

KITCHEN & BATHROOM LIVING

**REAL-LIFE
INTERIORS**
Inside stylish
homes

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SCIENCE**
The latest
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**INNER
SANCTUM**
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TO ENLIVEN YOUR SPACE**

DESIGN • APPLIANCES • SURFACES • FLOORING

Amy Kerr had grand plans for the renovation of this London kitchen, but little did she imagine it would change her style of living quite so much. 'Rob kept saying it would alter the way we lived as a family,' she laughs. 'I never believed him, but he was right of course.' The 'Rob' she is referring to is Rob Gelling of Kitchen Architecture, who Amy had met through friends. His Oxfordshire-based company offers the contemporary Bulthaup kitchen collection and has recently opened a showroom in Putney.

Amy's house is Edwardian with a classic L-shaped kitchen and a jigsaw of small, compartmentalised rooms. Rob was able to see the house prior to any structural changes and was therefore able to suggest the architect. 'Knowing what's possible structurally is crucial to my job,' he explains. 'Many of our clients live in period properties but want a living space that facilitates a modern lifestyle – an open, family living space. Using Kitchen Architecture to design your kitchen is not just simply putting furniture in a house – we're high-end so it's important that we add value, and one of the ways we can do that is being involved right from the start.'

Rob played around with the layout, and the final kitchen plans included removing the 'L'-shape to make the kitchen square (freeing up a huge amount of space). Also as part of the renovation programme was a basement excavation creating a utility area, playroom and home cinema.

The result is impressive. There is now what Rob calls 'good communication' throughout the property. From the front door you can see right into the garden, and when Amy is cooking or preparing food, she can interact with anyone sitting at the island and is not isolated from family life.

Plus, if anyone makes a cup of tea or needs to lay the table, they can easily access the necessary drawers



FIT FOR PURPOSE

Ergonomically designed, this sleek modern kitchen is perfect for family life in the city



CLOCKWISE FROM MAIN IMAGE The cherry wood and Formica table is bespoke. The island unit contains a hot-water tap, freezer and hob. Amy chose Siemens appliances. Large windows allow in plenty of natural light

'AN ISLAND WITH SINK AND HOB INCLUDED IS THE PUREST FORM OF WORK BENCH'



bench,' explains Rob. 'There isn't always the space, but if you can, it does work very well.'

One of the important aspects of a Kitchen Architecture-designed room is how it works ergonomically. Amy's favourite feature is the dishwasher, which has been positioned at a convenient hip-height so using it doesn't require bending. Crockery drawers are positioned on either side. 'Rob used to come round and mimic the movement I would use to unload it,' she says. 'It seemed ridiculous at the time, but now I smile every day when I do it.'

Amy chose white gloss furniture with a stainless steel worktop on the island, and a jutting apple-wood bar. An area beside the fridge uses the same material as wall panelling with a series of 'floating' shelves. With overhead lighting and heating hidden beneath the industrial-looking polished concrete floor

(obviating the need for radiators), the overall effect is sober. 'While I love a clean, contemporary look, I didn't want it to look too clinical or slick,' says Amy, 'so we decided to add funky furniture. I described to Rob what I wanted and he found just the right person to design it. It adds vibrancy, which suits my personality.'

'It's so important that Amy loves her kitchen,' says Rob. 'We're asking clients to make a significant investment in us, so it's vital they are secure in the knowledge that what we are doing we will add value to their property. In five years' time, I'd like to think that Amy is still singing our praises – 90% of our business comes from personal recommendations and I'm very proud of that.' Kitchen Architecture (www.kitchenarchitecture.co.uk) has showrooms in Oxford (01865-426990) and Putney, SW15 (020-8785 1960)

without impeding the cook. Tea-making paraphernalia and the toaster, as well as a series of electric power points are all hidden in a deep shelf behind a matt steel roller – the interior lights up as you raise the shutter. Beside the hob are pan drawers, knife storage and a place for herbs and spices – all the things you need on hand to prepare and cook a meal.

'An island with sink and hob included is the purest form of work

