

A ROOM OUTSIDE

by Simon Cheetham

It's the age-old problem with conservatories. Too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter.

Of course, a "room outside" is a great way to extend your home without going through the hassle of moving.

A light, bright conservatory, delicately decorated, is a great selling tool when you do come to up sticks, though. But, again, it's not until you've lived through the seasons in it that you come to realise, well, as we said before...it's too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter. The winter chills can be overcome quite easily with the addition of an extra radiator. It's the summer that's the real problem. The heat can be oppressive because ordinary glass does nothing to protect you from UV rays and the glare means you may resort to reading the Sunday papers wearing sunglasses. Don't laugh, it's been done in this correspondent's household, such was the intensity of the brightness. So, how many of you out there knew there was a way round this? A revolutionary product from America means you can sit through the most intense heat in your conservatory and never feel the slightest discomfort.

Forward-thinking businessman Michael Bradley is the sole UK distributor of Four Season sun rooms — the product which uses glass which cuts out a staggering 98 per cent of harmful UV rays — from his outlet,

Room Outside in Quarry Lane, Chichester.

"It's a fantastic product and one which we are very excited about," says Michael. "The glass cuts the glare, filters light and leaves you in perfect comfort. It really does become a room outside and not just a conservatory.

"What it also means is that you can have timber floors, wooden furniture and even antique desks in your room, safe in the knowledge that none of them will fade in any way. The insulation values have been tested and exceed even that of a cavity wall. It really is a wonder product. It can't be faulted, the figures speak for themselves." At Michael's invitation, I popped along to Room Outside to test the "Tunnel of Heat", a futuristic-looking walkway which superbly demonstrates just how effective the sun rooms can be. One half of the tunnel is ordinary glass, the other is "Wonderglass". Bright lamps are turned on and left for a few minutes before you pass through and experience no climate change at all and then walk into a wall of heat as you enter the unprotected section. "Customers think there is a trick with the lamps but there is no need to try to fool anyone. Once a customer has walked through the tunnel, they realise just how



effective the glass is," explains Michael. But don't take his word for it. After some research I discovered a dome-shaped restaurant in Istanbul built entirely from the Four Season glass. That's right, you could never dine in the afternoon heat of Turkey's biggest city under glass unless it worked perfectly. "It's more expensive, obviously," adds Michael. "But when you can use the room all year round, you'll be glad you paid extra." You don't need to go to Turkey to see for yourselves...

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