

## **Kbbreview Industry Awards 2007**

### **CATEGORY: Young Designer for Kitchens - age 25 and under**

#### **FINALIST: Rob Hodge**

##### **What was the full brief from the client?**

To create a social environment that would cater for the client's love of cooking, entertaining and interacting as a family. I was asked to design a space that would look completely unique, that would be the properties best feature and at the same time would be very functional.

The kitchen and dining room were to be knocked through as well as extended further into the garden, adding on an additional 40% to the size of the property. Two large pillars which were originally the external wall of the house either side of a window would remain so would need to be worked into the design effectively.

My client asked me to deem this room as a kitchen, dining room, study, living room and a bar that would seamlessly blend all these environments together in one space. I therefore had to think about desk and filing options, as well as cooking and social areas. Media was also a key consideration on this project. The kitchen had to act as a hub for entertainment throughout the home as well as a control centre for internet, cctv and security.

I was asked to include a large amount of fridge & freezer capacity, steam and microwave ovens to complement a professional range cooker. Two dishwashers were required to lend a hand after diner parties and effective food preparation areas for large catering. Further luxury appliances were also required including a large wine cooler, coffee machine and warming drawers along with a Hydro Zip tap.

The style for this project was most certainly contemporary however I was asked to retain a traditional feel that was apparent in the design and build of the property itself. The furniture had to reflect the highest quality to feel like both a kitchen and a relaxed living space.

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

I was handed a healthy budget for this project which ended up at £109,000 for the kitchen with a further £8,000 for a special bespoke dining table I designed as well. This gave me flexibility to include high end materials and appliances as well design some unique one off units and design features. The installation involved co-coordinating with the clients contractors during the build to ensure services were positioned correctly, ducting was installed and the room prepared for the kitchen. In the same vein we had to manage our own fitters with our stone glass and wooden worktop suppliers to create the end product.

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

As you will see, the key feature is the island. With the space I was dealing with I could proportion this on a large scale. This then enabled me to introduce a large radius which forms the outline of the island. The radius of the two curved fins is 3150mm, this gave me the opportunity to include 2x curved, 60mm thick walnut breakfast bars which break up the vast composite worktop. By recess-

ing the furniture beneath I achieved ample leg room whilst still retaining my radius. The furniture below the bars is in walnut to contrast against the hand painted island furniture. All of these aspects really define the bar areas with one backing on to the wine and drinks area, facing the cooking space with the other facing the 42" plasma screen housed in 28mm walnut panelling. My client described this as "his and hers" breakfast bars!

The Island makes up all of the functional worktop space, this meant I had to include the food preparation, cooking, serving & washing up areas within the design. Most of these elements are located on one side of the central pillars (also the entrance to the kitchen). The range cooker utilizes one pillar as a splash back and also effective ducting route. The splash back itself actually encases both pillars as well as the beam between them to give a stunning glass archway through the centre of the kitchen.

Having the range located here gave me a vast work surface area between the sink and hob for food preparation. Within the preparation zone you will find a pull out bin, cutlery drawers and pop up sockets as well as being located close by the sink and refrigeration this gives you everything you need to prepare a meal. Also included within this area is a bank of tall walnut furniture that includes internal drawer storage, warming drawers and compact appliances furthering the technology to assist in creating gourmet food on large scales if required!

From the cooking zone I wanted to achieve a fluid link to both the living/dining room and breakfast bar areas to retain the social element of the kitchen as well as effective serving areas. Flush worktop between the glass arch through to the living room side means food can be served without having to walk all the way round the island.

I then thought about how the study area could work. I positioned this in front of a low level window adjacent to the tall bank of kitchen furniture. This was an ideal desk height, giving you a view out into the garden whilst seamlessly integrating itself into the kitchen. The furniture here includes pen drawers, filing drawers and paper storage along with cable tidy solutions. My favourite part of the desk area is the corner dresser unit that I designed with a cork and white glass centre panels that you can write on with special pens.

The living room and dining side of the kitchen reflect the same island design and glass arch however incorporating touch latch doors, a glazed dresser and TV/ media hub area with walnut surround takes away the feeling of a kitchen and puts in place the feeling of a relaxed living space. A second sink and dishwasher is positioned on this side to offer further catering or food preparation facilities if required. 100mm thick walnut shelving offers the clients a chance to personalize the kitchen with their own accessories.

The space turned out exactly how I intended it, a stunning environment that blends walnut, maple, glass, composite and paint colours into an inspiring design that works as well as it looks!

