



The latest trend is to blend your units seamlessly with the rest of your living space, so it looks less like a kitchen. We look at how smart design could be the master of disguise

Words: **Yvette Filer**

A kitchen that doesn't quite look like kitchen...what? It might seem strange, but it's now a frequent request and a look that's fast evolving how we live in our homes. Going open-plan has rapidly become the goal for many of us, as we look to completely reconfigure our homes to provide multi-functional spaces for the whole family without anyone feeling cramped or confined. The idea of being able to cook while casually chatting to your partner or children, or converse with guests while getting drinks ready sounds appealing, doesn't it? But while your kitchen is one of the most important aspects of your home – and usually your biggest investment – you might not want it to dominate the space. Fortunately, with some extra thought and careful planning, you can still create a well-equipped scheme that can be easily integrated into the rest of the space – and look less, well, kitchen-y. We're talking hidden storage, built-in seating and matching materials throughout the cooking, eating and living areas. Start thinking outside the box and take inspiration from the following clever designs ideas we've become rather fond of... >

HIDDEN STORAGE

The best, and perhaps most obvious way, to discreetly design a kitchen into an open-plan space is to hide the working areas. In this Modulnova Studio concept, sleek modern cupboards lacquered in satin black enclose the kitchen so it looks like a smart wall of units when not in use. Available at Designspace London, from £25,000.

BUILT-IN SEATING

An upholstered banquette area brings colour and shape to this luxurious kitchen, creating a hotel-bar style setting family and friends can comfortably sit at while you cook nearby. A far cry from standard designs, the rich velvet and gold finishes complement the Taj Mahal solid quartzite island. Bespoke design by Eggersmann, price on application.



Photography: Agnese Scavillo

BLENDING IN

Designed under a dramatic butterfly roof on a second-floor level, these kitchen and living areas are naturally flooded with light, so a cohesive bright and airy scheme was introduced to enhance this feature. Whitened timber cladding on the ceiling softens the space, while the kitchen itself was purposely installed with minimal fittings and a stylish yet subtle terrazzo worktop. Designed by Transit Studio, a similar scheme would cost between £12,000 and £15,000.



CLEVER CABINETRY

A continuation of the same style of cabinetry throughout a kitchen-living-diner not only creates a flowing design, but here hidden storage has been added beneath the built-in seating to make it a practical solution, too. This scheme helps open up the room and make each area – for cooking, entertaining, and lounging – feel more connected. Bespoke contemporary cabinetry starts at £35,000 from Sustainable Kitchens. >



BESPOKE BANQUETTE

Irene Gunter at Gunter & Co Interiors used whitewashed oak slatted panelling to make this bespoke banquette the focal point of the open-plan kitchen. Practical areas are hidden behind the bespoke curved seating set-up, providing a nice break from straight and square angles that are usually found in a kitchen environment. Price on application.



FREESTANDING DESIGNS

In a vast space such as this converted barn, it can be easy to fall into the trap of adding too much kitchen cabinetry. Instead, the homeowners chose relaxed-style wooden pieces in keeping with their effortless design scheme to fit in with the rest of the room, including a clever cover for the overhead extractor. This is The Sebastian Cox Kitchen by Devol, priced from £15,000. >



In Stefanie's RADAR

Here's what caught our sub editor's eye this month...

Look twice

Divine Savages have brought flocking back for their new wallcover - but that's not all. Take a closer look at the Poochi design, shown here in lolo black, and you'll see the polka dots are actually little dogs. **Cute!** Price: £150 per roll.



Al fresco cooking

What's your go-to lockdown dish? Mine is spicy rice cakes (or any style of rice cakes, really). **Recipits UK's outdoor kitchen** £1200 comes with a fire pit, warming oven, cooking bowl, and just about everything else you need to cook up a storm outdoors.



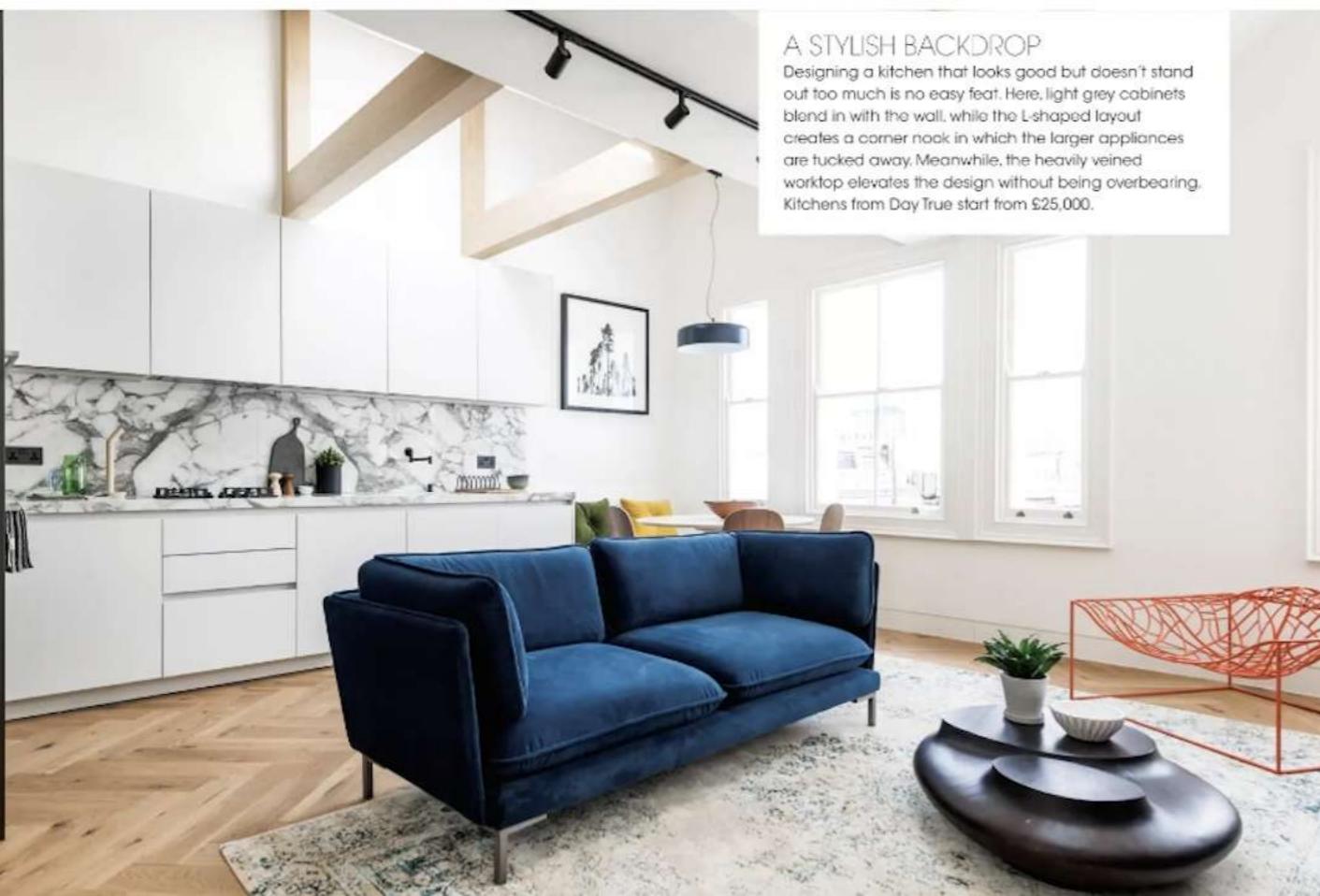
Natural light

Inspired by the smooth cliff faces and ridged headlands of Cornwall, Tom Raffield's Leven lighting range has a cool, tiered drum design that adds warmth to any space. From £195 for a wall light.



MADE TO MATCH

A seamless transition from kitchen to living area can be made by using the same materials and finishes throughout. Here, taking centre stage is a striking central island styled in Crown Imperial's Sand Oak which is continued into with Crown Lifespace modular storage and matching media unit furniture. Available in a range of finishes and handleless designs, kitchen designs from Crown Imperial start from around £10,000.



A STYLISH BACKDROP

Designing a kitchen that looks good but doesn't stand out too much is no easy feat. Here, light grey cabinets blend in with the wall, while the L-shaped layout creates a corner nook in which the larger appliances are tucked away. Meanwhile, the heavily veined worktop elevates the design without being overbearing. Kitchens from Day True start from £25,000.



BOLD ELEMENTS

Metallics may be found in kitchen accessories, but how about making a statement with your cabinetry? Designed by Christina Meyer Bengtsson, this handleless golden brass kitchen is matched with the walls helping it to blend in, while a slim Fenix laminate worktop in Nero creates balance. Chelsea design is from Reform, starting from around £285.49 (£332) per front. **KBB**