

RENFREWSHIRE HOME





One couple north of the border
have created a beautiful and
bright kitchen hub, with a
stunning island at its heart

Words: **Alison Nicholls** Photography: **Neale Smith**

White lightning





Opening pages (p116-117): Anthracite Oak Shaker doors from Stoneham have been used sparingly in combination with the flat white units to add interest and warmth.

Left: Jo enjoys cooking on her large Siemens induction hob. It was important that this was located on the island to enable her to chat with guests while entertaining.

Nestled amid the striking landscape of the Renfrewshire countryside, a few miles from the pretty village of Lochwinnoch, sits the fabulous home of Jo and Brian McCulloch and their daughter Laura. It's easy to see why this beautiful spot captivated the couple when they bought here 18 years ago. "We were looking for a place in the countryside with great views so this property where we have open vistas out over our own eight-acre field towards the hills was perfect," explains Jo. The buildings that existed on the site originally comprised a pair of old stone-built farmhouses and an animal byre which Jo and Brian set about converting into a delightful family home.

At the time the couple had a traditional handmade pine kitchen installed to fit with the feel of the old building, but, although the kitchen certainly stood the test of time, after 17 years they decided it was time for a change and craved a brighter, more contemporary feel. While researching companies, the pair came across Kitchens International, an award-winning Scottish kitchen design firm whose stylish and unique designs caught their attention. Here Jo tells us more about the project...

What was your brief to the kitchen designer?

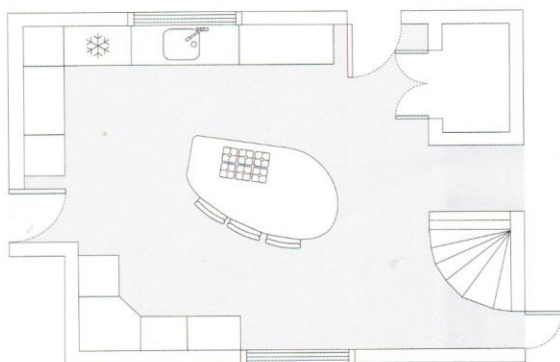
We wanted the kitchen to be much more spacious and light with a large central island. When we saw the oval island with glass breakfast bar in the Kitchens International showroom we knew we wanted this kind of look, although the one in the showroom was quite large so we had to make sure our scaled-down version still looked great as well as allowing the right amount of space for the kitchen to function effectively.

How did you decide on materials for the kitchen?

We definitely wanted a white kitchen to maximise the sense of light, but we thought all white ►

Right: The kitchen opens onto a comfortable living area, which adds to the sociable nature of the space. Meanwhile, a lovely oak staircase leads to the upper floor.

Bottom right: Storage has been maximised by making use of all areas of the island, including the curved corners. LED-lit glass shelves hang on a panel of oak, providing an area to display decorative items.



units could feel a little featureless so we settled on mainly white units but contrasted them with some sections of Anthracite Oak. The designers at Kitchens International came up with ideas we liked such as the mirrored end panels, zebrano border and zebrano panel on the front of the island, which brought some interesting details to the design.

Did you have a specific wishlist for the kitchen?

I enjoy cooking and we like to entertain so I had to have at least two large ovens, plus we added a steam oven and microwave too. A large induction hob was a must and I wanted it located on the island so I could interact with family and friends while I cook. It was also important that the space should work well ergonomically, in terms of where the main elements were located, and have lots of drawers under the hob so pans, utensils and spices are all easy to access. Finally I wanted it to be a very sociable space with a laid-back atmosphere.

Were there any hiccups?

We didn't plan an extraction system as part of the initial design so it was expensive to find a solution that would work with this type of design and fit within the constraints of the ceiling and joists. The amount of electrical power needed in the kitchen for the large induction hob and four ovens meant that we had to fit an additional circuit breaker box adjacent to the main box in the garage and run in a new supply – we knew about the installation before we started, but it wasn't in our original planning.

What is your favourite aspect of the design?

I love the oval island and the sense of space. In the previous kitchen we had an island and a separate table, but the beauty of the large island is that it performs both functions and it's a very sociable arrangement where your guests can sit and chat. [KBB]





The chic glass bar and stools face towards the windows so Jo, Brian and Laura can comfortably sit around the island and enjoy the magnificent views.





Opposite page: A ceiling plinth echoes the shape of the island and houses the neat Westin extractor and stylish pendant lighting.

Left: A sideboard area has been created behind the island by placing two sections of drawer units on either side of a wine storage unit, with tops and side panels in the oak finish. It looks like a piece of furniture, but it remains perfectly in keeping with the rest of the kitchen.

Q&A

Owner Jo McCulloch says...

Any advice for someone embarking on a similar project?

Do as much detailed planning as possible. As ours was an unusual kitchen layout it needed careful consideration of the space around the island: where the stools sit, the ergonomics of the design and so on. We got this pretty much spot-on, but things could have come unstuck had we not paid careful attention to the details. Make sure you really get your cupboard space and drawer sizes as you want – it's too easy to accept the standard solution.

Anywhere you managed to save money?

We had a fixed quote from Kitchens International for the kitchen and installation that helped manage the budget. Our barstools were very good value – we could easily have spent much more!

What did you find the most useful research tool when starting this project?

Just browsing on the internet looking for ideas was where we saw the Kitchens International designs and thought they looked a bit different from others we had seen.



GET THE LOOK



Above: Ronaldo Bask barstool, £405 from Go Modern, (020 7731 9540 or www.gomodem.co.uk)



Above: Ceinwen silk fabric in Paprika from the Indesence Collection, £98 per m, Voyage, (0141 641 1700 or www.voyagedecoration.com)



Above: Boardwalk wood-effect porcelain tiles in Maple, £144 per sq m, Stone & Ceramic Warehouse, (020 8993 5545 or www.sacw.co.uk)

Below: Brilliante toaster in red, £84.98, De'Longhi, (0845 600 6845 or www.delonghi.com)



Above: Bread bin in black by Nigella Lawson, £56, Unique & Unity, (0845 605 9699 or www.uniqueandunity.co.uk)



SourceBook

DESIGN

Kitchens International (0141 404 7744 or www.kitchensinternational.co.uk)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry Stoneham Anthracite Oak Shaker, Fusion Pure White and Mode Grained Painted White cabinets with zebrano coricing and brushed steel plinth, Kitchens International, as before

Worktops Silestone (01256 761229 or www.silestone.co.uk)

Appliances Hob and ovens, Siemens (0344 832 6999 or www.siemens.co.uk); Extractor, Westin (01484 421585 or www.westin.co.uk); Wine storage unit, CDA (01949 862012 or www.cda.eu)

Tap and sink Blanco (01923 885200 or www.blanco.co.uk)

Boiling-water tap Quooker (0808 102 0677 or www.quooker.co.uk)

Flooring Biggio Design (0141 354 0330 or www.biggiodesignglasgow.com)

Barstools Atlantic Shopping (0121 230 1644 or www.atlanticshopping.co.uk)

Lights Cotterell & Co (0333 043 1110 or www.cotterellandco.com)

COSTS

Stoneham kitchens from Kitchens International start from £20,000

Left: The neat Blanco sink provides a perfect viewing spot in front of the window, making the washing up less of a chore.