

“ This room works brilliantly, even when we have a crowd ”



Kitchen confidential

If you thought kitchens were just places to cook, think again. Meet three women whose choice of décor really makes a statement about their lives – and their personalities

FEATURE ROSE MILLER PHOTOGRAPHS BOB SMITH

Gillian McNeilly

“ Getting ready for a party – that’s when my husband Keith and I are in our element. We love entertaining and friends come over for dinner or lunch at least twice a week. And because Keith is from Northern Ireland and I’m from Scotland, our families come to stay with us often.

We bought the house five years ago, and the existing kitchen was way too small and, in terms of style, just not my cup of tea. When Cameron, our son, was born, 19 months ago, we decided to enlarge the room by building an extension over the side return and adding three metres to its depth. We wanted to make the garden feel part of the room, so we can push back the doors and double the size of our entertaining space.

It was our builder who recommended Vivienne Warman of Kitchen Co-ordination to design the new room. We asked Vivienne for something minimalist, sleek and modern, which wouldn’t just be a kitchen but a combined living, dining and entertaining space. I love the combination of white glass and walnut, the clean lines and simple look. It’s very easy to live with.

We decided to include as big an island as possible to make the most of the space. The quartz top is one huge

piece of stone – it took six men to carry it in here! And the mushroom shape of its stand has a secret: lots of storage space. In the evening, I can bung Cameron’s toys away in there and the room becomes an adult space, not a playroom.

I’ve tried to keep the palette of the room quite neutral, with some splashes of colour to make it homely. I don’t like lots of ornaments (though I do have a bit of a thing for sheep and have quite a few of them dotted around the house), so I don’t have to clear up lots of stuff before people come over. In summer we’re known as the Barbecue King and Queen – all our friends know we’ll be grilling pretty much every night, and they are always welcome. This room works brilliantly, even when we have a crowd. ”

Gillian’s Address Book

Kitchen Co-ordination 020 8958 6262; kitchencoordination.co.uk
 dwell 0845 675 9090; dwell.co.uk
 Designers Guild 020 7893 7400; designersguild.com
 Britannia 01253 471111; britannialiving.co.uk
 Gutmann Blanco 020 8452 3399; blanco.co.uk
 Zodiaq 0800 962 116; zodiaq.co.uk

Facing page, clockwise from top White glass and perfectly matched walnut Neos furniture by Kitchen Co-ordination creates a streamlined look. The range cooker is by Britannia and extractor by Gutmann; two rams from Gillian’s beloved sheep collection; the doors fold back to maximise the sense of space; made from alabaster Zodiaq quartz stone, the island worktop has an overhang so bar stools can neatly tuck underneath

