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# Subtle, stylish, sophisticated

Painted in a soft stone shade to blend with the warm tones of the wooden floor, antique brass handles and bespoke cabinetry add to the individual character and beauty of this classic kitchen >

Words: **Amelia Thorpe**  
Photography: **Jonathan Bond**  
Styling: **Chantel Elshout**



A built-in **extractor**, from Elica, has been concealed in a cupboard above the **gas hob**, from Miele.

## The FACTS

**Who?** A retired couple  
**What?** A new kitchen as part of a flat renovation  
**Where** Central London  
**Cost?** Bespoke kitchens by Chantel Elshout Studio start from £45,000  
**Time?** 14 weeks









As part of a project to refurbish a three-bedroom apartment spread over the ground and lower ground floors of a handsome Victorian house, interior designer Lavinia Dargie of Dargie Lewis Designs began to turn her attention to the kitchen. "After living in the flat for many years, the homeowners wanted to update the room and give it a fresh feel," she explains.

Knowing that they needed to replace the well-used existing cabinetry, Lavinia followed up a recommendation to meet kitchen designer Chantel Elshout at Chantel Elshout Studio. "I had heard that Chantel offers a very personal service, which I felt was important in creating a design that perfectly suited the space," says Lavinia. "The flat has very tall ceilings, so I knew that we would need tailor-made cabinetry to make the most of the lofty feel of the room." The owners also wanted to allow the beautiful sash window that overlooks the garden square to be the focal point of the room, so they were looking for a designer able to create the quietly refined look they had in mind. "The owners and I saw eye to eye with Chantel from the first meeting," Lavinia says.

While they began assembling a palette of materials to respond to the couple's brief to create a light, calm and elegant space, Lavinia and Chantel reviewed the layout. "It worked well, except for a large American-style fridge-freezer which protruded into the room and rather obscured the window, as well as a configuration of units that didn't offer the best storage potential," says Lavinia.

The solution was to simplify the layout, with two streamlined sweeps of furniture along the walls, providing ample work surface and plenty of storage, plus a tall bank to house the ovens at one end of the room. A new fridge-freezer is built-in to its own housing to minimise its visual bulk, and it has been positioned well away from the window. "The appliance is now in an area of the kitchen with much more circulation space, so the sense of flow around the room is improved," explains Chantel. "It is also built next to an area of worktop, so it is easy to place bags of shopping on the counter and unload directly into the fridge."

The custom cabinetry blends classic doors with fielded panels with flat-fronted base drawer and door fronts. "They are classic with a little detail to add interest, but not so much that they seem fussy," explains Chantel. Painted in a soft shade of stone to blend beautifully with the warm tones of the wooden floor, the doors are finished with handmade antique brass handles to add a note of individual character

**left** Double doors hide a dresser cupboard with internal shelves, while the Miele **fridge-freezer** is integrated into tall housing on the right.

and burnished beauty. "We also included two wall cupboards with reeded glass panels to break up the look, with internal glass shelves to create an area for displaying attractive glassware and china," she adds.

As the ceilings are nearly 4m high, the cabinets are made to taller dimensions than the standard height. "Any shorter and they would have looked stunted in the space," explains Chantel, who specified a simple cornice to complete the top of the cupboards. "The extra height also offers a little more storage, which was important to the homeowners."

The height of the ceiling also presented a certain challenge with the lighting, as downlights and pendants on ultra-long drops would not have been practical solutions. Instead, LED strips placed along the top of the wall cupboards wash a glow up towards the ceiling, adding soft glamour in the evenings, while those below illuminate the worktops and provide practical task lighting. "Hidden in the shadow gaps at the very top of the glass splash backs, the LEDs are discreet but very effective," says Chantel.

In keeping with the airy feel and tranquil mood of the room, the walls are painted in a lighter shade of the same stone colour of the cabinets, with matching glass splashback. "Both shades are gently neutral, but with a degree of warmth that adds to the soft hues of the room," explains Chantel. The worktops are made of stain and scratch-resistant Compac Unique Calacatta surface, designed to offer the natural and timeless beauty of real marble with the durable qualities of quartz.

The finishing touch in the new kitchen is a central dining table, positioned so that the homeowners and their guests can enjoy the sunshine that streams through the window as well as the views of the garden. Stylish rattan chairs, a large houseplant, linen cloth, and open shelves used to display attractive ornaments and books draw attention through the room towards the eye-catching window and the greenery beyond. "Details like these add personality," says Lavinia. "Although the colours are subtle, they aren't bland – together with the timber floor, there is plenty of warmth and softness in this room and a sense of restrained elegance that is absolutely in tune with my couple's style." >





A swivel and pull-out Le Mans unit makes storage in the base corner cabinet readily accessible.



## The PLANS

Updating the kitchen allowed a retired couple to create a space that not only looks good but also boasts generous storage, all while making the most of the room's double-height ceilings.

**1 Cooking appliances** A tall housing unit accommodates an oven, warming drawer, and combination microwave.

**2 Fridge-freezer** Now moved away from the window and dining table, the new chill zone is more easily accessible and less of an obstruction in the room.

**3 Wet zone** Placed close to integrated bins and fully integrated dishwasher, the sink has a regular mixer as well as a mini boiling-water tap.

**4 Cutlery drawer** This is in easy reach of both the dining table and dishwasher.



The **cabinetry**, made by Davonport for Chantel Elshout Studio, includes drawers lined in grey-stained oak.



1



2



#### SHOP THE LOOK

- 1 Bromley Oak flooring, £44.95 per sqm, The Wood Flooring Co. [thewoodflooringco.com](http://thewoodflooringco.com)  
 2 Crossways pull handle in satin antique, from £81.60, Armac Martin, [armacmartin.co.uk](http://armacmartin.co.uk)  
 3 Madrid dining chair, £439, Pepper Sq. [peppersq.com](http://peppersq.com)  
 4 Hopscotch clay paint, £54 for 2.5 litres, Earthborn, [earthbornpaints.co.uk](http://earthbornpaints.co.uk)

3



4



The back painted glass splashback protects the walls and creates a clean finish.







Glassware cupboards are lined in grey-stained oak with glass shelves and reeded glass door panels.

Handmade antique brass **handles**, from Ged Kennett Contemporary Metals, finish the timeless cabinetry with a modern touch.

## SOURCEBOOK

**Interior design** Dargie Lewis

Designs 020 7786 6840

[dargielewis.com](http://dargielewis.com)

**Kitchen design** Chantel

Elshout Studio 020 7720 7859

[chantelshout.com](http://chantelshout.com)

**Cabinetry** Davonport 0845 468

0025 [davonport.com](http://davonport.com)

**Appliances** Gas hob, fridge-freezer,

oven, combination microwave,

warming drawer Miele 0330 160

6630 [miele.co.uk](http://miele.co.uk) Extractor,

Elica 01252 351111 [elica.com](http://elica.com)

**Taps** Perrin & Rowe 01708 526361

[perrinandrowe.co.uk](http://perrinandrowe.co.uk)

**Sink** Blanco [blanco.com](http://blanco.com)

**Worktops** Compac [en.compac.es](http://en.compac.es)

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more suppliers at

[thesethreerooms.com/directory](http://thesethreerooms.com/directory) **KBB**

