

Essential

February 2012

KITCHEN

BATHROOM BEDROOM

THE ESSENTIAL KITCHEN BATHROOM BEDROOM MAGAZINE **THE UK'S NO.1** £3.75

ELEGANCE!

REAL-LIFE HOMES FULL OF PURE STYLE

STAR ATTRACTIONS

- SOPHISTICATED BASEMENT KITCHEN
- BESPOKE HOUSE OF OPULENCE
- NAPOLEONIC FORT IN CHANNEL ISLANDS
- MONDRIAN-INSPIRED KITCHEN
- TWO HOUSES BECOME ONE

34-PAGE SPECIAL
**THE SHAPE OF
THINGS TO COME**



KITCHEN TEXTURES • CHIC BEDHEADS • CITY BATHROOMS • WASHING MACHINES

DOWN UNDER

Going underground proved a great move for this luxurious basement kitchen.

PHOTOS JAKE HIZIONES WORDS ANNA TOBIN

This sophisticated kitchen/diner lends itself to informal family eating, but with the lights turned down in the evening, it is easily transformed into a formal entertaining space with an inviting sitting room beyond.



Sebastian and Téa Johnston have a very full house. They share their 1950s five bedroom terraced home in Central London with their three children and three nieces, Eloise, 13, Tika, 12, Jasper, 9, Téa, 7, Felix, 6 and Tata 6. It was vital that their new kitchen would be able to accommodate everyone comfortably and give the couple room to entertain outside the family too.

‘We chose architect Stephen Fletcher, whom we had worked with on our previous home, to redevelop the whole house to suit our needs,’ explains Téa. ‘He started from the bottom up, developing a plan to go

underground to create a basement which would provide a central eating, dining and living space where the whole family and all of our friends could hang out.’

She adds, ‘With a basement you always have the problem of too little light, but Stephen overcame this by installing a feature glass floor in the living room above, and designing floor-to-ceiling glazed doors out on to the back garden, which we also had dug down to maximise the flow of light. When you’re in here now, it’s easy to forget that you are actually in a basement, it’s so bright.’

The house’s original kitchen was on the ➔

KITCHEN PROFILE

The Johnston family dug down to create a spacious basement kitchen. The challenge was to maximise the feeling of space and light flowing into the room to create an airy open-plan kitchen/dining/living hub. Gleaming mirrored surfaces reflect the light from the glass ceiling above and the patio doors onto the garden to ensure that the room is always flooded with daylight, while flashes of vibrant citrus put an individual stamp on the ultra-contemporary scheme.

Kitchen designed by Jane Stewart at Mowlem & Co, 555 Kings Road, London, SW6 2EB. Tel: 020 7610 6626. mowlem.co.uk. Kitchens start from £30,000.

Architect: Stephen Fletcher at Stephen Fletcher Architects, 12c Cleveland Street, London, W1T 6PZ, 020 7637 1244.

Builder: City Interiors, Temple Works, Brett Road, London, E8 1R. 020 8510 0555.

Above Vertical lines of the mirrored wall units accentuate the height of the room, while the reflective surface adds depth. Stained wood veneers, and glossy quartz Oyster Caesarstone worktops, create an understated contemporary chic feel.

Left A specially designed drawer pulls out to reveal an extensive spice compartment, where each pot is easy to identify and access.

Right The glass ceiling is a great feature both in the living room above, and the kitchen below, bringing extra light into the basement. The splash of citrus inside the pantry adds a sense of fun to this sleek, modern and stylish scheme.



‘A feature glass floor in the room above maximises the flow of light.’



‘Mirrored wall units look great, and they also bounce light around the room.’

ground floor and, although it functioned reasonably well, it was poky and lacked storage space so Téa never felt able to relax there. ‘We both like contemporary style kitchens with lots of hidden storage so that there is minimal clutter on display,’ says Téa. ‘We’d gone to Mowlem to design a kitchen for us in our previous house, which we were very pleased with, so when the architect suggested that we use them here, we were very happy to use them again.’

Téa explains, ‘Jane Stewart, the designer at Mowlem, came up with the brilliant idea of the mirrored wall units, which not only look great, and they also bounce light around the room. Although it is a large space already, they make it feel even more spacious down here.’

As the Johnstons often entertain and have parties in the house, it was important that the kitchen not only looked good, it had to function brilliantly too. ‘There were certain things that we specified to the designer that we wanted, such as the easy-to-access drawer containing all my spices and the pantry for storing non-perishable foods, then Jane developed our requisites and came up with other great storage facilities too. I wanted everything to →



Above The Miele combination microwave oven, single oven and warming drawer have been ergonomically stacked, within easy reach of the serving area.

Right The handleless doors in the island unit open up on to a deep cupboard, large enough to hold an extensive dinner service.

Opposite A Westin ceiling pad extractor has been built into the bespoke surround to match the island. The unit plinths are made from steel to complement the mirrored panels and stainless steel appliances, helping to tie the whole scheme together.





‘It was important that the kitchen both looked good and functioned brilliantly.’

have a place where it could be hidden away so the worktops didn’t feel crowded at any time.’

With so many children living in the house, it was also important to Téa and Sebastian that they can always keep one eye on what they are up to, and the central island preparation unit allows whoever is cooking in the kitchen to look out over the rest of the room and through to the garden beyond.

But it’s not just the view out from the kitchen that has been given great consideration. The units have been designed so that their internal fittings are just as visually appealing. ‘I love splashes of colour,’ says Téa, so the inside of the pantry has been painted bright yellow. It’s the simple things that really make this kitchen interesting and imaginative.

‘There is nothing I would change about this kitchen now, I think it looks fantastic. It is exactly as I wanted it and that is largely down to having a great designer, an architect who really listened to our ideas and was able to turn them into reality and our builders, City Interiors, who were superbly professional throughout, and did work of the highest standard, right on time.’ ■

STOCKISTS INFORMATION

APPLIANCES

Similar hob HG1111MDB, £1,465, at ATAG; KU15RA50GB integrated fridge, £429, at Siemens; Similar dishwasher G5585SCVi XXL, £1,199; H5040BMclst combi microwave oven, £1,500; ESW5080-14clst warming drawer, £720; K9752iD-1 larder fridge, £1,188; FN9752i 8 drawer freezer, £1,392; H5247 Culinart oven, £1,450, all at Miele.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

KWC Inox spray hose steel tap, £501; US1830B steel undermount sink, £460, both at Inspired Sinks; Dulux Yellow paint 54YY69/747 gloss finish, £12 per litre; Dining Table, £POA, at Living Space; Similar dining chairs see Eames DSR chair, £206, at The Conran Shop; Similar light Chasen S2 light, £1,306, London Lighting Company; Similar floor tiles TOP 12XW 1200X600X11MM, £61 per sq. m, at European Heritage.

**Prices are approximate. For stockists, see page 160.*

Above The same quartz Oyster Caesarstone has been used for the worktops and the splashback so as not to detract from the clean lines of the kitchen.

Right Behind the exterior drawer face lies two internal drawers, ensuring that both deep pots and shallower bowls can be located with ease.

