think about the landscape. On a recent trip to London, he was inspired by a film about Alvar

Aalto shows at a modernism exhibition at the V&A. In the film, a swimming pool designed by the Finnish architect inspired an idea to use a combination of stone coping and wood decking to replace the dotted setting of the free-form pool.

In the meantime, Smyth's idea of a perfect autumn weekend afternoon is to light a fire, read the papers, and listen to opera. Another treasured pastime is to drive with no destination in mind, but just to take in the fall foliage and explore the surrounding countryside. There are occasional trips to scour for antiques in the Hudson Valley, as well as hiking and biking in the Berkshires. And Smyth admits that he's beginning to "learn up to the idea of giving small dinners for two or three people." Yet the designer makes it clear that his weeks are not too energetic and that he's at his happiest "just buttering around" his new village and home. ■