



BEFORE

Homeowners Elena Little, an artist, and her husband, Matt, who works in banking. **Family** Annabel, 11 **Location** St Albans, Hertfordshire **Property** Five-bedroom house, built in 2003

#### BUDGET BREAKDOWN

Cabinetry £11,100 Larder cupboard  
£2,520 Glazed wall cupboard £1,210  
Appliances £4,052 Worksurface £2,496  
Flooring £1,581 Sink & tap £845

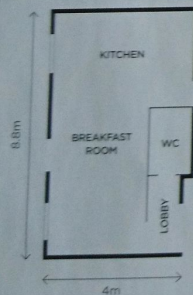
#### TOTAL SPEND

£23,804

#### PROJECT BRIEF

To rip out the old kitchen and floor and install new cabinets, flooring and appliances

#### THE FLOORPLAN



#### MAKEOVER DETAILS



#### PROJECT NOTES

The extractor fan is disguised and made into a statement feature by an elegant chimneyhood built over the range cooker in a design that matches the cupboards

**OPEN-PLAN DESIGN**  
Simplifying the layout gave the space a more streamlined look

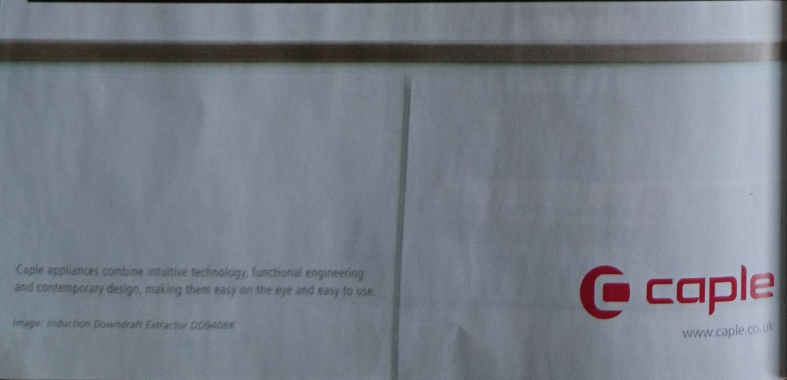


## 'Our new scheme is built to last'

For Elena and Matt Little, attention to detail and careful planning resulted in a low-cost, high-quality design to stand the test of time

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN PHOTOGRAPHER ALISTAR NICHOLLS





Caple appliances combine intuitive technology, functional engineering and contemporary design, making them easy on the eye and easy to use.  
Image: Induction Downdraft Extractor DD9408K

**caple**  
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**LIGHT FANTASTIC**  
Removing blinds and curtains from existing windows and doors has brightened the space

**E**lena and Matt Little had moved into their new-build home in St Albans in 2003, but as time passed, the rooms started to feel increasingly tired and dated. At first, they planned to sell up and relocate, but when their youngest daughter, Sophie, became terminally ill, their plans changed and they decided to stay. 'We kept ourselves occupied with general decorating and then tried to move again a year after Sophie passed away,' Matt explains. 'The sale fell through, so we decided to focus on improving our house.' The kitchen in particular was a priority. 'Faux-wood units lined the walls, crowding the U-shaped layout, while the oven and hob were separate, and the fridge and freezer low under the counter. The breakfast bar also crossed into a pinch point where the WC wall stepped into the room, making walking around it awkward.' 'We wanted to shake-up the layout but keep the design simple,' Elena explains. 'I saw a kitchen without an island and then realised we'd have enough storage and worktop space without one, saving ourselves money, too.' Wanting a timeless look, she sought inspiration on Pinterest, where she was drawn towards grey-painted Shaker units. From the start, the couple focused on searching for top quality at competitive prices. After a search online, they went with ▶

### IDEAS TO STEAL

Take Elena's neat tricks into account when planning your own kitchen project



↑ **BE CREATIVE WITH WALL SPACE**  
Additional storage with a shelf is perfect for hanging utensils from



↑ **ADD TO A PANTRY**  
Make space for a microwave and install a spice rack on the inside of the door



↑ **TRY A RESILIENT ALTERNATIVE**  
Durable marble-effect quartz has the look of stone but won't stain

WHERE TO BUY  
New to 2023





**PERFECT HARMONY**  
Aged oak porcelain floor  
from Floors of Stone  
complements the wooden  
dining table and benches

**TRADITIONAL LOOK**  
Quartz worktops and  
grey cabinetry add  
to the classic feel



#### SHOPPING BASKET

**CABINETS** Shaker cabinets painted in lead with Bella brass cupboard catches and cup handles, £11,100; larger cupboard, £2,520; glazed wall cupboard, £1,210; all Devol  
**WORKTOPS** Carrara 30mm quartz, £2,496; Rock & Co  
**APPLIANCES** For a similar range cooker, try Idealist. Elca Elibloc extractor, £210; Devol Miele fridge, from a selection, Currys. Miele freezer, from a selection, Appliance City  
**SINK & TAP** Perrin & Rowe Phoenix chrome tap with filter, £535; Villeroy & Boch Cisterna 60c sink, £310, all Devol  
**SPLASHBACK** White metro tiles, £85.70 per sqm, Verulam Tile Warehouse  
**FLOORING** Aged oak porcelain flooring, £44 per sqm, Floors of Stone  
**PAINT** Walls in all white modern emulsion, £43.50 per 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball  
**FURNITURE** Table and benches, from a selection, Farmhouse Table Company, Elijah glass ceiling pendant, £160, Laura Ashley

Devol in early 2016, as they loved its initial proposal. 'Even the fitters commented how well the cupboards were made,' says Matt.

The couple then looked for a timber-effect porcelain floor to blend in with the real wood they'd laid in the adjacent dining room. Elena had seen a few and then found that Devol operates alongside sister company Floors of Stone. There, she found a porcelain plank in a similar pattern and width to their wood design. Floors of Stone had the best quality products,' says Elena. 'The price was much cheaper than others I'd seen and I thought the wood print was more realistic.'

The Littles settled on a durable, faux marble quartz and went direct to local worktop specialist Rock & Co to save money. They took samples of the surface and floor back to Devol to find a suitable paint for the doors. Elena was keen on pale grey, but also wanted Farrow & Ball white walls. 'In the end we chose lead, Devol's dark grey, for the cabinetry,' she explains. 'We also painted the inside of the pantry

cream, as well as picking brass ironmongery.'

By sourcing their own appliances, extra savings were made. Elena and Matt chose Miele because they were happy with the dishwasher they'd bought from the German manufacturer previously. They decided on the range cooker after looking at a variety of brands in a department store. 'We narrowed our search down to Britannia,' Matt explains. 'I then found the online company Idealist, which sells discounted stock. It had exact model we wanted but at £1,200 cheaper than in the shops.'

'The kitchen was fitted in just three weeks, with the Littles decorating one weekend before the units were installed. Once the worktop was fitted, they finished off the look with a new farmhouse-style table and benches. 'We had the table made to size, so now have lots of space for entertaining,' says Elena. 'The room feels far more spacious and light, which is lovely as I like to paint in here. The transformation has uplifted the feel of the whole house. We're really happy. GH

Pure Freude  
an Wasser

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