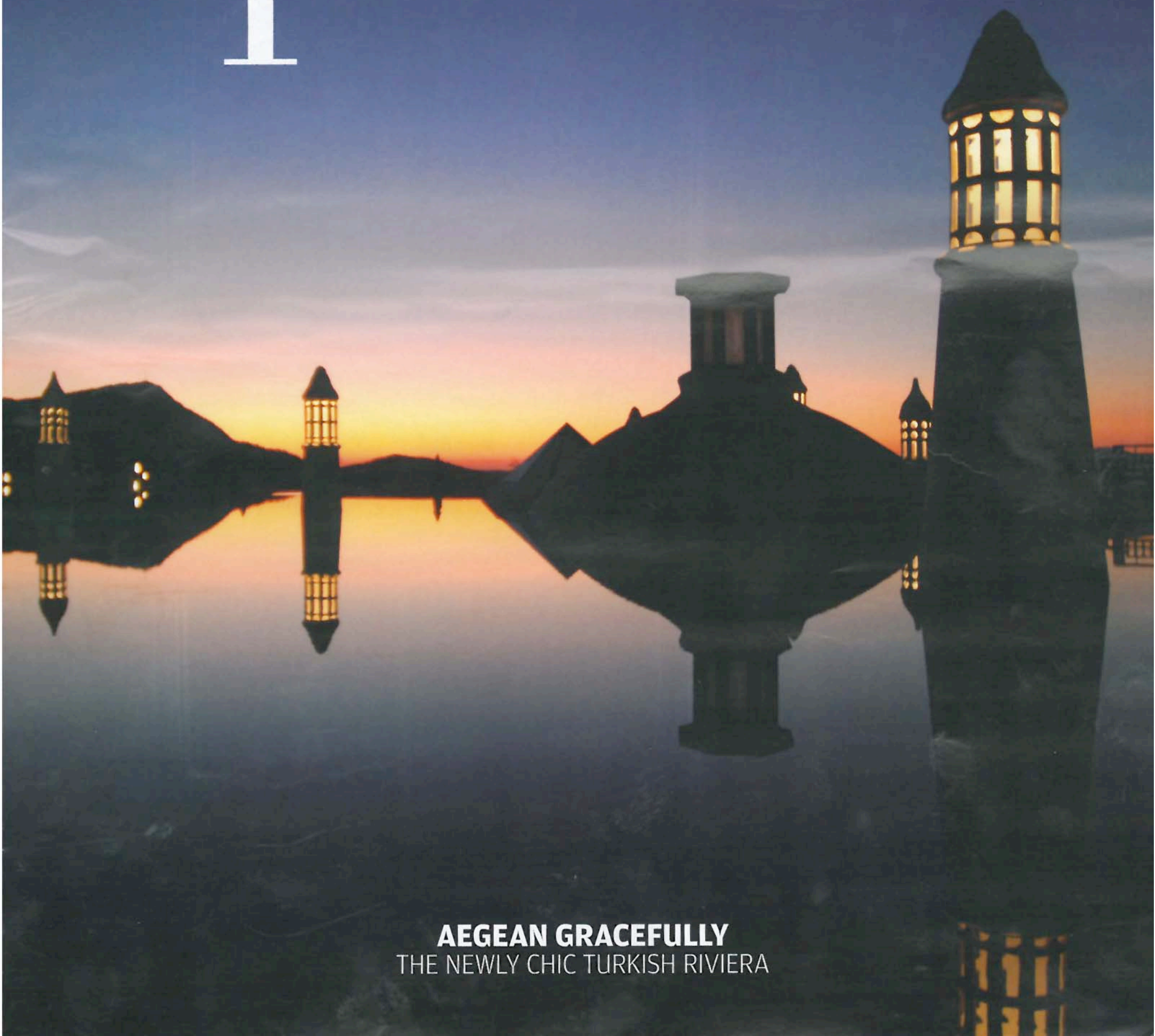


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How to Spend it

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AEGEAN GRACEFULLY
THE NEWLY CHIC TURKISH RIVIERA



larder-da!

A mainstay of the traditional kitchen, the larder is making a comeback as a desirable way to store everything – just so. Jenny Dalton reports.

Until very recently, if you moved into a home that still housed a separate larder or pantry room, there was only one thing you would do. And that would be to knock it out in a bid to increase the size of your open-plan, extended kitchen-diner. No more. If you are lucky enough to find a pantry tucked into your pre-converted period home, you have nothing but an asset on your hands.

So says Miss Hope, co-founder of Hope & Greenwood, the fashionable confectionary brand stocked in Selfridges and Fortnum & Mason, who has a number of larders in her Victorian house – kept as a nostalgic throwback to the pre-refrigerator era that inspired the company.

“My mother and aunt had pantries or larders full of higgledy-piggledy packages,”

says Hope. “Our buying criterion is, ‘If it was in Auntie Mary’s larder, then it belongs at Hope & Greenwood.’”

Hope’s pantry, all whitewashed walls and paper-lined shelves, houses “posh crisps, Kilner jars of flour and prunes, Vin Santo, Little Scarlet jam, sugar plums and marzipan”. It is, she says, neither “cold nor refrigerated; it is purely an aesthetic pleasure”.

The benefits of larder living, it seems, have been rediscovered. Now, a new from-scratch bespoke kitchen is more than likely to include at the very least a capacious larder cupboard, and probably a separate pantry room.

“When the American fridge hit our shores, lots of larders were pulled out to accommodate them,” says Karen Howes, director of Taylor Howes Designs, who is fully aware of the irony in being asked to reinstate what she once habitually sought to

Above: a walk-in larder by Mowlem & Co, price on request. Right: ebony veneer Macassar larder by Smallbone of Devizes, price on request.



“Larders are a boon for adventurous cooks who like to have a wide range of ingredients available.”

recycling bins and almost endless shelves for dry goods. The result in the rest of the kitchen is a “totally clutter-free look”, says Burnett. “Large walk-in larder cupboards enable owners to cut down on high-level cabinets within the main kitchen space – so it’s about an enhanced minimalist aesthetic.”

Although, as Howes suggests, the majority of high-end properties are opting for bespoke, large-as-you-like larder cupboards, this move away from the horizontal aesthetic to the vertical can often save space. Marks & Spencer offers a slimline larder cupboard with pull-out wire baskets (£699), while An Angel at my Table has just added the pretty pine Cottage larder cupboard (£1,195) as a sister to its popular Grande Larder (pictured left, £1,990). Resembling a wardrobe when closed, it melds into a hallway or dining-room corner.

The current larder trend has emphasised English firms that have reinstated a hitherto British classic, but Italian brand Dada offers a slim, glossy white lacquer larder column with stainless-steel drawers (pictured above left, from £2,500) in its Tivali kitchen range, as well as a tall, rotating walnut-finish larder cupboard (from £5,500) as part of its Hi-Line series.

Are these less-specialist larder cupboards without marble or stone shelves pushing the definition of the larder itself? For Charlotte Hill-Baldwin, sales and marketing director of John Lewis of Hungerford, whose freestanding wooden larders (example pictured far left, from £4,820) can be customised in colour and layout, the ideal larder should include “good ventilation, a cold shelf, hooks and spice

hangers”. As for a pantry, this should have “cool marble slabs, a cheese box, bottle holders and plenty of hooks for hanging game or herbs”. But Mowlem & Co design director Jane Stewart says there are no strict definitions for “what used to be a cool and contained storage space for dry and bottled goods before the advent of refrigeration. These days a larder can be whatever you want it to be, so long as it is spacious and well organised.” What defines the successful larder today, she says, is “opening a sleek set of doors to reveal your Aladdin’s cave of ingredients, all at a glance and within easy reach”.

SHELVING THE OPTIONS

An Angel at my Table, 0845-200 0723; www.angelatmytable.com. **Dada**, 199 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (020-7631 2345; www.moltenidada.co.uk). **Holloways of Ludlow Kitchens**, 121 Shepherd’s Bush Road, London W6 (020-7602 5757; www.hollowayskitchens.com). **John Lewis of Hungerford**, 156-158 Wandsworth Bridge Road, London SW6 (020-7371 5603; www.john-lewis.co.uk). **Marks & Spencer**, 458 Oxford Street, London W1 (020-7935 7954; www.marksandspencer.com) and branches. **Mowlem & Co**, 555 King’s Road, London SW6 (020-7610 6626; www.mowlemandco.co.uk). **Smallbone of Devides**, 220 Brompton Road, London SW3 (020-7581 9989; www.smallbone.co.uk). **Symm**, 01865-254 900; www.symm.co.uk. **Taylor Howes Designs**, 020-7349 9017; www.taylorhowes.co.uk.

remove. “I think that now we’ve got used to the American fridge, we want the pantry as well.”

Architectural building specialist Symm is currently constructing a £3m family home with “a main kitchen, a subsidiary pantry for storage and catering-staff cooking, and an adjacent walk-in larder for all the additional food”, according to senior contracts manager Phil Morton. “A busy household may often need to cater for 15 to 20 guests, and one main storage and preparation area just isn’t enough,” he explains.

Bespoke kitchen maker Mowlem & Co is also adding larders and pantries to many of its new projects (from £40,000). One example in Chelsea, built in conjunction with architect Stephen Fletcher, features a hidden, walk-in pantry (pictured on opening pages) that has been painted acid-yellow to match accents in the kitchen, and houses walnut drawers and shelves.

Taylor Howes Designs has recently completed a walk-in 2m by 1m cold larder (£15,000), which is inspired by a Swedish dry-chilled system, for a family in west London. “You can store everything in that room,” says Howes, “from dry goods and crockery to fruit, cheese and meats. It has an amazing capacity; with four girls, the family needed lots of kitchen storage space. It was at the top of their wishlist, even above audio-visual elements.” Indeed, where space allows, Howes frequently incorporates cold rooms into her renovations, utilising traditional elements of larder design such as north-facing walls and marble shelves for meats and cheeses.

Furniture maker Smallbone of Devides has recently created several bespoke larders and design director Steven de Munnich says a good example “should house the contents of up to eight wall cupboards”. He credits the return to more traditional means of food storage to more sophisticated dining habits, with dry, fresh ingredients and meats often being delivered to the home from various sources. “The emphasis is on healthy eating and fresh food. Larders are a boon for adventurous cooks who like to have a wide range of ingredients available to them.”

Not that the new larders aren’t often beautiful objects of furniture in their own right. Take, for example, Mowlem & Co’s recent Zen-like kitchen in a period south-west London family home. The inside of the handsome in-built and handle-free pantry is as carefully worked as the exterior, finished in the

Clockwise from above:
John Lewis of Hungerford Cool Pantry, from £4,820.
Dada Tivali Larder Column, from £2,500.
An Angel at my Table Grande Larder, £1,990.

same glossy, stained oak veneer, with drawers, spice racks and soft-close doors.

Chairman Peter Sheppard and creative director Keith Day of the Sheppard Day design agency designed the Smallbone of Devides Macassar kitchen and have the freestanding larder (pictured on opening pages, price on request) in their Venetian apartment. It is an ebony and marble-shelved temple to Italian food, made to be noticed rather than to blend into the background. The design “suits the Venetian lifestyle and cuisine”, says Sheppard: “There’s an abundance of dried and bottled foods in the markets, including wonderful pasta, beans, porcini, passata, tomatoes, oils, olives and anchovies. When friends come round for drinks, someone will often say, “Let’s eat” – and with these fantastic ingredients you can conjure up a delicious meal.” The inside of the larder is as impressive as the outside, featuring mirrors and lighting.

The majority of clients want to optimise organisation while hiding their food store from sight, says Robert Burnett, head of design at Holloways of Ludlow Kitchens (from £25,000). A Holloways project for a family in London incorporated a walk-in larder hidden behind a slender, almost “secret” door, lined with the same lacquered ash veneer as the rest of the cabinetry and the dividing wall. Inside is a floor-to-ceiling wine rack, wine cooler, food-prep area, microwave, toaster, scales,