



Gabriela Peacock and stuffed ostrich in the reception room, also opposite

THE END OF MINIMALISM

Vintage clocks, contemporary art, stuffed birds and animals – and a prehistoric bear skeleton – compete for attention in a revamped Notting Hill home **REPORT** Caroline Boucher **PHOTOGRAPHS** Rachael Smith

The family room. Right: cave-bear skeleton in the entrance. Below: the reception room



When nutritionist Gabriela Peacock first ran consultations from her Notting Hill home, new clients must have got something of a mixed message when she opened the front door. The hall is dominated by the huge skeleton of a prehistoric cave bear. However, given the Peacocks' present to each other before their wedding in Lake Como was a stuffed ostrich, it soon becomes apparent that this is no ordinary house.

Gabriela and her hedge-funder husband, David, bought the house seven years ago, but moved out during a two-and-a-half year basement dig. "I know, I know," says Peacock. "It was hell for the neighbours, but now we have payback on both sides while they do theirs." They moved back in ten months ago after a lavish overhaul with the help of interior designer Peter Mikic.

The couple's taxidermy destination of choice is Deyrolle in Paris, where they sourced a case of vibrant tropical butterflies and an albino white peacock. There's a tiny bird by the artist Polly Morgan in the living room and a squirrel skeleton playing the violin. However, they would never tolerate trophy animals: what appear to be a pair of tusks flanking the desk are sculptural pieces made from camel bone.

They are avid collectors in general. There are translucent alabaster pots they brought



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back from Bali, spears from India, ceramics from Laos and Vietnam. Then there are the clocks – a passion David inherited from his father – and a large art collection that includes Francis Bacon and Ai Weiwei. The two black Baccarat chandeliers were hung by Baccarat after the company had inspected the site and tested the fixtures – a sensible precaution, because the chandelier in the master bedroom (hung by the builders) crashed to the floor.

The Peacocks are big entertainers, although less so right now because Gabriela is pregnant (they already have a five-year-old daughter, Maia). The dining room in the new basement has dark walls and a black carpet. A specially designed asymmetric brass dining table can seat 16, but can also be taken apart in 5 minutes to clear the room for a party.

Originally from the Czech Republic, Peacock, 35, started her career as a model before coming to London. She became interested in nutrition and studied for a health science degree. "I found it really hard, because my spoken English was much better than my written English. It took me six years." She went on to develop a range of supplements with a biochemist, which is available online and about to be launched in Selfridges and Harvey Nichols. Peacock is certainly a good advertisement for her products – blooming and glossy. A far cry from that skeletal bear. ■

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