



DARREN TAYLOR
MANAGING DIRECTOR,
SEARLE & TAYLOR

Having started in the kitchen industry at the age of 18, Darren brings a wealth of experience into designing and creating bespoke hand-built kitchens for his clients.

T

LIGHTEN UP
Soft, grey paint tones are paired with a deep blue, both sympathetic to the period of the property

Designer kitchen

EVERY INCH OF SPACE WAS CLEVERLY PLANNED TO MAXIMISE USAGE IN THIS ELEGANT FAMILY KITCHEN AND ADJOINING DINING ROOM

PHOTOS Paul Craig | WORDS Yvette Murrell



There's more to this room than first meets the eye, as Darren Taylor, managing director of bespoke kitchen design company Searle & Taylor, explains. 'I was given an extensive brief for a relatively small and restrictive space, so every element had to be well considered.'

The Georgian townhouse in the heart of Winchester is a listed building, spanning four storeys and coming complete with a lift. When the homeowners bought the property, it had been used as offices, so a whole house renovation was needed. They opted for local tradesmen and architects, and brought Darren on board to collaborate with them in designing the kitchen. The couple added a single-storey extension to the back of the house to provide an extra sitting room, but the allocated space for the kitchen and dining room within the original building remained relatively small. The kitchen measured 3.8 metres by 4.5 metres, albeit with impressively tall three-metre-high ceilings. 'We worked upwards,' explains Darren, 'adding a mix of floor-to-ceiling cabinets and lift-up top boxes with a chrome ladder rail for easy accessibility.'

The island was designed in the same Shaker style, with tongue-and-groove panelling and

multiple handy features. 'The working side of the island not only has a sink and three-in-one tap, but an integrated dishwasher and bins too. The other side has plenty of storage for cookery books, plates and cutlery, so someone can set the dining table without getting in the way of whoever is cooking.'

Bespoke cabinetry was needed to work with the uneven tapered walls. 'Each cupboard gets bigger and bigger inside as you get towards the fridge freezer, which we built around, so it sits flush in the cabinetry.' Darren also specified Dekton worktops, with a marble-effect finish, for practicality. 'We often use quartz, which is great, but it runs the risk of cracking when you put hot pans on it. This surface is much more durable.'

Through bi-folding double doors that uphold the Georgian feel of the property, sits a light-filled dining room with storage to house occasion crockery and a drinks station for use when entertaining. The cabinetry here matches the kitchen with the glamorous addition of different handles and antique mirror-backed shelves. 'Fitting everything into this space was no mean feat,' concludes Darren, 'but the result is a really functional and elegant-looking space.' **EKBB**



GRAND PLANS

Darren fulfilled the homeowners' initial brief while working around the constraints of a listed building



PROJECT DETAILS

DESIGN Searle & Taylor.

CABINETRY Signature Bespoke Shaker-style kitchen with chamfer frame and hand painted in shades Cotton 2 and Kigali 678 by Paint & Paper Library, by Searle & Taylor. A similar project would cost around £50,000. Signature Bespoke kitchens start from £40,000. Signature Bespoke dining furniture starts from £10,000.

WORKTOPS Opera by Dekton.

SINKS AND TAPS KBX160 45cm undermount bowl and half sink in stainless steel, £560, Franke. Flex 3-in-1 boiling water tap in polished chrome with PRO3 Tank, £1,150, Quooker.

APPLIANCES G4990Vi Jubilee fully-integrated dishwasher, £799, Miele. Cache 110mm integrated extractor, £POA, Westin. RF522ADX4 79cm-wide fridge freezer in stainless steel, £1,849, Fisher & Paykel. 120+ range cooker in White, £9,965, Everhot. **For stockists and contact details, see page 144**



CHILL ZONE

Left The Fisher & Paykel American-style fridge freezer sits flush within a bespoke surround

GLAZED LOOK

Above Glass panels on the cabinetry doors add interest to a large run of furniture

‘The ceiling height was overwhelming, so we used that to our advantage and built upwards’



ON THE RUN

Storage was planned meticulously to make the most of the available space

WHAT WAS YOUR BRIEF FOR THE PROJECT? The homeowners wanted a great deal from this kitchen – they were after an island, range cooker and American-style fridge freezer. But, with it being a listed building, we had to work around the original coving and tapered walls. When you walk into that house, you’re overwhelmed by the ceiling height, so we used this to our advantage and built upwards. But we had to come up with a design that didn’t look too heavy, so used light colours and detailed finishes in keeping with the existing style.

WHAT WAS THE MAIN CHALLENGE OF THE PROJECT? Hiding all the new plumbing work, electrics, servers and lighting controls neatly away while still providing access to them all and keeping to the aesthetic we initially set out to achieve. I had to be really clever with storage, such as creating reduced-depth drawers and different-sized cabinets to square off the design.

WHICH ASPECT OF THE DESIGN ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF? The bi-folding cabinet doors in the appliance garage, as I like to call it. I suggested the addition of glazed panels to break up the space, as otherwise it would be one large block of cabinetry. Objets d’art are neatly displayed on top, and small appliances are hidden behind the cabinetry alongside plenty of sockets and some additional worktop space.



'We had to come up with a design that didn't look too heavy, so we used light colours and detailed finishes'

WIDE OPEN

Left Bi-folding doors in keeping with the Georgian style of the house can be opened up fully to connect the kitchen and dining room

MIRROR IMAGE

Below left Symmetrical built-in storage features an antique mirrored back for added elegance



FIT RIGHT IN

Above left Bespoke cabinetry in the dining room matches the furniture in the kitchen, but has different handles

COCKTAIL HOUR

Above right A handy drinks station in the corner of the dining area houses bottles and glassware

TABLE MANNERS

Left The dining table is used on a regular basis for family meals, as well as for hosting dinner parties

