



CAPITAL GAINS

Expert planning ensures a small kitchen is still big on storage and style

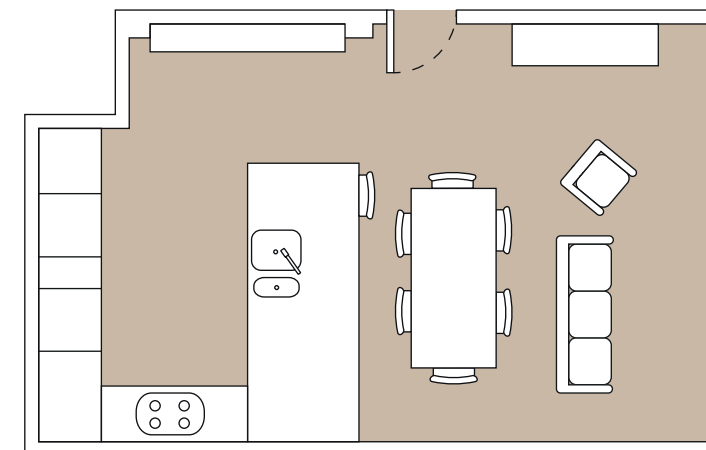
Words: Felicity Borthwick Photography: Alex Maguire

Alyson and Nigel Jones's main residence is in Surrey, but for years they have also kept a pied-à-terre in central London – a two-bedroom flat in Shad Thames with glimpses of the river. Nigel works in London and the pair often socialise there on weekends, so it's very much a second home for them. As such, comfort and functionality is just as important here as in their Surrey home and, after 12 years of living with the same kitchen, it was time for a new one.

"The kitchen had become very tired and wasn't all that practical, so we decided to put in a much more modern, urban design," Alyson elaborates. "My friend, who's an interior designer, recommended Vivienne Warman

from Kitchen Coordination and we really liked her as well as the plans she came up with."

The couple had ripped out a few walls to open the space up, so they wanted a kitchen that enhanced the room's light, airy feel whilst also offering as much storage as possible, and Vivienne has executed their brief beautifully. "There are no wall units above the worktops now, which keeps it feeling light and open, whilst a peninsula unit, with drawers on the working side and cupboards on the other, offers enormous amounts of storage," she explains. "Moreover, by creating a peninsula layout instead of an island, there is still plenty of room to move around." ▶



Opening pages (p154-155): "When we first bought the flat I always found myself bending down to look at the view because of the wall units, so it made me realise that they had to go. We also got rid of a couple of walls to open this room up, so now it's very light and airy," explains Alyson.

Left: The couple opted for handleless units to keep the space feeling calm and uncluttered. And inside the units, everything stays where it's placed as Rational's storage now comes with white rubber non-slip matting.

Below left: By using Corian for the worktop, an 'L' shape could be created without any visible joins. It also allowed for a moulded sink, adding to the room's sleek, clean look, and contrasts beautifully with the dark units.

Below: Alyson and Nigel found this elegant dining furniture at Interior Supply in London's Chelsea Harbour.

Q&A

Kitchen designer Vivienne Warman says...

What was the biggest challenge with this project?
To make a small area feel as spacious as possible whilst still getting in lots of storage. By using handleless cabinetry and a peninsula unit with storage front and back, I think we have achieved this.

Were there any major U-turns during the process?

No, because we spent a lot of time choosing the materials before we started.

What makes this kitchen a success?

I think it helped that the Joneses were willing to take risks with the design, like mixing up the colours the way we have with white drawers beneath the hob.

Any tips for people embarking on a similar project?

If you are looking to place a kitchen in an open-plan room, you have to be careful that the kitchen doesn't dominate the whole area and that it blends with the rest of the space.



With practicalities taken care of, Nigel and Alyson turned their attention to the look of the kitchen, opting for a beautiful two-toned scheme. The tall housing and two wide drawers beneath the hob are from Rational's Solo range in a white, high-gloss lacquer, whilst the Sepia Oak base units belong to its Atmos collection. "We chose white gloss to enhance the feeling of light in here, but it also offers up beautiful reflections of the river," says Vivienne. "By using it on the pan drawers it breaks up the design and prevents this wall from looking too dark. The shallow cabinet on the opposite wall, meanwhile, simultaneously balances this out but mixes things up as the doors are oak with a white gloss frame," she continues. "The Joneses didn't want their new kitchen looking too uniform and I think this works really well."

The cabinet Vivienne refers to is yet another example of how she has added storage without swallowing up valuable space. At only 220mm-deep and wall-hung, there is plenty of room to walk past it into the kitchen, yet enough space inside to house all the couple's glassware. The tambour unit next to the oven also maximises space, acting as both a storage and worktop area for the coffee machine and other small appliances.

Above the hob sits an ultra-contemporary extractor from Elica. "We chose this model to complement the white drawers below and because that wall really needed a feature extractor," says Vivienne. Indeed, with its slick design and ambient lighting, the OM extractor certainly does the job. It also works nicely alongside the fresh, white Corian worktop, which comprises a moulded sink to enhance the kitchen's sleek, clean lines.

"As we were going for dark flooring and cabinetry we really wanted a striking countertop that would offset it all and the Corian works beautifully; it lifts the whole room," says Alyson. "We are so happy with our new kitchen – we have masses of storage now and love the two-toned scheme that Vivienne designed for us!" KBB





Above: A shallow wall-hung cabinet offers plenty of space for the couple's glassware whilst ensuring there is still room to move between the kitchen and dining area. Integrated lighting underneath the unit makes it more of a feature and adds to the ambience.

Right: The OM extractor by Elica provides a nice feature and contrast against the dark wall. "Alyson was very brave using such a strong colour on this wall, but it works beautifully – she has a very good eye," praises Vivienne.

SourceBook

DESIGN

Kitchen Vivienne Warman of Kitchen Coordination (020 8958 6262 or www.kitchencoordination.co.uk)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry Solo high-gloss lacquer and Atmos Sepia oak veneer, Rational, from Kitchen Coordination, as before

Worktop and sink Corian (www.corian.co.uk), Kitchen Coordination, as before

Flooring For similar try Espresso oak floorboards from Direct Wood Flooring (0333 320 1933 or www.directwoodflooring.co.uk)

Appliances Oven, steam combination oven, induction hob, dishwasher, integrated fridge and freezer, all Siemens (0344 892 8999 or www.siemens-home.co.uk); Extractor, OM, Elica (01252 351111 or www.elica.co.uk)

Tap Livello, KWC (01793 754130 or www.kwctaps.co.uk)

Dining table and chairs Interior Supply (020 7352 0502 or www.interiorsupply.co.uk)

Barstools Poliform (020 7368 7600 or www.poliformuk.com)

Pendant lights Tom Dixon (020 3696 4950 or www.tomdixon.net)

COST

Kitchens from Kitchen Coordination start from around £12,000

