

SUNNY SIDE UP

Proving that functional can also be beautiful, this striking Sola kitchen has been designed for a family that loves to cook and entertain together

Words: **Felicity Borthwick** Photography: **Mia Lind**



Previous page (p125): “We put the parquet flooring in as we’ve both always loved the look of it and thought it would make the space feel warm and welcoming,” says owner Rebecca Hare.

Right: The kitchen opens onto a cosy living area where the walls have been painted a dark, sophisticated shade to tie the spaces together.

Rebecca and Michael Hare bought this pretty Victorian terrace back in 2002 as they liked the area and were looking to swap their flat for a house. They wanted somewhere they could raise a family and up until recently the property had served its purpose well. However, the kitchen was becoming increasingly tired and the couple’s daughters were getting to an age where they enjoy helping out with dinner preparations, but there wasn’t much room.

“We basically just realised we needed more space and wanted a kitchen where we could all work together as a family,” recalls Rebecca. “So we decided to extend out the back and side to make room for a large kitchen that connects with the garden. I also wanted to be able to include a dining table that could seat up to 10 people as we like to entertain.”

The couple’s builders recommended Sola Kitchens to them and a glance around the finished project reveals what a successful recommendation this was. They now have a sleek and stylish black kitchen with plenty of room for several people to work in simultaneously. Moreover, despite the bold cabinetry, the room is light and airy thanks to new glass bi-fold doors and pops of sunny colour in the form of yellow dining chairs and pendant lights. The parquet flooring and lengthy timber island surface also lends warmth to the scheme.

“The Hares initially had grey units in mind, but the longer we worked with them, the more they were drawn to darker shades and eventually they ended up opting for black, with a flat door finish,” recalls Sola designer Rhiannon Phenix. “We offer both wood and MDF, but because they were using wood on the island and flooring they wanted something less textured as a contrast. The timber on the island is lovely and quite unusual,” she continues. “We were initially looking at walnut, but it can become a





bit red or orange whereas the Wild Bavarian we used has more of a yellow tinge to it, which works better with the rest of the room."

As well as looking good, the Hares' new kitchen is highly functional and has been carefully designed around the family's cooking habits and lifestyle. For example, in the island, at the end nearest the curved breakfast bar, is a set of three drawers with cutlery at the top and plates in the bottom. This allows the girls to access these items and lay the table without having to get in the way of mum and dad when cooking. This same set of drawers is also slightly offset from the dishwasher, on the opposite run, allowing both to be open at the same time for easy unloading.

Rebecca and Michael also keep a lot of different types of herbs and spices for cooking, as they like to try out various cuisines. Thus, a tall cupboard with wooden racks, specially positioned around the couple's jar sizes, has been included next to the fridge-freezer. "They initially started off with just three or four drawers, but as they started using the kitchen, they realised it would be handy to have a few more, so we put some additional ones in," explains Rhiannon.

"This is one of the great things about Sola," she adds. "We can easily add to kitchens after they are completed as everything is built specially for each client, and we keep all the measurements and technical drawings," she continues. Rhiannon has also been back recently to create an extra-wide plinth drawer that runs below both ovens, so the couple can keep their trays in here.

"What makes this kitchen such a success is simply that it works for us," says Rebecca. "When it's tidy it looks great, but it is also practical enough to do some serious cooking, plus it's a lovely, comfortable space for us to have lots of people in!" KBB

Above: The Hares' brief was for a clean, unfussy look without extraneous decorations. They also wanted the kitchen to be a sociable space where they could cook as a family and entertain guests.

Opposite page, top right: At either end of the wall run, tambour units have been created to ensure the worktop stays clutter-free. The unit on the right is used for breakfast appliances, with a drawer below specially designed to the height of the couple's tallest mugs. The unit at the other end holds small appliances such as mixers and blenders.

Bottom left and centre: Internal storage has been carefully organised to cater for the Hares' cooking paraphernalia – from appliances and utensils to their collection herbs, oils and vinegars.

Bottom right: The couple like to cook many different cuisines so have a large collection of herbs and spices for which a special cupboard has been created alongside the fridge-freezer.

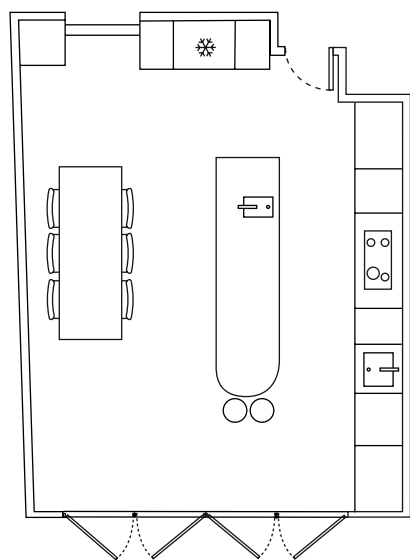




Above: We knew we didn't want a white kitchen and we had had wood before so we thought about grey and then it just got darker as the project evolved," says Rebecca of their colour choice. "Then we saw these yellow hand-blown lights and just loved them. The chairs were chosen to complement them."

Right: These stylish black Miele ovens blend in nicely with the dark cabinetry, ensuring a clean, streamlined look.

Opposite page: "The Hares wanted a wooden surface on the island because everyone always gathers around an island, whether there's seating or not, and it's much more comfortable and warmer to rest against than other materials," says kitchen designer Rhiannon Phenis.



Right: The Miele extractor hood has been discreetly concealed within the units above the hob, maintaining a sleek, minimal look.

Below: The couple wanted to include some open shelving above the sink and hob to ensure everyday items were instantly accessible. "We love the stainless-steel worktop too as you don't have to worry about it," observes Rebecca.



SourceBook

DESIGN

Kitchen Rhiannon Phenis of Sola Kitchens (020 3004 0898 or www.solakitchens.com)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry MDF units painted in colour NCS S 8500-N, Sola Kitchens, as before

Worktops Stainless steel and Wild Bavarian wood, Sola Kitchens, as before

Splashback Stainless steel, Sola Kitchens, as before

Appliances Oven, combi-microwave oven, hob and extractor hood, all Miele (0845 365 6600 or www.miele.co.uk); Dishwasher, Bosch (0844 892 8979 or www.bosch-home.co.uk); Fridge-freezer, Fisher & Paykel (0845 066 2200 or www.fisherpaykel.com/uk)

Sink DecoSteel (www.decosteel.se)

Tap Quooker Fusion (0808 102 0680 or www.quooker.co.uk)

Flooring Oak parquet. For similar try The Natural Wood Floor Company (020 8871 9771 or www.naturalwoodfloor.co.uk)

Barstools Habitat (0344 499 4686 or www.habitat.co.uk)

Dining table John Lewis (0345 604 9049 or www.johnlewis.com)

Dining chairs Cult Furniture (020 8185 6960 or www.cultfurniture.com)

Pendant lights Curiousa & Curiousa (01629 826284 or www.curiousaandcuriousa.co.uk)

COST

Kitchens from Sola Kitchens start from around £28,000