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The kitchen is the hardest-working room in the house. These all work like a dream



PICTURE THIS

A classically styled interior for a family who relish the good things in life – home cooking, malt whisky and an English garden

MCCARRON
& CO

‘To fully enjoy the view outside,’ was the response to Richard Jackson, co-founder of furniture makers McCarron & Co, when he posed the question: ‘What’s your main priority for this project?’. A Home Counties new-build, Richard had the luxury of a blank canvas, while also the responsibility of planning and delivering a kitchen that fulfilled the brief, looked good and was a pleasure to use.

Richard’s design meets four objectives and each one creates a natural pathway of movement.

A cooking zone – hob and ovens at easily accessible height – sits along the back wall and a sink area overlooks the garden. Plenty of worktops allow space for prepping while food storage, refrigerated and dry, is spread across the right hand wall. ‘The clients both cook so I incorporated plenty of counter tops and a decent size larder,’ says Richard. Two European fridge freezers perch centrally to allow for integrated doors as the clients preferred these to freestanding stainless steel appliances.

Richard combined two classic cabinet styles, painted and natural, and used a spray-paint finish rather than the slightly textured coat applied by hand. ‘It looks a little more sleek and modern,’ he explains. Handles are polished aluminium ‘spear handles’, Richard’s own design.

The island has dual purpose. As a prepping station, breakfast or drinks bar. It’s an elegant piece of engineering – a delicate sliver of glass supported on curved aluminium arms. ‘The space between larder, fridge run and sink area was substantial so by curving the back of the bar I was able to position it with a view through the kitchen window.’

With dining table and chairs next to sliding doors, the clients have drinks close at hand when entertaining. Richard designed two special drawers with divided sections to house malt whisky and there’s more than enough space for wine – essential in any good kitchen. For garden lovers who enjoy good food and wine and the occasional whisky, it ticks every box. After all, life is supposed to be simple. mccarronandco.com



HEAVY METAL FAN

Gleaming chrome, tones of steely anthracite and buffed leather all have their place in this well-composed interior

MOWLEM
& CO

‘On my first site visit I got a clue to the client’s taste as they had a motorcycle in the kitchen. Seeing that, I knew I could push the boundaries,’ smiles Julia Brown, head designer at Mowlem & Co Northeast. Situated in the north of England, the house has ample space and the family already has formal dining and relaxing areas so the kitchen has become a room in itself.

‘Because the kitchen was gargantuan, in essence, wrapped

around two main walls, I felt an L-shaped island would anchor the space and complement the banks of storage and appliances,’ explains Julia. Wherever you are, the island is close; its proportions allowing different zones for different cooks. When the children want a snack they don’t need to be in mum or dad’s way if they are preparing a meal. To make the island less imposing, Julia elevated part of it onto legs. Caesarstone, a quartz composite, got the nod over veined marble because of its uniformity of colour. Concrete-grey brings together the industrial feel. Sliding pantry doors with ribbed glass fronts add visual texture against the relative harshness of other materials.

The client had an existing steel dining table, keeping it was non-negotiable, so a leather-upholstered bench adds comfort. The lights were sourced at Original BTC, while a Sub-Zero wine cooler and Wolf ovens and gas hob were installed alongside an existing fridge.

The kitchen has plenty of natural light, with glass windows along one wall, but the ceiling is low so it can be shadowed at the back. ‘When you have an area without natural light I always think it’s best to work with it by using darker finishes rather than forcing lighter shades, which are still then in shadow,’ says Julia. The family now has a kitchen with a steely heart that functions perfectly for their lifestyle. And the motorbike? Still in position.

mowlemandco.com

I HEART YOU

Hard to resist – pastel shades and clever planning

JO
HAMILTON

MELLOW MARSHMALLOW

As part of a re-jig of a London flat, designer Jo Hamilton carved space for this chic dining and kitchen area into a corridor with no natural light. 'I knew it needed to be white in order to keep the space looking open,' she explains, 'so I chose a lacquered kitchen from Design Space London and painted everything around it in the same shade.' Jo added a bespoke mirror, backlit to create a warm glow, and a stunning statement light by Gallotti & Radice. Pretty pink gold-framed chairs complete the picture.

johamilton.co.uk



GILT
& GLOSS

HOME SWEET HOME

'This is my own property,' says Anouska Anquetil, creative consultant at Gilt Studio, 'a very small room which took a feat of planning to get everything in.' Although floor space is scant, ceilings are high so Anouska designed concrete panels to sit above standard Ikea wall cabinets, drawing the eye upwards. A wall mirror helps to create a feeling of airiness. 'I wanted the main feature to be the floor – a beautiful parquet by Natural Wood Floor. She also splashed out on lighting from Hector Finch and used Buster + Punch handles. The unique worktop is concrete with copper powder and resin detailing. 'It's like an artwork,' says Anouska. giltandgloss.com

PHOTO: PAUL CRAIG



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

The owners of this Grade II*-listed cloth hall in Kent had their patience tested before getting the go-ahead for an impressive open-plan kitchen

MARTIN MOORE

As an interior designer, Sharon Barton (sharonbartoninteriordesign.com) is used to dealing with design challenges. But even she was close to despair when her own kitchen planning application stalled. 'Historic England was very helpful but others not so,' she says. 'I understand houses need to be preserved but people have to live in a modern way. With two teenagers, it's not feasible to have a tiny kitchen, especially one that doesn't compare to the house's size.' Finally, her wish was granted.

Originally built to store cloth, her Kent home has an Arts and Crafts style thanks to previous owner, Captain John Noel. Noel found fame as the photographer on the 1924 expedition to Everest and clearly his creative enthusiasm didn't just lie behind a lens. 'The house has beautiful detail, including door latches, which he obviously took great pride in maintaining.'

Sharon turned to David Sant, at the Martin Moore Notting Hill showroom, having been impressed by its furniture and design service while receiving companies for a previous client. 'While on that project, I made a mental note to return for myself,' she smiles.

The layout features a combination of bespoke cabinets, some painted, some natural oak, and quartz worktops. Appliances are top-of-the-range Gaggenau for cooking and, for cooling, Sub-Zero fridges with pull-out freezer drawers, plus a wine store. A vast larder cupboard features panelled detail, a hint towards the age of the house, housing shelving and drawers for crockery, glassware and dry foods. At the far end of the kitchen, a breakfast cupboard opens to reveal coffee machine, toaster and small sink with Quooker hot water tap. 'You help yourself and eat outside or at the bar.'

The kitchen neatly synthesises old and new. Contemporary marble lights by Timothy Oulton and black carbon fibre stools by Moooi add to the tempo but there's a classic elegance that lends familiarity to the rest of the house. 'Oak features throughout so we needed some in the kitchen although I didn't want it to dominate,' explains Sharon. 'Most of the house is dark and cosy, so it was important to appreciate and celebrate the light in this beautiful room'. Captain Noel can rest assured, the house is in good hands. martinmoore.com ■