

I look forward to using

Dace Erdmane removed walls, added more storage and created an eating



INSIDER INFO

WHO LIVES HERE?

Dace Erdmane, an interior designer (@deinteriors), her husband, Jurgis Erdmanis, who works in the shipping industry, and their children, Amalda, 21, and Nik, 16. The couple bought their 1930s semi in South Croydon in February 2015.

WHAT DESIGN ADVICE DO YOU HAVE?

Pick patterns, colours and a kitchen style that you truly love because you'll enjoy the room for much longer than if you make safe or high-fashion decisions. For a cohesive look, think of the house as one unit and pick a thread that runs through all the rooms – mine is navy blue and light grey.

DO YOU HAVE ANY MONEY-SAVING TIPS?

The B&Q cupboards were a fraction of the price compared to other companies for the same number of units, and I loved that I could tailor the look with wooden worktops and copper handles.



Before

A move to South Croydon marked the start of Dace and Jurgis' new life in the UK – they're from Latvia and have lived in Canada, Singapore and the USA. The couple found a house they liked in 2015, which needed redecorating from top to bottom. The kitchen was the hardest challenge, with the original coal room at the back taking up valuable space. Dace's goal was to make the kitchen as big and open as possible. 'We'd enjoyed open-plan living in the USA but we couldn't extend here because of the sloping garden,' she says. 'We decided to take down the wall to open the kitchen to the lounge, and get rid of the coal room. However, we later discovered we had to keep the disused chimney for structural reasons.'

With the new layout decided, it was time to look at the aesthetics of the space. At first, Dace wanted a navy kitchen, having moved away from their bright, Nordic taste in Latvia to a love of dark furniture and décor in Singapore. 'While decorating our UK house, dark blue and light grey became the colours that tied rooms together and I wanted to carry that through to the kitchen,' she says. 'Though, at the time, a navy kitchen was hard to find in my budget.'



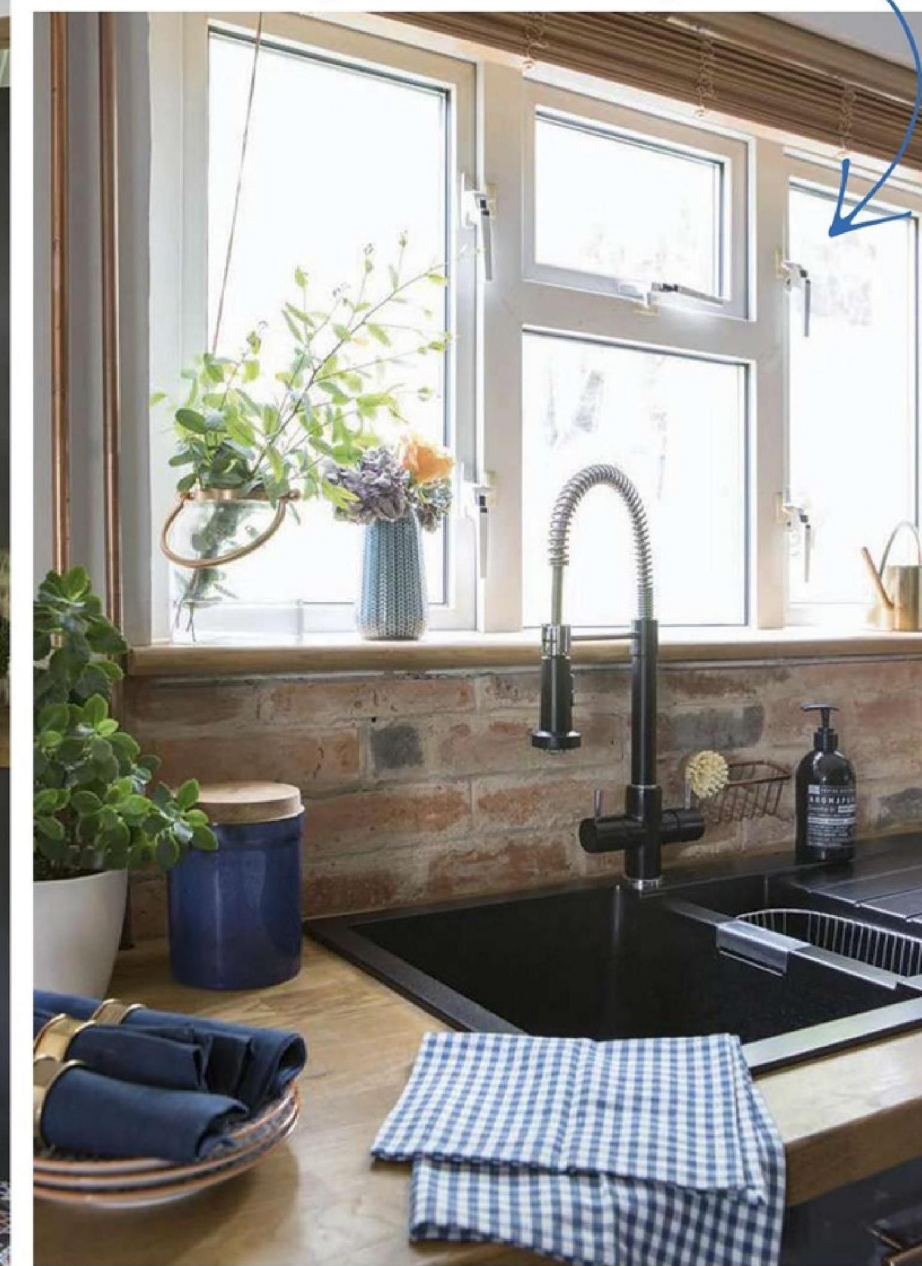
CUSTOMISE A BUDGET KITCHEN
Dace played around with cupboard sizes and produced a layout that uses top-to-bottom space along one wall, forgoing wall cupboards opposite to encourage light and openness. The peninsular is a new addition and provides much-needed seating

TRY A BRICK HACK
Finding the bare bones of the original brick wall to be too white, Dace created a splashback with brick slips in tonal oranges and greys to match with the floor and worktop



BALANCE PRACTICAL WITH PRETTY

An easy-to-maintain black composite sink with a chunky hose tap is a functional choice for an industrial aesthetic. Dace moved the sink in front of the window to overlook the garden, a concept new to her that she's grown to like since moving to the UK



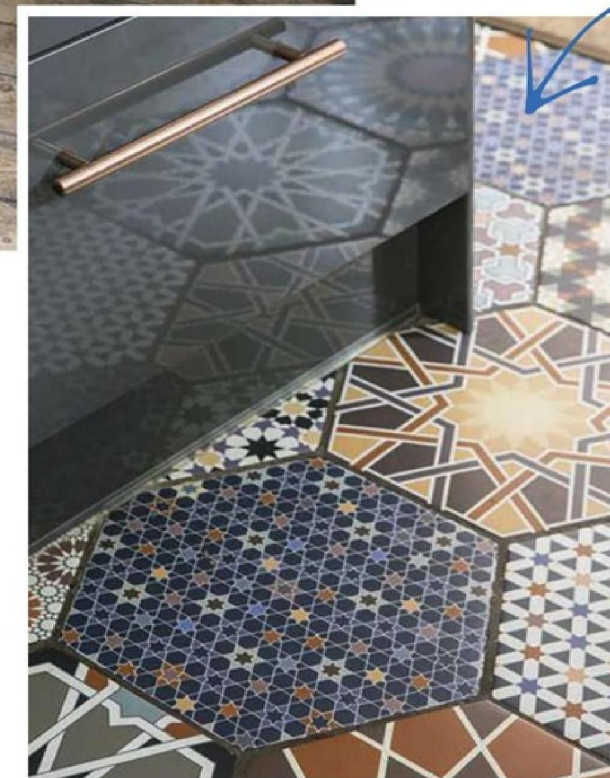
CHOOSE ONE BIG IDEA

Dace instantly fell in love with the pretty patterns and colours of the hexagonal floor tiles, which inspired the Moroccan look in her kitchen. A blend of 14 different designs meant plenty of choice to mix and match the layout as she pleased

While exploring cupboard options, the lively floor tiles came to Dace's attention during research for a course through the British Academy of Interior Design.

'I instantly loved the pattern and colour combination of blues, greys and brick orange,' she reveals. 'I visualised a Moroccan-industrial look, which I added to with the brick splashback, glass and brass pendant lamps, and copper stools and handles.'

By now, Dace was on the verge of choosing IKEA's black cupboards when one of Jurgis' work colleagues told them about their



my kitchen now

area, and the transformation has renewed her love of cooking

SHOPPING LIST

Santini kitchen cabinets in Anthracite (22 units), £4,100; Cooke & Lewis Galvani Black Composite Quartz 1.5 bowl sink and drainer, £198; Cooke & Lewis Ithaca Black kitchen twin lever mixer tap, £150; GoodHome Annatto copper-effect steel bar cabinet handle (L) 220mm, £8 for two, all B&Q. Prime Oak worktop 40mm thick, £1,024, Worktop Express. Hotpoint FFU4D.1X_SS fridge freezer, £569, AO.com. Bosch HBF113BROB Serie 2 built-in electric single oven is similar, £299; Bosch HMT75M451 microwave is similar, £129; Bosch PKE61D17E ceramic hob black, £319; Hotpoint HFC3C32FWUK 14-place extra efficient freestanding dishwasher is similar, £359; ElectriQ 60cm sloping black glass chimney cooker hood is similar, £80, all Appliances Direct. Moroccan Mix Hex floor tiles, £35 per sq m, The Porcelain Superstore. Brick slips, £40 per sq m, eBay. Clear 660x1050mm 4mm-thick glass splashback, £110, Splashbacks UK. Raw Silk in Midnight Blue wallpaper by Architects Paper, £58 per roll, Wallpaper Direct. Track light system, £193, Modern Lighting Solutions. Clear glass lantern in antique brass, £65 each, Wayfair. Xavier Pauchard Tolix-style 65cm metal stool in Copper, £69 each, Cult Furniture. Blue table runner, £7, Sainsbury's Home. Blue and white check tea towel is similar, £6 for two, Ocado.

TOTAL COST: £8,245

B&Q kitchen. 'I thought there wouldn't be enough variation in the cupboard options to get the custom look I wanted,' she says. 'When I designed the layout on B&Q's design platform, I discovered I could put shallow cupboards in front of the chimney and still keep the line across the rest of the cupboard run. There was plenty of choice and the same ergonomic features you'd find in more expensive kitchens for a much cheaper price.'

Dace settled on Anthracite grey gloss cupboards and chose a navy wallpaper for the walls. Real oak worktops and copper handles complete the customised look. Once the building work was finished, the couple built the flat-pack kitchen. Dace also tiled the floor, which helps to zone off the main kitchen area from the rest of the space while highlighting the room's new, larger layout. 'Mixing and matching tiles in different combinations was the most enjoyable part of the project,' she says. 'I'm pleased the kitchen has our own stamp and won't look like anyone else's.' [vii](#)