

Kbbreview Industry Awards 2007

CATEGORY: Young Designer for Kitchens - age 25 and under

FINALIST: Chris Etheridge

What was the full brief from the client?

The client is a good friend of mine as he is a property developer and we have worked on many projects for him before, so it was only natural for him to approach me to design his own kitchen.

The brief he gave me was quite flexible and he was eager for me to put my own ideas into the kitchen. The house he had just bought was a detached Victorian villa, which had very dated 1970's units and décor, so the one thing he insisted on was something very modern.

At the same time he also wanted something very dramatic and different as he was tired of the very safe designs which he used day in and day out in the kitchens for his developments.

What was the overall budget including installation, and how did you manage it?

Keith did not give me a strict budget for the kitchen, he is quite an easy going guy and if he likes something he will spend the money on it. He knew I would give him a good honest price and whatever the total cost would be, it would be worth it. I knew I couldn't go to over the top so I set myself a rough budget of somewhere between 15-20k. There was quite a bit of building work to be done, which Keith was going to organize so all we had to do was install the kitchen into the finished hollow shell, which meant not much could go wrong our side. When designing the kitchen I had to be mindful to stick somewhere near my projected budget, but being as the kitchen was relatively small it was quite easy to do this and I don't feel I had to cut corners on quality to achieve the budget. In the end the complete cost was 18k so Keith was happy with that.

Describe the final design and, in detail, the design process

After Keith told me he wanted me to design his kitchen, we decided to get together to discuss ideas and come up with some suggestions for the design. Keith was very keen to have an open plan kitchen and dining room. This involved knocking down a wall partitioning the two, which opened the kitchen up allowing a lot more light in. One thing that became quite obvious straight away was that the kitchen was very narrow, completely ruling out the option of a breakfast bar/ island design which Keith would have liked. There were also a number of windows, one of which was very low, and this would become quite a challenge in the design thinking as Keith did not want to change it. Keith also wanted a tall bank of units for storage as well to house a double oven and combi microwave, which I knew would be hard to incorporate in to such a tight, narrow space. We decided to go with Siemens appliances as Keith wanted high quality equipment at a reasonable price. As Keith and his wife couldn't chose between a gas or electric hob, I suggested the Siemens domino hobs and they were delighted with this choice. Being as the kitchen was so light Keith wanted to go for a dark wood, and as he wanted something original, I suggested he go for a high gloss macassar repro laminate door, which at first he was a bit skeptical about, but he soon warmed to the idea once he had seen the CGI images of the kitchen. As a dramatic contrast I included high gloss white wall units and a high gloss white quartz worktop with 100mm thick end pilasters which framed the macassar wood beautifully. It was a natural choice to then go for an Elica Om white glass hood which complimented the wall units. After many different alternatives I

finally managed to fit a tall bank of units in which incorporated the oven, microwave, larder fridge and freezer and still had enough room to squeeze in a couple of handy pull and swivel larders, perfect for Keith's wife who wanted some clever storage devices included in the kitchen. I then suggested creating stud work around the tall units to make them fit in the kitchen nicely and then this allowed me to design a nice tidy seating area under the low window with some handy pull out draw units. By having a bank of tall units as well as two separate runs for the hob and sink area, I feel it has created a nice modular feel where each section has its own defined purpose i.e sink area for washing up, hob area for cooking, tall units for storage. This very semantic way of thinking is something I try to achieve on all my designs as I feel it gives each part of the kitchen a feeling of belonging and purpose.



