



TIM SAUNDERS & FAMILY VISIT

Uppark in West Sussex

Dreams take time to achieve. It certainly did at Uppark, the magnificent stately home on the Hampshire/West Sussex borders. The idea came to mind back in 1590 but it did not actually become a reality for another hundred years. Those of us thinking of adapting and improving our homes can sympathise with this. After all it does take a huge amount of thought to get a design right. There is ornate architecture and as we walk around the house we savour the atmosphere, the high ceilings and wonderful furniture including a grand piano. "Look at this," says my wife Caroline, pointing at the extravagant wood panelling that surrounds a door leading from one room into another. Of course each room has a grand fireplace, a selection of sofas, massive paintings and large windows looking out onto the gardens. Then there are the ruffled curtains, the bare floorboards and large rugs. Look up and the ceilings have cornices and mouldings unlike many of our homes today. This is something totally different. This grand home is crammed full of wonderful furniture. We're sure that we spy some that is Chinese. "Ah, no it isn't," says volunteer guide Richard Jones. "Chinese design was fashionable at the time and so it is highly likely that the furniture was made in Europe to look like it was Chinese." Interesting. In fact Richard is a mine of

information. "Sir Harry Fetherstone went on a grand tour of the world and brought back various pieces that appealed to him. He had paintings produced, too." Richard talks about the house and how it was a challenge to get water to the property saying that it had to be mechanically harnessed from nearby South Harting village. In 1954 Uppark was handed to the National Trust by the Meade-Fetherstonhaugh family, who still reside at Uppark today. In 1989 there was a devastating fire, which resulted in a pioneering conservation project to rework the damaged interiors.

We visit the wine and beer cellars and a volunteer talks to Henry (6) about the bell system. If a bell rang a job had to be done. There must have been an army of servants and we visit their quarters where their clothes are hanging up. A regimented and orderly routine would have been necessary to run such a house. Very Downton Abbey.

For more information visit:
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/uppark-house-and-garden>

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