

Kbbreview Industry Awards 2007

CATEGORY: Designer Award for Kitchens - project cost over £25k

FINALIST: John Coulter

Client background

After years of living in a close knit suburban housing development Roy and Emma decided it was time to move to the country and after several months of stressful house hunting they found their perfect home which was thankfully still under construction. This allowed us to work with the builder and redesign the rear internal layout of the house so that the kitchen, dining room and living area would be completely open plan. We added large full height windows to the rear elevation and also added three skylights to the raised ceiling area so that the room would attract as much natural light as possible. In the original layout there was a utility room and a small sunroom situated where the kitchen is now located, the original kitchen layout was at the side of the house and formed part of the proposed living area.

Client's brief

Roy and Emma's previous house had a traditional design with an Aga; While Emma was still of a traditional mindset, Roy seemed a little more adventurous so after spending a considerable amount of time at our initial consultation I persuaded them both to start thinking along the lines of a more contemporary kitchen design.

- My client had requested a large island incorporating a sink and Breakfast bar.
- Emma also wanted an American fridge freezer with an ice maker.
- Now that they were living in the country they needed as much storage in the kitchen as possible due to less frequent trips to the supermarket.
- With this particular area of the house now having a double height ceiling and three sky lights it was not possible to utilize an overhead extraction system.
- Due to his love of coffee, Roy insisted on a built-in coffee maker.
- Roy had been doing some research on steam ovens, but needed some guidance on the different models available.
- Emma was concerned about her cooking facilities, after years of cooking with an Aga.
- They also requested that I design the kitchen so that Emma can keep an eye on the kids and socialize while working in the kitchen.
- Emma also informed me that she suffered with back problems and was unable to bend over or lift things from below waist level.
- They had approximately £30,000 of a budget allocated for the kitchen.

Final design

After being able to redesign the room to suit the kitchen layout I had in mind, it was then time to introduce the new PlusModo range from Poggenpohl, at that time we did not have a PlusModo kitchen on display however after showing Roy and Emma some shots of it from a catalogue, and realising my personal passion for this product they were immediately convinced that this was the kitchen for them.

I suggested the use of Poggenpohl's PlusModo range to make a powerful design statement, as it features super chunky worktops, open elements and strong horizontal lines. It also allowed me to mix contrasting colours and finishes which greatly enhanced the end result.

I decided that the kitchen layout would work better with two islands rather than one large island, I had two reasons for this line of thinking firstly, as this room has so many full height windows, there was not enough wall space for perimeter base units so one island is for preparation and washing up and the other is for cooking and has a large breakfast bar for casual dining. Secondly, I had to locate the ovens on one side of the room and the fridge/freezer on the other side, which makes it more practical to cross the room between two islands rather than having to walk around one big island.

After several attempts to incorporate a standard American fridge/freezer failed, I persuaded them to stretch their budget and recommended Sub-Zero's latest I736TCI fridge/Freezer. This 915mm wide 610mm deep fully integrated model was a perfect compliment to this sleek ultra modern kitchen.

Rather than using conventional wall units and in order to suit Emma's needs to maximize storage I used PlusModo's extra wide larder units with special sliding doors and pull-out internal drawers on either side of the fridge/freezer.

With the hob located on the island and no possibility of overhead extraction, I opted for Gaggenau's pop-up downdraft system, which was ideally positioned between the Gaggenau gas and electric hobs. Roy and Emma absolutely loved this idea.

It was also necessary to incorporate pop-up electrical sockets on both islands as wall sockets was not an option.

It was obvious from the onset that my clients had an eye for quality and they appreciated my recommendation to use Gaggenau appliances, so I incorporated a Gaggenau eye level side hinged single oven, coffee maker and a combi steam oven along with two warming drawers, which were cleverly housed in mid-height cabinetry with open illuminated glass shelving above and between the two tall banks of windows.

Another important element I recommended on the island with the sink were dishwasher drawers, I positioned a raised level single Fisher & Paykel dish drawer on either side of the sink to facilitate Emma's back problems, this way she can easily load dirty dishes from the work surface into the dish drawer and unload the clean dishes straight into the mid-height pull out unit behind without ever having to bend down.

I wanted this kitchen to have an important social element, so that the entire family could be together at all times and be a place where Emma would not feel isolated doing her daily chores. I feel that as a result of my efforts what we have achieved is not only a very sleek modern practical Kitchen but a wonderful family room.

Final costs

The final cost of the project, including installation, was £35,000.

