



Feature by **Amelia Thorpe** Photography by **Darren Chung**

natural attraction

Earthy tones, contemporary design and iconic furniture form the hub of this spacious Hertfordshire home belonging to the sociable Ball family.

Accents of kiwi-green lift the scheme's richly coloured materials while treasured children's photos add personality and unique character.



above Matching furniture, a circular light and a hi-tech sound system ensure the dining area is a chic spot for entertaining and everyday meals.

kitchen profile

A mix of Rational's Arte White high gloss lacquer and Cult walnut veneer units creates an exciting contrast in this streamlined kitchen by Kitchen Co-ordination. Finished with a seamless black glass splashback, chunky brushed steel handles and Blizzard CaesarStone worktops, the result is chic, unique, contemporary and inviting.

Kitchen Co-ordination, 81 Penshurst Gardens, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 9TT.
Tel: 020 8958 6262. www.kitchencoordination.co.uk
Expect to pay from £8000.

Helen Ball was fed up with house-hunting so, when she peered in through the windows of a new-build (and not yet completed) house in Hertfordshire and liked what she saw, there was no hanging about. Before she had even set foot across the threshold, she rang the developer in order to snap it up straightaway.

Seven years later, it was time for Helen to put her speedy decision-making skills to use again as a new kitchen was in the offing. "Its layout was so un-workable that I used to get really irritated every time I cooked," she explains. An awkward peninsula arrangement jutted into the room, plus worksurfaces and storage capacity were both limited. "I told Chris it's a new kitchen or we're moving," laughs Helen as she recalls the ultimatum she gave her husband. And, since neither Chris nor Helen could face the idea of house-hunting again, a new kitchen it was to be.

But who to call? As usual, Helen didn't hang about. She telephoned her friend, Clare, whose kitchen she admired and asked for the number of her designer, Vivienne Warman at Kitchen Co-ordination. Just one more conversation later, this time with Vivienne, and the work began.

After browsing through magazines, Helen had developed a few clear ideas for the new kitchen; a combination of white and wood, an island that provided plenty of work space and a breakfast bar. But there was something troubling her. "I just couldn't see how we could ever incorporate an American-style fridge freezer," she remembers. "It was fantastic when Vivienne walked into the room, immediately pointed out where it could go and how the whole layout could work," she adds.

Vivienne happily took on board Helen's wish list, creating a sleek contemporary design with high gloss lacquer and walnut veneer cabinets, plinths and frames. "Vivienne interpreted what I wanted and made it even better," enthuses Helen. Touches of black add drama and definition while splashes of kiwi-green ensure the room is lively. "Dark colours can look heavy, but the reflective surfaces keep it feeling light," adds Vivienne.



right Injecting a touch of classic designer excellence to the modern setting, an iconic Eames chair is good-looking and comfortable.



"Our son says he's going to cook for us...I can't think of anything nicer."

above Windows offer views of the garden with its pergola and patio accessed via double doors.

right Helen can now enjoy her new kitchen with a glass of wine while choosing her next party menu.

left A CaesarStone worktop was chosen for its durability, fresh shade and shaping possibilities.





opposite page Symmetry was key at the heart of the room; three stools, a trio of pendants and a perfectly proportioned island all offer harmony.

above That must-have fridge freezer has been incorporated into a single cabinet with storage above for cookbooks and special crockery.

above Soft-close buffers prevent the deep drawers for pots and pans from slamming shut while chunky steel handles suit the clean-lined units beautifully.

useful information

Kitchen **cabinetry**, prices on request, at Rational. Tel: 01543 459459. www.rational.de

Appliances
HB24D561GB **steam oven**, £679; similar **single oven**, HB77560B, £965; HW290560B **warming drawer**, £409; similar **dishwasher**, SE65T390GB, around £610, at Siemens. Tel: 0870 840 3300. www.siemensappliances.co.uk

SAD224GB **fridge freezer**, £1304, at Admiral. Tel: 01737 231000. www.admiral-appliances.co.uk

Similar induction **hob**, DTI309X, £804, at De Dietrich. Tel: 0870 750 3503. www.dediethrich.co.uk

Igloo **extractor hood**, around £446, at Elica. Tel: 01252 351111. www.elica.co.uk

Fixtures & furnishings
Olympus **tap**, £135; ARX 160D **sink**, around £280, at Franke. Tel: 0161 436 6280. www.franke.co.uk

Amberes Marron porcelain **floor tiles**, £34 per sq. m., at Tiles & Baths Direct. Tel: 020 8202 2223. www.tilesandbathsdirect.co.uk

Glass **splashbacks**, priced to order, at Crawford Glass. Tel: 020 8520 4494. No website available.

CaesarStone **worktops**, £445 per m., at Prima. Tel: 020 8201 5857. www.primagranite.co.uk

Quad bar **stools**, around £89 each, at Danetti. Tel: 0870 760 5701. www.danetti.com

Charles Eames **lounge chair** and **ottoman**, around £700 per set; Eames **dining table**, £440, at Ravaya. Tel: 01375 677732. www.ravaya.co.uk

Black pendant **lamps**, around £61 each; Circular **pendant lamp**, around £99, at MIL Lighting. Tel: 01727 845545. No website available.

Tall back walnut **dining chairs**, £69 each, at Dwell. Tel: 0870 241 8653. www.dwell.co.uk

Nick Munro Vanish **mirror**, around £200; Kiwi **blinds**, priced to order, at John Lewis. Tel: 0845 604 9049. www.johnlewis.com

Sound system, price on request, at Bang & Olufsen. Tel: 020 7376 5222. www.bang-olufsen.com

The central focus and social hub of the room is the island – a practical workstation for preparation of food. A sweep of cabinets along one wall holds built-in appliances and storage while a tall housing encases the must-have American fridge freezer. An adjacent door leads through to the utility room with matching furniture and splashbacks. "Added extras, such as the internal lighting in the wall cabinets with part-glazed panels, or the thickness of the worktops, make all the difference to a room looking unique and special," explains Vivienne.

So what do the Ball family think of it all? Chris, an operations director, and daughter, Lydia (five), totally enjoy the new room (complete with its state-of-the-art Bang & Olufsen sound system). But it's probably trainee chef son, 18-year-old Tom, who makes the most of it. "He says it's a great place to experiment with some of his new recipes," says Helen. "So we're taking advantage of his skills and our new kitchen, and he's going to cook a dinner for us and some of our friends. I can't think of anything nicer," she concludes with a smile. ■