

BRILLIANT *by* DESIGN

Suzanne Page put her creative talents to good use when she and husband Mark extended their home to make a modern, open-plan living space

FEATURE LAURIE DAVIDSON • PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID STILL • STYLING BRONWYN DELL

CABINETRY

Bespoke dark-stained oak by M Kitchens was chosen for most of the units so that they wouldn't get lost in this capacious room. Suzanne designed the dining table to match the rest of the furniture and asked the company to make it for her



Kitchen FACT FILE



THE OWNERS

Suzanne Page, a design manager, and her husband Mark, a global business development manager

THE HOME A detached 1950s house in Surrey

THE PROJECT Large extension to house a new kitchen-diner and living space

PRICE GUIDE

£12,500

for a similar M Kitchens design, cabinetry only



EXTERIOR

With the doors folded back, inside and out become one. Dark rattan furniture provides a cohesive look with the oak cabinetry cementing the link between the spaces.



ISLAND

Unistone Bianco quartz worktops look striking against the dark units. Cupboards on either side mean cooking equipment and items for the dining area can be stowed close to where they're needed

FAVOURITE DESIGN ELEMENT *'The island unit is probably the part of the scheme I like best. It does a great job of dividing the kitchen from the dining zone, plus it houses the dishwasher, wine cooler, sink and hob. It's a really sociable area, too'*

Working as a design manager and having a good eye for aesthetics proved a huge advantage for Suzanne Page, when she and her husband Mark came to extend their detached Surrey home.

'Mark and I bought this house three years ago and it was a total project,' recalls Suzanne. 'The kitchen was one of the worst rooms – it was so small and dark, with very dated cabinetry. The only appliance was a 1950s cooker that was something of a safety hazard.'

Despite this, the couple fell in love with the house and worked their way through the rooms, transforming the interior from dark and dated to light and contemporary. 'We'd always known that we would eventually extend the back of the property and create a large open-plan kitchen and living space,'

says Suzanne. 'We wanted to be able to invite friends and family over and all be in one room. Plus, as our garden is south-facing, it made sense to make the most of the light.'

AFFORDABLE BESPOKE

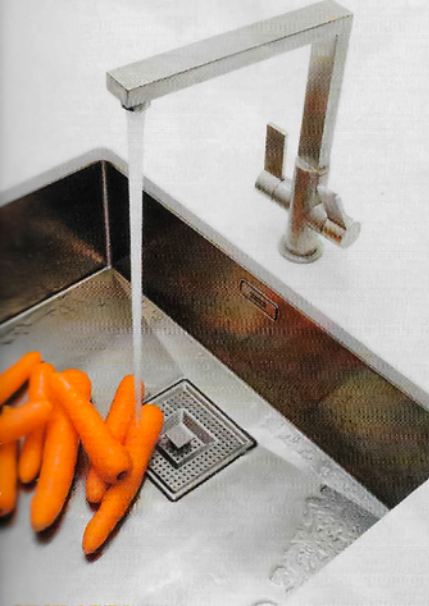
Suzanne drew up plans for the extension herself, using the existing kitchen as part of the new space, while an adjoining garage at the side of the house was to become a separate utility room. Then the couple began the search for a kitchen company and a friend recommended local firm M Kitchens.

'We were really impressed with the quality of its cabinetry,' recalls Suzanne. 'Although we didn't think we could afford a bespoke kitchen, we popped into the showroom and had a chat with designer Hugo Rincon. We knew instantly that this was the right route for us

to go down and were pleasantly surprised – it was more affordable than we thought.'

As they both like contemporary design, Suzanne and Mark knew they'd choose a modern scheme. After viewing various wood samples, they selected solid oak stained cabinetry, which would be topped with chunky, white quartz worktops. 'I didn't want an all-white kitchen, as I thought it might get a bit lost in such a large space,' says Suzanne. 'Instead, we settled on dark oak, which contrasts well against the white walls. Being a designer means I have quite strong ideas – thankfully Mark tends to go along with them.'

After taking on board Suzanne's plans for a proposed layout, Hugo came up with the finished design. 'Everything, including the positioning of the appliances, was spot-on,' says Suzanne. 'The main focus is a large island



SINK AREA

A Peak sink and Bern tap, both from Franke, fit well with the modern design of the kitchen



CUPBOARDS

A double larder unit features pull-out drawers and is topped with shelves, to house dried goods, spices and sauces. It sits next to the integrated fridge freezer, so that all foodstuffs are in the same area



STORAGE

Wide drawers are used to store crockery, with clever removable racks so plates can be taken directly to the table



APPLIANCES

On the back wall, a neat bank of Siemens appliances has been built in and features two single ovens, a combination microwave and Mark's essential item – a coffee machine

OUR FAVOURITE BUYS

The **WINE COOLER** frees up space in the fridge, and is situated in the island, close to the dining table, which means it's easily accessible when we're entertaining.

We splurged on the **ISLAND WORKTOP** – because it is such a big feature, we wanted it to look as good as possible.

The **VINTAGE CUPBOARD** was a junk-shop find. We sanded it down and painted it white and now we use it as a bar to store drinks. I love the mix of old and new.



'Before you start, **VISUALISE** the space and how you will **USE IT**. We knew we wanted it to be a **SOCIABLE** open-plan area, which is why we went for a **BIG ISLAND**'

FLOORING

Polished cream tiles look beautiful and reflect the natural light that filters in through the bi-fold doors and roof lanterns. However, they've proved rather difficult to keep looking spick-and-span

unit, which divides the kitchen from the dining area. Hugo's design meant everything would be easily accessible, so we wouldn't have to keep walking from one end of the island to the other while cooking.'

However, clever features were where M Kitchens really added value to the Pages' kitchen. 'Hugo suggested having a full-height corner unit with fully extending pull-out drawers,' says Suzanne. 'They're large enough to accommodate every pot and pan we own. We also have storage on both sides of the island, and even a cubbyhole in which to put trays. Little things like that make a huge difference and create a user-friendly space.'

When it came to appliances, the couple each had one must-have item. 'Mark wanted a coffee machine, and I insisted on a wine cooler,' says Suzanne. 'We opted for Siemens models

as they are good quality and include a range of different features, but at an affordable price.'

A DIY JOB

With the extension finished and the layout and cabinetry decided on, it was over to Mark, along with Suzanne's father, to fit the kitchen. 'We're lucky that my dad and Mark are competent DIYers,' says Suzanne, 'as it saved us quite a lot of money.' The process went smoothly, aside from two small hitches: the first being the late arrival of the bi-fold doors, which meant building works had to be put back by two weeks, and in turn the fitting of the kitchen. Then, when the quartz for the island was delivered, it was accidentally dropped and chipped. 'It was just one of those things,' says Suzanne. 'M Kitchens was fantastic and even put the damaged worktop

in place for us so we could use it while we waited for a replacement. A week later the company had fitted the new one.'

Now that their first child is on the way, Suzanne and Mark couldn't be happier with their stylish space. 'Mark and I find that we use this a lot more than our sitting room and we'll often throw open the doors if it's a sunny day,' she says. 'Plus, the open-plan design will be an advantage when the baby is old enough to crawl and we need to be able to keep an eye on her whereabouts while we're cooking.'

Friends and family have also been taking advantage of the new kitchen. 'Last year we had our first Christmas dinner here, with 17 guests,' concludes Suzanne. 'Plus we've had barbecues and large gatherings all through the summer. Ultimately, it has changed the way we live – and definitely for the better.'



DINING ZONE

The table has a central plinth so that 10 people can sit here without furniture legs getting in the way. It's paired with Calligaris Jam chairs from Mac & Mac

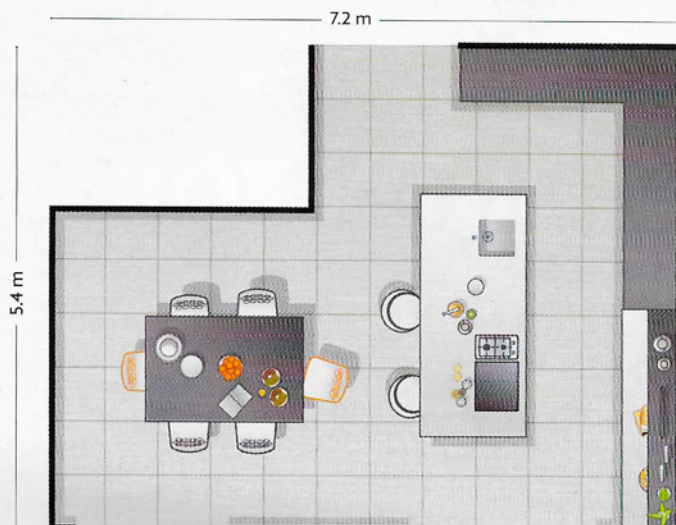


HOB

A Siemens wok burner is perfect for quick meals, such as stir-fries. It sits next to a sleek induction model

CABINET

This pretty cupboard provides an eclectic contrast with the modern cabinetry. Suzanne gave it a new lease of life after buying it second-hand and now uses the piece as a drinks cabinet



SHOP THE LOOK

CABINETRY

■ Bespoke solid oak and oak-veneer units by M Kitchens. A similar kitchen, cabinetry only, costs **£12,500**

WORKTOPS

■ Unistone Bianco quartz. Total price including templating and installation **£4,600**

FLOORING

■ Porcelain tiles, for similar, try Super White Polished, The Tile Experience. Price per sq m **£32.40**

APPLIANCES

- 2 x built-in single ovens, Siemens, each **£630**
- Built-in combination microwave, Siemens **£715**
- Four-zone induction hob, Siemens **£310**
- Domino wok burner, Siemens **£497**
- 90cm island extractor hood in stainless steel and glass, Siemens **£730**
- Built-in coffee machine, for similar, try Siemens **£1,497**
- Fully integrated fridge freezer, Siemens **£720**
- Integrated undercounter wine cooler, CDA **£430**
- Fully integrated dishwasher, Siemens **£670**

SINK AND TAP

- Peak single-bowl sink in stainless steel, Franke **£414**
- Bern monobloc mixer tap in Silk Steel, Franke **£273**

FINISHING TOUCHES

- Bespoke solid-oak dining table in wenge finish, M Kitchens **£1,800**
- Calligaris Jam chairs by Archirovolto, Mac & Mac, each **£168**
- Five-piece rattan garden sofa set, Select Furnishings **£599**
- Egg chair in Dark Orange wool, Bluesuntree **£399**
- Bar stools, for similar, try Retro Circles, Dwell **£99**
- Stockholm pouffe in Delikat White and Black, Ikea, **£195**
- White cabinet, for similar, try Modern Glamour Luxus, Juliette's Interiors **£5,312**
- Foscarini Big Bang Suspension light by Franzolini and Jimenez, Mac & Mac **£633**
- Ilsey crockery, Marks & Spencer, from **£6**
- Rug, for similar, try Twinkle Sparkle, The Big Rug Store, from **£100**
- Mirror, for similar, try Large Silver Framed Modern, Midnight Mirrors **£194**
- Evoke Mio radio in Paprika, Pure **£129.99**
- Reactive vase, Marks & Spencer, **£15**
- Avranches poster by Albert Bergevin, Art.co.uk **£15.99**

FOR STOCKISTS, SEE PAGE 142