

A BIG DEAL

Extending isn't always the answer to creating more space in the home – as this cleverly redesigned kitchen proves

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PROJECT DETAILS

DESIGNER

Claire Totman of
Claire Totman
Designs (clairetotman
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PROPERTY

New build

WORK

Creating a large
kitchen-diner

LOCATION

Surrey

This Georgian-style home needed a new kitchen to make better use of the space and the owners asked designer Claire Totman for help. 'It's common to assume that to make a layout work you need to extend but we will always look at ways to reconfigure an existing space first,' says Claire.

1 STARTING POINT

Although the kitchen was big enough for a dining table, the family seating area was squeezed in. A separate sitting room was on the other side of the wall but the homeowners weren't keen to knock through and lose the space. Claire suggested turning the integral double garage, used for storage, into a formal sitting room and building a replacement store on the side of the house. 'This allowed the whole of the back to become one large open-plan kitchen looking onto the garden.'

2 LAYOUT DECISIONS

Orange pine perimeter cupboards had been arranged in an L-shape with imposing cabinets opposite and a small island between them. Claire's redesign took out the run facing the garden so the owners could have a bigger island. 'Floor-to-ceiling cupboards on the other side don't dominate the room as they're not in view when you come into the room,' she adds. 'We've fitted in a full-height fridge, freezer and two larders with a break front design that's staggered for interest.'

3 THE LOOK

Warm taupe neutrals with green undertones were chosen for the joinery and walls, complementing the earthy decoration in the rest of the house. Darker green on the island creates depth and interest as does the joinery. 'Our signature style at Claire Totman Designs is timeless, classic elegance with a modern twist and we design all our joinery in-house,' says Claire. 'Here, doors are an understated plain Shaker because the vein pattern in the porcelain surfaces is such a strong focal point.'

4 FINISHING TOUCHES

More light comes into the room, thanks to double internal glazed doors with fixed panes either side, and a small window swap to floor-to-ceiling glazing. Brass wall lights provide task lighting and the tap is brass, too, but with a living finish that patinas. 'The homeowners are delighted with the room, which now has a comfortable kitchen, dining and living area, and a separate sitting room, too,' says Claire. 'It's all been done without extending, they can hardly believe it's the same house.'

PRACTICAL CHANGES

'We made the space work harder with a larger island and less joinery without compromising on storage,' says Claire. Joinery, Claire Totman Designs; painted in Slaked Lime Dark, Little Greene; island in Treron, Farrow & Ball. Parador Trendtime 6 Oak Mistral Grey flooring, Country Carpets. Weathered oak bar stools, Cox & Cox. Fusion Round tap in patinated brass, Quooker



'GLAZED PENDANTS OVER A CENTRAL ISLAND ARE A GOOD IDEA AS THEY DON'T COMPLETELY BLOCK SIGHT LINES AND ALSO REFLECT ANY NATURAL LIGHT FROM WINDOWS'

TOP TIP

Beautiful wood stools add warmth and texture, softening a room's hard surfaces and straight lines

FINISHING TOUCH

'We used a high quality-porcelain for the work surfaces with an excellent vein print that looks as real as marble,' explains Claire. 'It's extremely hard-wearing – red wine can simply be wiped away – but it doesn't come cheap, it's an investment.'

Sapien Stone porcelain surfaces in Arabescato 4D, Cullifords. Antique brass T-bar handles, Claire Totman Designs. Large Bastille pendant lights; Mini Elbow wall lights with Stanlette shades, all Pooky

