

The FACTS

Who? Sarah Farrington-Brown and her sons Callum, 19, and Locky, 15 with Charlie the cockapoo

What? A kitchen-diner in a four-bedroom new build

Where? Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire

Cost? £60,000

Time? Part of the 14-month house build project

A scheme of stone and soft grey-blues gives the kitchen a timeless country look with a touch of industrial. Harvey Jones' Arbor cupboards are painted in Farrow & Ball's Cornforth White and the island is in de Nimes. **Boiling-water tap**, Quooker; **hob**, for similar, try Smeg



COVER
HOME

Picture perfect

Sarah Farrington-Brown's new-build country house demanded a classic-contemporary kitchen that was just as spectacular as its surrounding views >

Words: Jane Crittenden Photography: Darren Chung

A *one-off* plot nestled in the COUNTRYSIDE, just outside of Stratford-upon-Avon, presented an *irresistible opportunity*

for Sarah Farrington-Brown, who'd been looking for her next house project.

She had been living in London, working as a property developer and interior designer, but the hectic lifestyle got too much, prompting a move to Warwickshire within easy reach of a good school for her sons, Callum, now 19, and Locky, 15. "We rented at first, and I came past this derelict cottage – which had an elevated view of a lake and wide-reaching panorama of hills – most days when I was out walking my dog," remembers Sarah. "This pocket of countryside is tranquil and idyllic, but when the cottage came on the market, I was hesitant to put an offer in because I knew the renovation work it would take would blow my budget. Eventually I caved – but offers went to sealed bids. I wrote a letter to the owners explaining why I'd decided to move here, and they seemed to like the idea of it going to a family with a dog."

Fortunately, the plot already had pre-existing planning permission for a replacement property with an upside-down layout. With a few minor interior tweaks, Sarah went on to build the four-bedroom house into the hillside, with the main living space spreading out 15m across the first floor, making the most of the views.

For the kitchen – which Sarah began planning before the land purchase even completed – she turned to Harvey Jones in Wilmslow, Cheshire. It was the natural choice as her mum, Christine Farrington, worked there. "We decided to place the kitchen tucked away from the dining area, so the drama is focused on the lake view as you walk into the room," explains Sarah. "The original plans included a separate living room, but that didn't make sense to me. I wanted the space to flow and connect but have useful dividers, so the island marks the start of the kitchen and instead of a wall, a three-sided fireplace sections off the living room from the dining area."

Christine advised on the many cupboard options for the kitchen as Sarah planned the layout, working hard to make the space functional but look like a relaxed living area, too. With floor-to-ceiling windows along one side, there were only two walls available for units and appliances, so Sarah decided to put mainly base cupboards across the back wall so the pitched roof shape could be appreciated, while a pantry larder and double fridge-freezer sit on the adjoining wall. "I love to cook, but I don't like clutter in an open-plan room so things like the food processor and large platters are stored beneath the breakfast bar," she explains. "Then I grouped all the food storage together close to the island." At the other end of the L-shaped layout, the double-oven stack proved tricky to fit in at first, as Sarah didn't want an under-counter appliance. "It's the only tall item along the back wall but the vertical window alongside brings balance back into the room," she says.

Sarah's interiors approach was for the whole house to have spaces that not only looked beautiful but would be comfortable and practical as well. "I felt a glossy, modern kitchen would be too stark in the setting, so I went for a contemporary-country look. Harvey Jones' Arbor units, with their subtle door detail, looked the part. I painted them in pale blue and grey with brushed gold handles," she says. The glass unit on the end of the floor-to-ceiling cupboard also forms the connection between the kitchen and dining zone. "I really like seeing the glazed cabinet as I come into the room with all my nice pieces of glassware and crockery on display," she says.

With such a large project, the kitchen was installed once the house was built with the cabinetry being delivered ready to be slotted into the room. Since the units had to be taken up to the first floor, a forklift truck lifted them up and over the balcony. "It was a nerve-racking moment with six men carefully stacking the boxes inside, but within three days a carpenter had the kitchen fitted and everything was ready to be painted," says Sarah.

Now complete, oversized lighting, art, and discreet plants add the finishing touches to the room, which frames a picture-perfect vista of the lake. "When I come in here, I feel like I'm walking into a lovely living space, where it seems perfectly natural to sit down and enjoy the view," says Sarah. "I love it. Our house is such a special, relaxing place to live." >



The same cupboards and handles transition between the kitchen and utility. Tap, for similar, try Insinkerator.



The kitchen-diner is positioned to enjoy stunning views of the lake and countryside. A ten-seater extendable **dining table** is arranged with a comfortable **leather sofa** and black fabric **chairs**, all Hartmann Runa from Stollers Furniture. The transparent **pendants** are from Jim Lawrence.



far left Inside the glass cabinet, dining room necessities and Sarah's collection of Malloran glassware are displayed. **Handles** Harvey Jones.



left The textured Spekva river-washed oak **breakfast bar**, from Harvey Jones, was a must-have for Sarah and contrasts with the smooth finish of the Silestone quartz **worktop**. Colours in the grey-blue vein were picked out for the cupboards, which have been **painted** in Farrow & Ball's de Nimes shade.



The central island gives a clear definition between the kitchen and eating area as do the oak trusses which add texture and definition to the high-pitched ceiling of the large open-plan room. The elevated position on the first floor means all the doors to open onto a balcony terrace. **Wine storage unit**, for similar, try Caple; **design**, Sarah Farrington-Brown. >



A stylish wall-mounted task light, from Jim Lawrence, next to the oak shelves gives the kitchen an informal feel along with the Jono's Lobster artwork by Evi Antonio. Vase, Nordic Nest.



above Inside the pantry cupboard, a quartz shelf is ideal for the coffee and hot chocolate machines, while the deep drawers hold baking supplies. Fridge-freezer, Fisher & Paykel; flooring, Terzetto Stone.

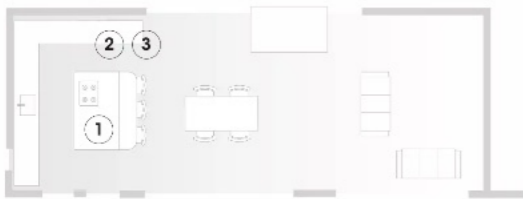
The PLANS

The new build four bedroom house has a large open-plan kitchen-living-diner on the first floor, which has been designed to maximise the surrounding views.

1 Zoning The island is the separation between the dining area and kitchen.

2 Storage The larder is placed next to the island so it's easy to make breakfast or a drink without obstructing the busy cooking area.

3 Display The glass cabinet visually links the kitchen and living areas, which looks more like a piece of free-standing furniture than a kitchen unit.



SOURCEBOOK

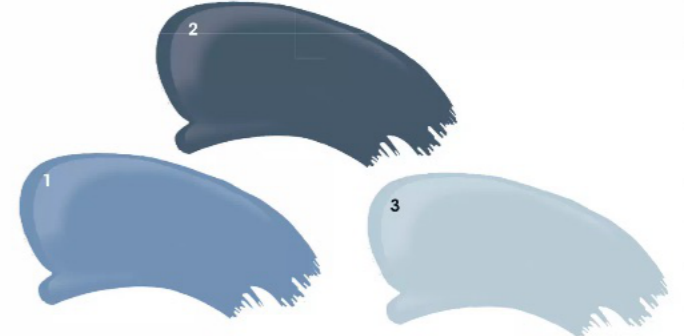
- Design** Sarah Farrington-Brown farringtonsdesign.com
 - Kitchen** Harvey Jones 0800 389 6938 harveyjones.com
 - Worktop** Silestone silestone.co.uk
 - Fridge-freezer** Fisher & Paykel fisherpaykel.com 0800 388 6605
 - Boiling-water tap** Quooker 020 7923 3355 quooker.co.uk
 - Flooring** Terzetto Stone 01926 427470 terzettostone.co.uk
 - Lighting** Jim Lawrence 01473 826685 jim.lawrence.co.uk
 - Paint** Farrow & Ball 01202 876141 farrow-ball.com
- For full stockist information, see page 142

The lights

- 1 Stourton black enamel pendant light, £79.99, Dowsing & Reynolds, dowsingandreynolds.com
- 2 Rossio pendant ceiling light with gold inner, £150, Iconic Lights, iconiclights.co.uk
- 3 Original BTC size 5 Titan pendant in black, £475, Period Property Store, periodpropertystore.co.uk



Sarah's design notes
Love the mix of traditional and industrial styles in Sarah's home? To help you recreate the look, here are some key ideas - from the colour on the cabinets to pendants, chairs, and flooring



The paint

- 1 Greek Blue chalk paint, £21.95 for 1 litre, Annie Sloan, anniesloan.com
- 2 Van Deusen Blue 11C 156 paint, £24 for 0.94 litres, Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoorepaint.co.uk
- 3 Skytark Blue wood paint, £18 per 0.75 litres, Thorndown, thorndown.co.uk



The dining chairs

- 1 Harriet dining chair in grey wool, £119, Cult Furniture, cultfurniture.com
- 2 Eichholtz Willis grey dining chair, £430 for a set of two, Sweetpea & Willow, sweetpeaandwillow.com
- 3 Bellucci dining chair in Dove grey, £129.99, My Furniture, my-furniture.com

The flooring

- 1 Midlake white porcelain tiles, £30.24 per sqm, Porcelain Superstore, porcelainsuperstore.co.uk
- 2 Zermatt natural tiles, £26.95 per sqm, Walls and Floors, wallsandfloors.co.uk
- 3 Pietra Lombarda off-white tiles, £34.95 per sqm, Original Style, originalstyle.co.uk

