

ST GILES FURNITURE GOES CONTINENTAL

words Faye Manning

At St Giles Furniture we have recently completed a project which started life one hot August day sitting round a swimming pool in Santa Ponsa, Mallorca. Whilst getting the statutory ice creams for the children we got talking to another family and the afternoon quickly disappeared along with several glasses of Rioja! On my return to the UK I found myself heading off to Chelmsford in Essex to measure up for a new bespoke kitchen for the family we had met in Mallorca. Always on a bus man's holiday!!!

After discussing ideas and favourite styles we decided to go with solid American black walnut cabinets with cream Silestone worktops (man made granite) and some trendy Miele appliances. At this point our client mentioned that they were planning on moving to Mallorca within the next couple of years and were currently house-hunting for the right property. Success with the Chelmsford kitchen project could lead to an invitation to design a kitchen for the new house in Spain – no pressure then!!

As predicted the Chelmsford project was highly successful with all the family loving their new kitchen area. Before too long they had also found a spectacular new home in Mallorca and I had to jump on a plane and head off to the sun to do some measuring up – it's a tough job but someone has to do it!!!

The house is large, modern and open plan with glass walls wrapping around the back to allow spectacular views of the pool, garden and sea to spill in and become part of the home. The brief was fairly easy as the family wanted another walnut kitchen and of course we had already made one for their UK home. However, heat, moisture from the sea air and air conditioning all had to be taken into account to allow for the movement of the timber.

Our client wanted every gadget possible as this house would be their dream home and their final move. XL Miele ovens were ordered along with steam ovens, coffee machines, induction glass hobs, Zip taps giving boiling and chilled filtered water on

demand and finally, what I thought was the most impressive piece of the whole kitchen, a five-foot wide Miele stainless steel double fridge freezer! We used Zimbabwe Black Granite on the worktops to contrast with the cream marble floor and extended the units to wrap around the corner into the dining area, inviting the table in as part of the kitchen.

The logistics of this project became a big worry for me so I contacted a removals company called Webbs International who specialize in moving clients from the UK to the Balearics. We made a decision to take the whole truck for transportation purposes so that we would not have to stack anything and could lay everything down flat. It resembled a high-tech military operation! Webbs arrived at our factory in Lincolnshire and promptly began to wrap the kitchen in £1200 worth of bubble wrap! Finally the back of the truck was locked and four days later we met again in Santa Ponsa, unlocked the truck and along with my fitters from England, we un-wrapped our kitchen!

Five days later the kitchen was fitted and ready for granite templating. When people refer to the Spanish way of life as "Mañana, Mañana" they are spot on. Six weeks later the granite was finally ready to be fitted! Personally I find that a kitchen only comes "alive" when the worktops go on and this project was no exception. The granite tops have given the whole room a real "wow" factor which our customer is delighted with. We have already been asked to do their study and after that the library area – what a shame – more visits to Mallorca!!!

To date this has certainly been one of my favourite projects. To overcome the logistical and humidity problems that we encountered and emerge with another ecstatic customer has been very satisfying and proved that the team at St Giles Furniture can and will tackle anything!!

For more information on St Giles Furniture contact Debbie on 01494 873031 or visit our website at www.stgilesfurniture.com

