

# Garden rooms

David and Sybil Caines have built a fabulous summerhouse at the bottom of their garden to create extra space for themselves and their two sons Jackson and Dylan. If you're hankering after a place of your own or simply need more room for the family then an outside escape is a versatile option

## How do you use the space?

'When I get the time to paint, I use it as a painter's studio, otherwise it's a lovely place to sit and read or listen to music,' says David. 'During the summer we use it for garden parties and then in winter the children's table tennis table goes in. When we planned it I imagined the boys would hang out there with their friends but usually it's Sybil and I retreating to the bottom of the garden to escape Jackson's guitar practice.'

## What do you love most about it?

'The sense of tranquillity and the feeling of being away from the street and the traffic. And I love the smell of wood.'

## What inspired you to build something so contemporary?

'One inspiration was the Eames House in California – I love the lightness of it. Sybil and I are interested in contemporary architecture and live in a Victorian property so the idea of mixing old and new excited us, and building a stand-alone structure gave us lots of scope. The sleek mirror steel wall was the architect's idea, it reflects the planting, helping to camouflage the structure and make the garden feel bigger.'

Designed by architects Ullmayer Sylvester (020 7503 0032) the summerhouse cost £35,000 and has won several awards including the *Architects Journal* Small Project Award 2005; the carpenters did such a beautiful job of the stud wall that the Caines have left it exposed and used it as shelving; 12-year old Jackson practises his guitar while his brother Dylan draws

