

WINNER  
BEST PROPERTY  
MAGAZINE

# GRAND DESIGNS



DREAM HOMES FOR THE REAL WORLD | AUGUST 2008 | £3.50

**KEVIN McCLOUD**  
WHY I'M DITCHING  
THE DEODORANT

**TV RETREAT**  
THE ITALIAN FARMHOUSE  
RESTORED ON A BUDGET

Lazy  
days

Idyllic homes for  
the sunny season

**OUTDOOR  
CHIC**  
ALFRESCO  
FURNITURE  
FOR LONG,  
HOT DAYS

**HI-TECH  
STYLE**  
LUXURY  
LOOKS  
FOR YOUR  
BATHROOM



**HOT  
PROPERTY**  
FIND YOUR DREAM  
PLACE IN THE SUN



**Sheer veneer**

Who'd have thought that the good looks of this ultra-thin wood veneer come from old bottles of milk and detergent reincarnated into Varia, an eco-resin made by 3form and distributed by Futimis Systems. The panels can be heat-formed to curve into 3D shapes, meaning they're a great eco option for striking wall and ceiling panels, sliding doors or interior partitions, which can even be backlit for extra drama. The panel can also be UV-protected, meaning it can be used outside. A clear winner. Prices start from £761 per 2.44x1.22m panel (020 7734 8103; futimis-systems.co.uk).



**Silence is golden**

More people than ever live in open-plan homes, so it's an increasingly common nuisance to find yourself having to shout over all the noisy mod-cons. A chorus normally erupts when the dishwasher, washing machine and dryer get into full swing, but you can now opt for household noise control and harmony with the new quiet appliance range from AEG-Electrolux. This includes a fridge that is 7dB quieter than the average library and the 'quietest dishwasher in the world' at just 41dB. Let those after-dinner debates proceed in peace and quiet (0870 535 0350; aeg-electrolux.co.uk).



**Steaming ahead**

If scrubbing your pots before putting them in the dishwasher gets you hot under the collar, you'll simply love Whirlpool's Aqua Steam – the first dishwasher in Europe to use steam technology, which promises to clean your dishes without the need for pre-soaking. An impressive 32 powerful jets blast out pressurised steam capable of cleaning even the most stubborn stains. Sensors detect the amount of dirt in the water and adapt the cycle accordingly, meaning that with Aqua Steam you use up to 30 per cent less energy than your regular cycle. Prices start from under £300 (0870 600 8989; whirlpool.co.uk).



**Bath to the future**

Imagine coming home after a long day to a hot bath programmed to the exact depth and temperature of your choice. Welcome to the ultimate in bathing gadgetry. Bathomatic from Unique Automation is a system that allows you to pre-set your bath to fill via a small wall-mounted console, or even from your own personal computer. What's more, the bath has an in-built heater to maintain a set temperature without needing to add more water, letting you prolong that luxurious 'Flake' moment without having to lift a finger. Prices start from £6,463 (020 7740 3910; uniqueautomation.co.uk).

**NEWS  
FLASH**

**Property Care Association (PCA)**, the UK trade body for the damp proofing, structural waterproofing and maintenance industry, has launched their PCA Promise to ensure that if a member goes out of business during a project, another PCA contractor will complete the work. Call 0870 121 6737 or visit property-care.org for details.