

CENTRE PIECE

Project profile

THE OWNERS

Denise Walsh, owner of a kitchen design company, her husband Stephen, a businessman, and daughters Bess, 5, and Lily, 1

THE HOME A new-build, contemporary-style house in County Tipperary

THE PROJECT Denise and Stephen started from scratch and designed a large open-plan kitchen-diner/living room with looks inspired by Philippe Starck

ROOM SIZE 10 x 8m

DESIGNER Denise Walsh, Donovan Walsh Design

CABINETRY Bespoke units from Donovan Walsh Design

BUDGET £30,000, excluding building work

Material world

The large stone splashback and countertops give the room an industrial style, with iroko veneer bringing a warming element

Designer Denise Walsh and her husband made a family-friendly kitchen a top priority when they built their dream home

Feature PENNY CRAWFORD-COLLINS Photography PHILIP LAUTERBACH

DESIGN SOLUTION *Denise explains...*

How did you come to build your own house?

Stephen's parents offered us this site and we leapt at the chance to construct our dream home in the country. We wanted to take advantage of the location, and architects Scott Tallon and Walker helped create a modern, simple yet elegant design, with floor-to-ceiling glass wherever possible to maximise the views. At the heart of the building was an open-plan kitchen-diner/living room.

Why do you think the kitchen works so well?

Visually, it's understated and doesn't impose on the open-plan space, as we integrated appliances and added clever storage solutions. The island allows us to engage with family and friends in a very relaxed, sociable way, which takes a lot of the stress out of entertaining. Although it's ultramodern, the scheme is also child-friendly and easy to maintain.

What about the finishes?

We carefully selected these so that the kitchen exuded a sense of calm and warmth, but also had clean and elegant

lines complementing the architecture. The Formica DecoMetal units, which might appear almost austere on their own, are softened by the natural warmth of the iroko teak and stone counter. The open shelving has allowed us to show our cookbooks and *objets*, which helps the kitchen feel like a real, working room.

Are there any other important features in the overall design?

It's essential to have adequate lighting in a kitchen space. Our Miele extractor hood is fitted with two downlights, which illuminate the hob while cooking. We added two more additional spots to the back wall that really enhance the look and functionality of the counter space in the evenings. Simple Italian glass pendants over the island add vintage charm.

Can you tell us about the island?

This provides a huge amount of work space and it's perfectly positioned for the main cook zone. From a design perspective, it added drama and glamour. The thickness of the natural stone worksurface makes the island look both substantial and stylish.

The details

CABINETRY Bespoke iroko veneer units and Formica DecoMetal-veneer units from Donovan Walsh Design around £12,000, cabinetry only

SURFACES Tunis Stone worktop and splashback, £380lin m; light-smoke Italian Marble flooring, £157sq m, all Antica

APPLIANCES Five-ring gas hob, £959; built-in single oven, £1,499; built-in combination microwave, £1,499; extractor, £929; built-in warming drawer, £1,019; fully integrated fridge, £1,459; fully integrated dishwasher, £898, all Miele. Fully integrated freezer with ice maker, £1,262, Liebherr

SINKS AND TAPS Kubus undermounted single-bowl sink, £399; Kubus undermounted half-bowl sink, £339, both Franke. Zero 55/40 undermounted single-bowl sink, £307, Caple. Modern boiling water tap, £890, Quooker. Semi-pro high-gloss chrome tap, £320, Warendorf. Atlanta single-lever tap, £100, Caple

FINISHING TOUCHES Timber cutlery tray, £50 for a 500mm wide unit; spice tins, £82; foil holders, £73; Dispensa swing larder, £1,174, all by Flanagan Fittings. Philippe Starck juicer, £72, Alessi. Replica Eames orange RAR chair, £47.99, Lakeland Furniture, is similar. Espresso cups by Damien Hirst for Tate, £12.50 each. Yellow Curve teapot, £47, Forlife. Custom-made wooden pear, price on application, Donovan Walsh Design. Foscarini Bud pendant lights, £443 each, Atomic Interiors

Rock solid

A marble floor is durable with a beautiful hue and veining that won't show every stain or spill



The layout



‘THE KITCHEN’S FEEL AND FUNCTIONALITY HAVE INSPIRED US TO COOK TOGETHER AS A FAMILY’



Clear view

Pull-out swing units beside the ovens ensure cooking ingredients are easily accessible



Added spice

Rather than keeping spices in the larder, they're handily organised beneath the hob – just where they're needed



Smart thinking

Even the utility space has a chic look with a neat sink area and appealing open shelving