



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

distant delights

A north London home has been given a contemporary transformation inspired by the cool tones of Canada's breathtaking mountains.

Leah Watson and John Garrad-Cole don't do bland and boring. Leah is someone who has travelled halfway across the globe from her native Canada to marry English banker John and set up home in north London, so a little bit of adventure is what she thrives on. "Both John and I have issues with places looking dull. We wanted something with personality for our home," she smiles.

So, having renovated the once 'very studenty' Victorian apartment from top to bottom, the couple rejected the usual beige and brown hues for their kitchen. Instead, they contacted Vivienne Warman of Kitchen Co-ordination, known for the clever and subtle blending of colours in her designs, to create a contemporary room featuring high gloss furniture in Leah's favourite shade of grey. "I love reading decorating magazines," says Leah, of her time when she has the chance to relax after busy days as Deputy Head at a London school. "I'd seen a similar titanium colour whilst browsing and knew

that it would suit this room. It has lots of natural light and tall ceilings, especially now that we have removed the two internal walls which divided up the space."

Vivienne suggested topping the units with a smooth engineered stone worktop. "It has an icy-white background with specks of grey and cappuccino which is the perfect complement," she says. Drama and personality are added with contrasting black glass splashbacks, chosen by John. Explains Leah, "It acts like a mirror, so adds to the light feeling of the room, rather than detracting from it."

above Don't forget the finishing touches – simple white ceramic tableware will add subtle style without overpowering the surrounding scheme.

right Complete with funky stools and a handy breakfast bar, the peninsula is an ideal perch for friends while Leah whips up tasty treats.

kitchen profile
Titanium lacquer Rational Sigma units have a streamlined design, creating a sleekly modern and fresh look in this room by Kitchen Co-ordination. Black glass splashbacks and rich oak flooring add drama, while stone worktops and steel appliances complement the striking colour palette.

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





left Clever corner utilisation ensures ample storage and cooking space to make life easy and help maintain a sleek, clutter-free area.

above The Quarella Blanco Taormina worktop's flecks of grey, cappuccino and black are echoed by surrounding practical elements.

below The big fridge freezer is adjacent to a larger cupboard to provide perfect food environments, whether fresh, frozen or dry goods.

right Plentiful natural light floods in through two windows and magnifies the airy feel given by high ceilings and reflective surfaces.

The choice of oak floor is stirred by Leah's Canadian upbringing. "Wood is everywhere at home. We don't go for carpets and we specified a variety with grey undertones, which would be in keeping with the units and décor throughout the apartment," she explains.

With the colour palette confirmed, it was time to settle on the layout. "We agonised about whether to have a dining table in here, because I was worried that if there was nowhere to sit when friends come over, I'd be cooking all by myself," says Leah. They finally agreed to install a large table upstairs in the living area where there is more room, and to opt instead for a breakfast bar/peninsula, rather than an island, in the kitchen. "It works really well. A table or an island would have taken up too much space. This way,

we can have breakfasts together at weekends, or drinks before dinner with friends in the evening," explains Leah.

Maximum use of space, including reduced depth cupboards, a corner carousel and wide drawers, ensures that there's plenty of storage. A wireless digital music system adds to the relaxing feel, as does different levels of optional lighting to alter the mood.

With the kitchen now complete, is it time to sit back and enjoy its cool tones and inviting atmosphere? "Well, in a while," says Leah. "We are planning a winter wedding at a ski resort in the Canadian mountains. So, at the moment, there's a lot to organise. In fact – come to think of it – they probably inspired our choice of these snowy, icy colours," she smiles. ■





above Integrated handles enhance the clean lines and crisp design while dark oak flooring brings a sense of warmth and richness throughout.

below Low voltage plinth lights create a dramatic yet soothing effect for John and Leah to enjoy when spending time relaxing together.



Useful Information



Sigma **cabinetry**, price on application, at Rational. **Tel: 01543 459459.** www.rational.de

Building **project management**, price on application, by Rachel Walton Bream. **Tel: 07803 050912. No website available.**

Appliances
H4250 **oven**, from around £549;
M8161ss **combi microwave**, from
around £525, at Miele. **Tel: 01235 554455.**
www.miele.co.uk

RCG20ss **fridge freezer**, around £1099;
ZDW240 **wine cooler**, around £709,
at GE Appliances. **Tel: 0800 731 8657.**
www.geappliances.com

SHV55MO3 integrated **dishwasher**,
around £519; WFLI2440 **washing machine**,
around £499; WTE6920 **tumble dryer**,
around £799, at Bosch. **Tel: 0870 727 0446.**
www.boschappliances.co.uk

Igloo **extractor hood**, from around £633,
at Elica. **Tel: 01252 351111.** www.elica.co.uk

Fixtures and furnishings
Curzon **tap**, £204; Zerox **sink**, £350, at Blanco.
Tel: 020 8452 3399. www.blanco.co.uk

Black glass **splashbacks**, £150 per sq. m.,
at Glass Express. **Tel: 01233 642220.**
www.glassexpress.co.uk

Quarella Blanco Taormina **worktop**, £350 per
sq. m., at Rossi Stoneworks. **Tel: 020 7609 7212.**
www.rossi-granite.co.uk

European oak **floor**, £55 per sq. m., at WoodChic.
Tel: 020 8991 6764. www.woodchic.co.uk

Lyra **bar stools**, from £197 each, at Espacio.
Tel: 020 7376 5088. www.espacio.co.uk

Tite suspension **lamps**, from £188 each, at SCP.
Tel: 020 7739 1869. www.scp.co.uk

Samsung 23" **television**, £549, at John Lewis.
Tel: 0845 604 9049. www.johnlewis.com

Wireless **digital music system**, prices on
application, at Sonos. **Tel: 0808 234 6596.**
www.sonos.com