

Classic in the country

Michele and Johan created their own layer of history with a clever new kitchen design in their Cotswolds country house

PICTURES MIA LIND
WORDS VICTORIA ROLISON



COOL CHARACTER

The grand cooker canopy and corning of the cabinets look like they've always existed beside the beams, thick walls and lead windows of this 17th century home. Meanwhile designer fabric and quirky features show the couple's personality

WARM HEART

Michele and Johan knew they wanted to have an AGA in their country abode, and love how they can turn their AGA iTotal Control oven on remotely so that it's busy warming their kitchen ready for their return



GREAT SPACE

The perfect spot for dining, the couple enjoy entertaining guests beside tall windows looking out to Michele's beloved garden. Cabinets to the side keep their cutlery and crockery in order

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utting the heart back into a mid-17th century listed house steeped in history – Charles Dickens himself was once a visitor – could pose a daunting task, but when Michele and Johan discovered their dream home they found themselves inspired by all of its character. ‘To us, the kitchen in a country house is the most important room, because it’s central to everyone and everything going on,’ enthuses Michele. ‘The previous owners had laid the floor and replaced the plumbing and electrics leaving the kitchen empty, which meant we got to do the fun bit.’ Typical of the era, the space was all thick walls, lead windows and uneven angles. ‘It’s an odd shape with a big pillar in the middle which we couldn’t touch because it houses a staircase,’ remembers Michele. ‘It was part of the charm of the house and I liked the idea of going around in circles in the kitchen, because that’s kind of what you do, it’s a bit like a mad roundabout!’

With three children aged 19, 12 and seven months, as well as a parrot and two dogs to cater for, the couple decided they needed a designer to help bring order to the mismatched measurements and, having always loved the company’s Scandinavian style, Sola Kitchens became the natural choice.

‘We wanted a kitchen which would look like it belonged in a house built in 1650, but with a modern twist,’ explains Michele. ‘Pia came up with the perfect easy-to-use design as well as other suggestions, like a glazed panel which meant you could see the light in the cellar, to bring out the beauty of the house. We enjoy entertaining friends and family and I love that we can sit nearly a dozen people comfortably at the bar stalls, on the window seat and at the table.’

And there you have it; a very old kitchen space brought into the present in a family home, having lost none of its magic along the way. *EKBB*





PIA ROSLING
SENIOR DESIGNER,
SOLA KITCHENS

Q&A

What was your brief?

Michele and Johan wanted the kitchen to look like it had been there forever with the house and because it is so old we discovered a lot of character for us to echo in the kitchen. The original windows had lead around the outside and we brought this to the inside which works really well. We also designed a chunky canopy above the AGA - which was something else they had wanted from the beginning. Another big part of the brief was a central island with a wine fridge, storage baskets, a prep

sink and a breakfast bar, as well as plenty of entertaining space for friends and family.

How did you decide on the layout?

The kitchen has a natural chimney for the AGA to stand against so we began there. The Belfast sink worked well at the window and then the island in the central space. We had the perfect recess for the fridge and freezer linking the kitchen to the dining area, where we incorporated tall units for glasses and crockery. By placing the dishwasher to the left of the sink, it was in the

perfect position to be emptied, ready to lay the table straight back into our dining space.

What are your favourite design elements?

We worked hard on the quirky details which are what makes this kitchen special. We created a glass panel in the wall which looks through to a lantern light hanging above the stairs down to a wine cellar and we built long storage boxes into the wall for 'treats' for the family and pets. From the windows to the island there is thought in every little detail of this kitchen.



STORE & ORDER

Michele loves how her drawers and cupboards are perfectly organised with wooden spokes and dividers for everything from the big pots and pans to the cutlery and the spice rack



Kitchen profile

The redesign of this 17th century kitchen has seen uneven walls and a quirky space all brought into line with handmade Frillen cabinets in Olive Green from the Sola Kitchens Classic Collection, with a dark brown Amazon suede finish stone worktop. Designers at the Scandinavian company pride themselves on combining style with practicality, while the cabinets and worktops are all handcrafted by a family business based in Sweden.

SOLA KITCHENS

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Kitchens start from £25,000.





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Stockists

APPLIANCES

RF540ADUSX4 **fridge-freezer**, £1,950, Fisher & Paykel. iTotal Control **oven**, £10,890, AGA. Cache 900 **cooker hood**, £750, Westin Design. G 6260 SCVi **dishwasher**, £1,150, Miele. Similar Sense Wi6128 **wine cabinet**, £903, Caple.

FIXTURES & FURNISHINGS

Belfast VBK 710 **sink**, £407; Venetian **tap**, £287; Pull-out Belfast nozzle **tap**, £281, all Franke. Ceramic oval undermount **prep sink**, £283, Holloways of Ludlow. Composite Amazon suede finish **worktop**, £7,310, Sola Kitchens. Roman gold **wall tiles**, 150x150mm, £250 per sq. m, Cotswold Tiles. Salvaged wood and weathered concrete trestle collection **table**, starting from £1,292, and vintage French round and square fabric side **chairs**, from £179, all RH Restoration Hardware. Similar Lene Bjerre Missie large floor **candlesticks**, £108 each, Houseology. Bric-a-brac shelf **wallpaper**, £129 per roll, Deborah Bowness. Elena **bar stools**, £827 each, Robert Langford, made with Family Silver **fabric**, £88 per m, Mulberry Home at TM Interiors. Similar style of café poster **wall art**, caffè espresso Giclee print (81x112cm), £150, Art.co.uk.

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ISLAND LIVING

With a breakfast bar, prep sink and plenty of worktop space, the island also houses storage baskets, a wine fridge, drawers and cabinets

GOOD FIT

The Fisher & Paykel fridge-freezer was chosen because it fitted so perfectly into the alcove and, opposite the Belfast sink and dishwasher, it forms the perfect bridge between the kitchen and dining area

