

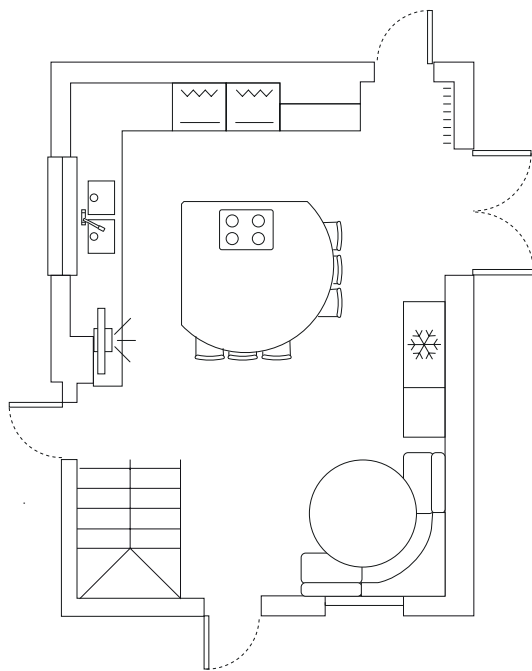


Rich pickings

Davonport's Belgravia kitchen works perfectly in this modernised barn conversion where classic and contemporary effortlessly entwine

Words: **Felicity Borthwick** Photography: **Darren Chung**

Previous page (p131): Gemma likes to have her family around her when she cooks, so this circular breakfast bar, which wraps around two sides of the island, is ideally placed. The barstools were custom-made by a German company called Ludwig Grimm and add a lovely burst of colour to the room.



Gemma and Kurt Jansen very nearly missed out on buying this house as another couple originally outbid them. However, just before the sale went through, the owner fell ill and took the property off the market. A year later, though, they were ready to sell again and the Jansens were offered first refusal, which they promptly, and delightedly, accepted.

The property is a converted 15th-century barn so, over the next few years, the couple busied themselves with various renovations, slowly making it more contemporary. They opened up the first floor and added glass panelling to the staircase, but, having decided to live with the existing kitchen for a while, after a number of years the oven broke down and the cabinetry began to look tired, so they started researching designers.

"We visited a couple of kitchen companies, but as soon as we met with Richard Stillman of Moneyhill Interiors we stopped looking," recalls Gemma. "We just felt very comfortable with him and he gave us great advice. For example, previously when you entered the house there was a little hallway with two rooms leading off it (one of which housed the boiler and the other a small gymnasium) and then the kitchen, so he suggested opening it all up, as we wanted to expand. So we now have a much larger kitchen that opens onto the garden as well as a utility room. The boiler has been relocated to a small room accessed from the outside."

For the kitchen itself, the couple were looking for something that would reflect the property's heritage but still have a fresh feel with modern touches. They also wanted to incorporate some walnut into the scheme. Thus, the Belgravia kitchen by Davonport, with walnut handles, was a perfect choice. The in-frame doors offer a classic country feel, while the flooring and appliances are sleek and contemporary.

Gemma loves cooking and the couple regularly entertain so the appliances had to be very high-end. "I knew from the start that I wanted a Wolf oven and a steam oven, while Kurt had his heart set on a Sub-Zero fridge-freezer and wine storage unit," explains Gemma. ▶



Rather than just panelling the back of the island, Gemma requested that cupboards be built-in here. However, as it's not hugely accessible, she just uses it as long-term storage for items she doesn't need very often.



The wine storage unit and fridge-freezer have deliberately been placed here, alongside the dining table, so that people can access them without having to go into the working kitchen area.



"I also wanted as much storage as possible – I think you can never really have enough – and spice racks on my larder door as I do a lot of spice cooking."

Gemma also stipulated that the kitchen should function as a sociable space, as she loves having her family around her while she cooks. Thus, a generous-sized island takes centre stage within the room, with a chunky curved walnut breakfast bar wrapping around two sides. An induction hob is positioned a safe distance across from the breakfast bar, while a steam oven and microwave sit within the adjacent side of the island, opposite the sink run.

Moneyhill Interiors was also responsible for providing the fabulous dining furniture in the corner of the kitchen. "Gemma sent us a photo of a bar in northern England to show us exactly what they envisaged for the dining table and bench seating and so we worked with Davonport to recreate this for her," explains Richard. "Everything was handmade and hand-upholstered. Even the little handles on the storage drawers below the benches were specially made to match the leather seats."

With such an inviting dining area and ample seating at the bar, the Jansens' new kitchen is a fabulous place for hosting parties, especially as it now connects with the garden. "Indeed, the last time I spoke to Gemma they'd just had a party with about 100 guests and she said it worked brilliantly and that no one felt in anyone's way," confirms Richard. "The kitchen design has really changed the way in which the entire house works." KBB



Q&A

Owner Gemma Jansen says....

What did you find the most useful research tool when starting this project?

Chatting to Richard at Moneyhill Interiors – he was just so helpful and gave us such good advice. We wanted to expand the kitchen so Kurt asked Richard to think outside the box with the layout – do whatever he liked – and he came up with such a great solution!

Is there anything you would do differently?

I wouldn't choose this Gaggenau hob again. I find it overly complicated to use and it has an alarm on it that you can't even hear, so it's not ideal if you're relying on it when cooking.

What was the biggest budget surprise or expense?

Nothing with the kitchen itself, but the cost of our building work doubled. We lost head height during all our renovations so then we had to dig down a lot, which took the work from about £30,000 to £60,000.



"I knew from the start that I wanted a Wolf oven and a steam oven, while Kurt had his heart set on a Sub-Zero fridge-freezer and wine storage unit."

Above: "The island creates a real focal point and the walnut helps to bring a certain presence to the centre of the room," says Richard. "The walnut also provides a nice break of materials, stepping down to the worktop, as well as linking in with the dining table."

Opposite page: A knife rack has conveniently been suspended above the work surface where Gemma does most of her slicing and dicing.

SourceBook

DESIGN

Kitchen Richard Stillman of Moneyhill Interiors (01923 773906 or www.moneyhillinteriors.com)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry Belgravia painted kitchen by Davonport (0845 468 0025 or www.davonport.com), from Moneyhill Interiors, as before

Worktops Bianca Capri, Silestone by Cosentino (01256 761229 or www.silestone.co.uk)

Breakfast bar Walnut by Davonport, from Moneyhill Interiors, as before

Appliances Induction hob, Gaggenau (0844 892 8988 or www.gaggenau.com/gb); Two single ovens and downdraft extractor, Wolf (0845 250 0010 or www.subzero-wolf.co.uk); Combination steam oven, microwave oven and warming drawers, V-Zug (0843 289 5759 or www.vzug.com/gb); Fridge-freezer and wine storage unit, Sub-Zero (0845 250 0010 or www.subzero-wolf.co.uk); Dishwasher, Miele (0330 160 6600 or www.miele.co.uk)

Flooring Porcelain. For similar try Bibliotheque (020 8365 2084 or www.bibliotheque.co.uk)

Sink Blanco (0844 912 0100 or www.blanco.co.uk)

Tap Fusion, Quooker (0808 102 0677 or www.studiofusion.co.uk)

Pendant lights Flos (020 3328 5140 or www.flos.com)

Barstools Bespoke design by Ludwig Grimm (www.ludwig-grimm.com) from Moneyhill Interiors, as before

Dining table Bespoke design by Davonport from Moneyhill Interiors, as before

Dining chairs Hüüsta (020 7908 3970 or www.huelsta.co.uk)

COST

Kitchens from Moneyhill Interiors start from £25,000