



Grand central

This kitchen is all about contrast – from modern design in a period home to light and dark colour tones

PHOTOS *Malcolm Menzies* | WORDS *Victoria Hrastie* | STYLING *Portia Lubbock*



LIGHT UP

Craig's mother restored the waterfall chandelier originally in the house, with warm bulbs casting a soft glow over the period details



‘The way the concrete effect downstands meet the flooring and the interplay of the two textures is really pleasing’

GOOD CONNECTIONS

By thinking outside the box and opening the kitchen up to the natural light in the adjoining rooms, the couple have ensured its position in the middle of the house works to its advantage



Not many houses can boast a grand ballroom with a spiral staircase reaching 12 metres up to a gallery landing, so it's easy to see why Craig and his wife went from having no plans to move to putting an offer in the day after viewing their

Buckinghamshire home. Dating back to the 1830s, the house is actually part of a much larger abode which has been divided into several feature-filled properties.

With two children in tow, the couple loved the layout, space and light on offer, though Craig admits the kitchen did take a little more vision. ‘Positioned in the middle of the house, it originally had a drafty chimney breast, no natural light and a false ceiling,’ he recalls. ‘By stripping it back to the bare bricks we discovered the high ceiling, as well as an arch motif on the alcove which runs throughout the house.’

After re-plumbing, wiring and plastering, as well as laying down under-floor heating and insulation, the couple were able to bring the kitchen into the 21st century while shining a fresh light on all the original detail they loved so much. A grand waterfall chandelier already in the property was restored by Craig’s mum who re-strung it bead by bead. ‘There wasn’t a lot of light in the kitchen but the chandelier creates a fantastic pattern on the ceiling,’

enthusies Craig. ‘Spotlights flood the space with light for prepping food while pendants and under-cabinet lights create mood lighting.’ Mirrored tiles in both alcoves continue the light show, creating a window effect at the same time.

When it came to the design itself, the couple decided on the same cabinetry as the kitchen in their last home, designed by Vivienne Warman at Kitchen Co-Ordination. ‘Here, the original kitchen had a cottage feel with an AGA in the chimney breast, but we wanted a sleek, modern design to counteract and contrast with the traditional feel of the house,’ explains Craig. This time choosing a bold blue hue, units are designed in perfect proportion to the high ceilings creating further contrast to all the light, with a concrete-effect worktop on the island bringing industrial texture to the scene. ‘We had concrete in our last kitchen and wanted the same look with less upkeep,’ he adds. ‘We love the island, the children will sit around while one of us cooks and the other is buzzing around.’

By opening up this room to its original beauty and incorporating layers of fresh light throughout, its position in the house has become a positive aspect, with the space flowing just as the couple originally envisioned. ‘If the kitchen is at the centre of our home, the island is central to that, right here at the heart of everything,’ finishes Craig. ‘It’s a fantastic space and I love it, it makes me smile every time I walk in here.’ **EKBB**



ON REFLECTION

Original alcoves are worked into the kitchen design, with mirrored tiles creating a window effect behind the sink and bouncing natural light from the rooms connected to the kitchen



Q&A

VIVIENNE WARMAN

DESIGNER AT KITCHEN CO-ORDINATION

What was the brief? The couple had worked with Kitchen Co-Ordination before and had the Cambia cabinetry in their last kitchen. They loved the lines, so chose the same style again, this time in a much bolder colour, bringing a more modern edge. They also had a concrete worktop but were keen on a more practical material so we decided on Caesarstone surfaces in Snow on the main run with a Rugged Concrete effect creating a statement on the island. It was really important for the kitchen to flow into the rooms surrounding and the light walls, period details and warm oak floors all help with this.

Can you talk us through the layout? We knew we wanted an island with tall units along one side and it made sense to position the fridge freezer with a broom cupboard and Butler's pantry either side.

The pantry has stainless steel baskets on the doors and a combination of shelving and drawer storage for all the food storage. On the opposite side we've got the ovens with the old chimney breast alcove creating the perfect place for the sink. The dishwasher, pan drawers and extra storage are all worked into the island, with the hob facing the bar stools for sociable cooking.

Were there any hurdles to overcome? The kitchen is in the middle of the house and the ceilings are four metres in height so the main challenge was extraction because we couldn't put an overhead extractor in. The Bora Basic hob offered the perfect solution, it's an extraordinary design where all the extraction is fitted under the floorboards and it's amazing when you see how well it works.

RIGHT DIRECTION

By positioning the hob on the island, with its own extraction neatly worked in, the couple were able to keep the space clear and the focus on family time



KITCHEN PROFILE

This bold, bespoke kitchen design features Rational's Cambia cabinetry in blue soft laquer with integrated handles. A combination of Caesarstone's Snow and Rugged Concrete surfaces create practical yet tactile countertops, setting the island apart from the rest of the design.

KITCHEN CO-ORDINATION
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Kitchen prices start from £15,000

Essential kitchens

IT'S PERSONAL

The couple fell in love with the grand ballroom's period features, to which they brought their own combination of modern design and natural materials to the room



STRONG STYLE

The solid steel Indian strong cabinet was picked up at an antique shop. Though it took four men to lift, it is a worthy statement piece for the hallway

STOCKISTS

APPLIANCES HB676GBS6B iQ700 oven, £949; CM656GBS6B iQ700 Compact oven with microwave, £1,379; similar SN678D06TG iQ700 dishwasher, £1,119, all Siemens. Basic hob, from £2,256, BORA. Similar Gaggia Classic 2019 SB SS 240V coffee machine, £425, Gaggia Direct. Dome kettle, £85, Dualit. RFG23UERS1/XEU fridge freezer with twin cooling plus, £1,529, Samsung.

FIXTURES AND FURNISHINGS

Rational Cambia cabinetry in blue soft lacquer with integrated handles, Caesarstone worktops in Snow and Rugged Concrete, all from £15,000, Kitchen Coordination. Olympus pull-out nozzle swivel spout tap, £371, Franke. Z-Style 340/180-IFU sink, £475, Blanco. Blonde rattan bar stools, £195 each, Rockett St George. Deco glass pewter wall tiles, £175 per sq. m, Fired Earth. Broadleaf Nuances Rich Solid Oak

Chevron flooring, £80 per sq. m, Broadleaf Timber. Similar Brooklyn Glass Funnel pendants, £69 each, Industville. Similar French Early 20th Century Louis XVI style gilt-bronze and cut-glass chandelier, £5,662, 1stdibs. Louis Ghost dining chairs in black, £206 each; Victoria Ghost chairs in Crystal, Smoky Grey, Transparent Orange and Transparent Green, £260 each, all Philippe Starck for Kartell. Bespoke reclaimed Indonesian Teak dining table, £POA, Important Rooms. Blush porcelain cup and saucer, £16 each, Ella James. Organic cotton napkin in Pale Rose, £40 for a set of four, Such & Such. Wooden serving boards, from £18, Truly. Ashley & Co candle, £44; WashUp handwash, £24; hand and body lotion, £28, Selfridges & Co. Amelie pink plates, £14 each; Pearl dinner plates, £13 each; Addison serving bowl, £44; Friso White jug, £28; all Layered Lounge. For stockists see page 168