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Kitchens and Bathrooms



THE RIGHT RECIPE

COMBINING MODERN APPLIANCES WITH CLASSIC DESIGN, THIS OXFORDSHIRE KITCHEN HAS ACHIEVED A SENSE OF BALANCE AND CALMNESS THAT SITS WELL WITHIN THE WHOLE OF THE RENOVATED HOUSE

TEXT | LOUISA PARKER BOWLES | PHOTOGRAPHS | DARREN CHUNG

For anyone who has taken on the complete rebuild of a house, this may sound familiar: the kitchen, the heart of the home, is being masterminded by a specialist kitchen designer, in isolation from the rest of the house. You want the design to look beautiful and function seamlessly. You are mindful that it must be in keeping with the rest of the house. It should ideally reflect the charm of the original property, but also needs to adhere to modern standards of living. It is a considerable feat that Alex Hughes, a designer at kitchen company Martin Moore, has managed here with great finesse.

The recipe for successful kitchen design may have evolved over time, but key ingredients remain the same. 'Over the past decade, technology has moved kitchen functionality and design forward, but essentially what a kitchen really needs is good storage, good work surface areas and appliances that suit the client,' explains Alex. 'I liked the fact that the owners took into account how a Victorian or Georgian house would have been built,' he says. Traditional design elements sit comfortably alongside contemporary appliances, such as integrated fridge freezers by Gaggenau, a boiling water tap by Quooker and a steam oven from Miele. 'A kitchen is a big investment and needs to stand the test of time,' Alex adds.

Part of the 'English Kitchen' collection by Martin Moore, the design combines traditional joinery with clean, contemporary lines. It includes a large island and cook's table, a dining area and a seating area. The bucolic views beyond are framed by floor-to-ceiling windows. 'The design route I usually follow is: design the perfect ergonomic kitchen, add balance and proportion, followed by colour and texture,' explains Alex. The client and her interior designer, Steph Hill, chose the fabrics for the upholstery and blinds, as well as the paint colours for the cabinetry to ensure continuity throughout the house.

The kitchen is peppered with clever design solutions. A dual-control electric Aga was paired with a steam oven for a variety of cooking options. The capacity of the fridge, freezer and larder were all calculated based on how often the client shopped and how she likes to cook - plenty of room for fresh ingredients was a must. Practical elements blend in with the cabinets. A fridge drawer faces the main sink and there are vertical dividers for chopping boards, big enough to store Aga trays, under the prep sink.

By building up a detailed profile of the family, Alex could design a beautiful kitchen that supports their routine and complements the rest of the house in a very pleasing way martinmoore.com | stephhilldesigns.com

TOP A prep sink in the island serves the cooking zone; the paint colours for the butler's cupboard and cook's table, from Paint & Paper Library, were chosen to chime with the rest of the house. Beyond the dining area are full-length windows that frame the bucolic view. BOTTOM FROM LEFT Plenty of storage has been included in the separate walk-in pantry. Traditional joinery is combined with clean, contemporary lines

