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# 16

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CREATE YOUR DREAM KITCHEN-DINER



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# KITCHEN-DINERS

(TO FEED YOUR FACE IN)

Cooking and eating go hand-in-hand, so it makes sense to double down and combine kitchen and dining room in one. Feast your eyes on our design and planning ideas – you'll never want to eat out again!

Getting food into your face faster is just one of the many benefits of moving your dining table into the kitchen. Additional pluses include extra time spent with family, less distance to walk when laying the table and kissing goodbye to lonely chef syndrome. We're not saying dining rooms are dead, but in a contest between a large, sociable kitchen-diner or small kitchen and separate dining room, the kitchen-diner wins hands down, with bells on.

But what about the downsides? There are precious few and they can usually be remedied (with the right budget, that is). Lack of space is often the biggest obstacle. Ramming a table large enough for your whole family into a small kitchen can be more hindrance than help. The most successful kitchen-diners are either big enough in the first place or made bigger by extending into the dining room or garden. You could also knock through into your hallway and have an open staircase in your kitchen-diner. Even if it only adds 80-100cm onto your kitchen's width, it can make a big difference.

If there's no way to shoehorn in a table, a reasonably sized breakfast bar is the next best thing. One on an island

unit or peninsula is preferable in terms of decent views, but you can also add stools to the end of a long run of regular units if you don't mind facing the wall while you eat. Focus on comfort levels with stools if you're using them at dinner, which is usually longer than breakfast or lunch. Back and foot rests mimic the comfort of a dining chair.

Dreaming of a sociable kitchen-diner that's a magnet to all family members? Then it's well worth making the room even more multifunctional. Add a squishy sofa if you can, with a TV for toddlers or teens, and sockets on the island for charging laptops and peripherals. Bar stools will encourage chats while you're cooking, while an extra prep sink will make it easier for people to pitch in. Include a quieter nook for studying, working from home or just getting lost in a good book. And don't forget the music for impromptu kitchen discos (always the best), and easy access to snacks and drinks. Above all, throw the fish forks and starched napkins out of the window (not literally); dining in the kitchen is low-maintenance, low-stress and full of laid-back conversation.

## GASTRO STYLE

Channel the full Michelin star dining experience with high-class cutlery, tableware and accessories



Hammered metal serving plate, £19, Kinfolk Décor



Jurupa dining chair in natural cane and black, £149, Made



Wine decanter with glass cut stopper, £7.99, Homesense



Talauma silver grey candle holder, £125, Oka



Tulip marble effect four-seater table, £160, Argos



Soho Seagrass kitchen, from £4,647, Magnet



Buying a new dining table often starts with a battle between the available space and number of diners. You'll rarely regret a table that's bigger than you need, as long as it fits the space, but a small table can quickly prove claustrophobic and annoying. A round table can be more interesting visually, especially with a rectangular island unit, and more sociable as every diner can make eye contact when chatting. An extendable table is brilliant if you only need extra seats once or twice a year.



Choosing the best layout for a kitchen-diner generally boils down to smooth traffic flow. The dream is a table positioned where it won't impede access to the kitchen or any internal or external doors. People often put the dining table in front of glass doors to the garden, which is great for dining views but not so great when hoards of children are running in and out. A barrier, such as an island or peninsula, between the dining and cooking areas can be helpful to keep family and friends away from the eye of the storm when cooking is in full throttle.



Slavishly matching the colours and finishes throughout can quickly look contrived – like you've ordered everything from the same page in the Next catalogue! Interior designers recommend establishing separate but complementary schemes for the kitchen and dining areas, with one, dominant shade uniting the two. Known as the 'red thread', this colour can be applied via art, accessories or lighting, allowing you to refresh when you want a change.



Alno Starline kitchen in Cashmere and Pearl Light Grey, from £30,000, Halcyon Interiors

Nordviken bar stool with backrest, £50, Ikea



*Don't forget*  
TO PULL UP A STOOL



RENO  
INSTAGRAMMER

LIZ BYRNE

'Our decision to create a kitchen-diner was initiated by the continuous mess that came with cooking in a galley kitchen and being separated from the rest of the family. I loved the idea of cooking while my husband watched TV or my little girl sat by the dining table or island to eat or do homework. The extension took two years and several redesigns to plan, particular the kitchen layout. An island with bar stools topped our wish list. We wanted to eat breakfast together before rushing out for the day. We rarely eat anywhere else now and the dining table is only used for guests. I'd recommend placing the bar stools opposite each other; it's easier to chat. The kitchen-diner comes into its own when we're entertaining. I love that I don't have to leave everyone to check on progress. The downside is everyone can see you panicking if a complex meal is not going smoothly! Luckily my friends and family know what to expect, so we just keep the drinks flowing...'  
Insta: @ourplaceinsale

