

David Gandy's West London Home

The male supermodel's home is full of handsome vintage finds and tailoring-inspired fabrics



David Gandy in his newly renovated London home with Alfie the Toy Poodle Photo: Tim Beddow

By David Nicholls

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I would like to have seen the look on the woman's face when she opened her front door to discover that the man collecting the table she had sold on **Gumtree** was David Gandy, one of the most successful male models in the world. Did the ubiquitous images of his rippling torso as he poses in nothing more than M&S pants flash across her mind as she took receipt of £150?

Gandy does this kind of thing quite a bit – he loves finding a bargain on Gumtree or eBay. And that is not the first thing I am surprised to learn when I visit his four-bedroom house in west London. 'I think people expect it to be more of a bachelor pad, with clean lines, technology and lots of leather and glass,' he says. 'But I wanted something that was comfortable and that felt lived-in.'

As we enter the house the photographer and I are encouraged to keep our shoes on, 'to help scuff up the floor a bit'. In fact it is already pleasingly worn. Tumbled oak in a herringbone pattern extends from the entrance hall up the stairs and into the living and dining rooms of the mid-Victorian property. Gandy bought the flooring from a firm based in Billericay, Essex, where he grew up. He says it was far cheaper than buying something similar in London.



These rooms are fairly compact, and they are furnished like the sort of comfortable lounge you might find in a smart boutique hotel in the countryside. The walls are panelled ('We chopped up dado rails so it didn't cost much') and the **Farrow & Ball** colour palette includes the neutral shades off-white, oatmeal and grey. Most of the furniture is vintage, including the armchairs in the living room that Gandy has had reupholstered. 'I'm sure an interior designer would criticise me for mixing different styles,' he says with a laugh.

Gandy has always been interested in interiors – one of his great pleasures is shopping for antiques with his mother, Brenda. He had helped friends with homes, but this was the first big project he took on for himself. 'I knew what I wanted and I had an index of websites that I like to get ideas from.'

The house was not in great shape when he bought it. It had spiral carpets, floral wallpaper, a lavatory tacked on to the kitchen and few original features worth keeping. This meant he felt he had carte blanche to give it a complete overhaul, which he did with the help of Nu:builds, a local firm. They dug eight feet down into the basement to make space for a bedroom and a utility room, as well as a large

snug, which extends a few feet beyond the back of the house and is partially lit by a narrow skylight running its width



A small bedroom on the first floor became a dressing room, which is fitted with vintage oak-fronted storage. It was inspired by a fitting room at a **Ralph Lauren** store in New York, and the designer's style – part American Ivy League, part English country – has influenced the rest of Gandy's home too.

It is a handsome space devoid of bling or frills – though scented with a Jo Malone Orange Blossom candle – and with only a handful of references to his work in fashion. Accessorised with industrial utility lights, it is full of boyish motifs such as cars, motorbikes and aeroplanes. There are iconic images of Churchill, Steve McQueen and Michael Caine on the walls.

One nod to fashion comes in the form of Gandy's choice of textiles throughout the house. Everywhere you look, furniture seems more tailored than upholstered, in windowpane checks, herringbone and stripes. It is no surprise to learn that many of the fabrics came from Holland & Sherry, a Savile Row cloth merchant that also produces interior textiles. The guest room is a study in Prince of Wales check.

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Gandy moved in last February after seven months of refurbishment work, and with a new kitchen extension at the back, very little of the original house remains. It was a bigger project than Gandy was anticipating, but he is visibly satisfied with the result. With his work for brands such as Marks & Spencer, for which he has designed a men's collection, Dolce & Gabbana, Lucky Brand jeans and David Preston, the shoe label he has recently acquired, he seems to be on a plane every other week. But as he pads around barefoot on heated floors – trailed by his girlfriend's dog, Alfie – one gets the sense that he is glad to be home.

David Gandy is an ambassador for Battersea Dogs & Cats Home (battersea.org.uk)

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