

# Building the Dream

In the latest instalment of her rebuild diaries, Jane Smith and her husband Richard add a swimming pool and lay the insulation for their cotto tile roof to be laid upon...



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The pool zone was now taking shape; it was very exciting, particularly for our three daughters. We pegged out the area around the pool where we wanted the sunbathing area to be and made it an irregular shape to be visually more interesting. The whole zone was then covered with gravel and grids of iron were laid over the gravel. Finally the cement mixer arrived again to pour the concrete on top. This gave us a really strong and flat pool surround. The final touch, some weeks later, would be the laying of hand-made old cotto tiles and the building of a beautiful curved wall defining the pool zone.

Meanwhile the plumber arrived to commence his work. Dino (nicknamed Smurf because of the beanie hat he always wore) set to work running the water and waste pipes around the house, including fitting Geberit toilet flush cisterns into cavities in the five bathroom walls. Eventually all this floor level pipework would be covered with a layer of light concrete and fixed permanently under the floors; it was therefore very important to make no errors with the positioning.

Up on the roof a thick, impermeable weather proof sheet was being put over the tongue and groove ceiling; then big squares of insulation were stuck into place, covering the entire roof. We went for insulation 12cm thick to prevent heat loss through the roof in the cold months. We put sheets 8cm thick around all the exterior walls for the same reason.

Once the insulation was in place on the roof, another impermeable sheet was put in place on top, then old

cotto roof tiles added the finishing touch. We had a roof! The pretty chimneys would be built next month.

The team now started in earnest on the exterior walls. The aforementioned insulation layer was put between the red building blocks and the facing of old stones, giving us an overall wall thickness of 70cm – incredibly thick and meaning the house would retain its internal heat in the winter, and in the hot summer the intense external heat would take a long time to penetrate through. As this work progressed the house took on its beautiful old feel. You can see this transformation in the photos at the top of the page.

The sun was shining throughout June and we were on schedule. We had one more month to go before the traditional August shut-down, so Richard and I sat with a glass of chilled Verdicchio and a bowl of our own olives and planned the priorities for July. ■

