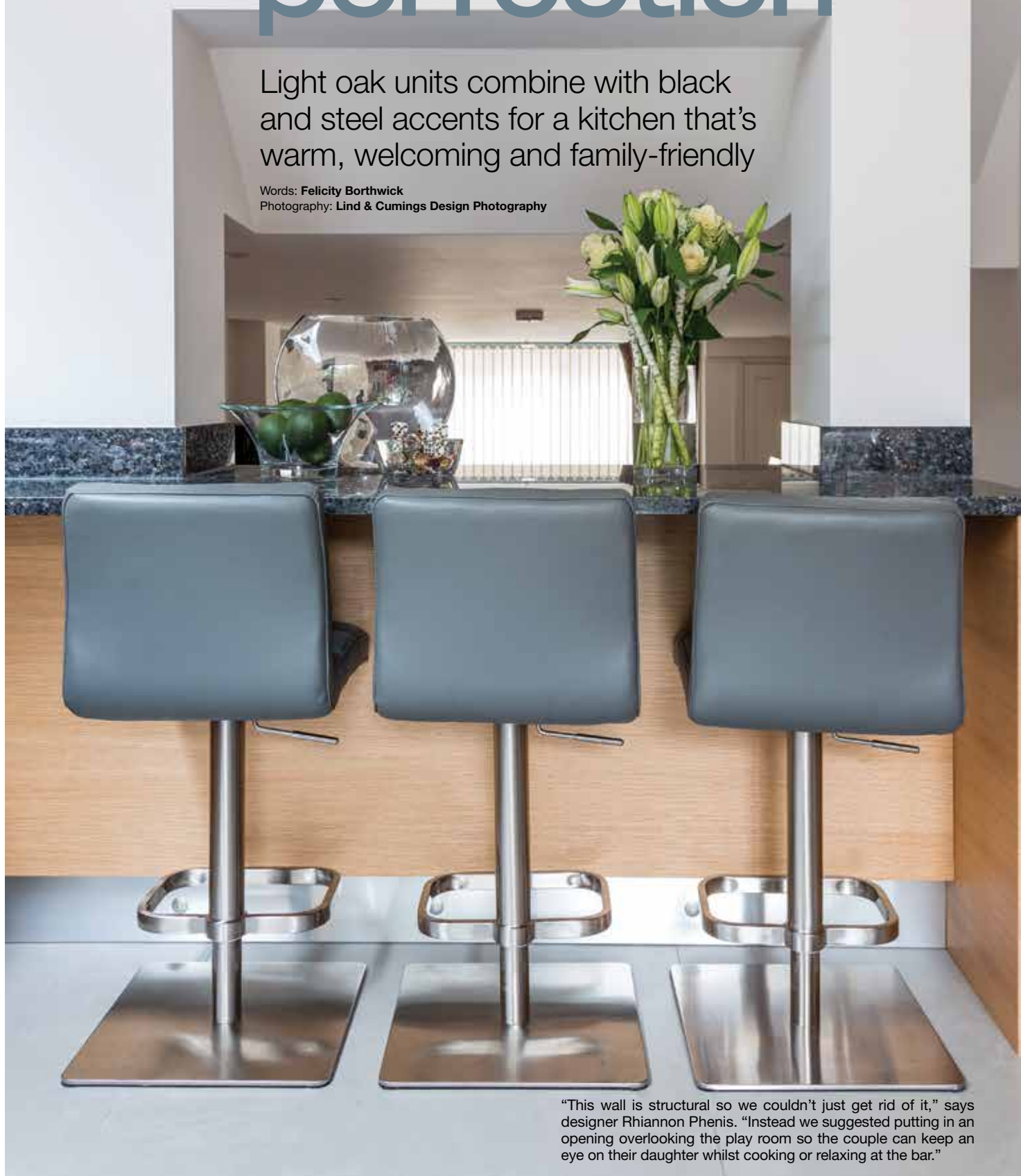


# Planned to perfection

Light oak units combine with black and steel accents for a kitchen that's warm, welcoming and family-friendly

Words: **Felicity Borthwick**  
Photography: **Lind & Cumings Design Photography**



"This wall is structural so we couldn't just get rid of it," says designer Rhiannon Phenis. "Instead we suggested putting in an opening overlooking the play room so the couple can keep an eye on their daughter whilst cooking or relaxing at the bar."

“The couple wanted something practical but pretty so that comes through with the dresser at the end of the room; it’s great for displaying glassware and photos, plus there’s additional storage underneath,” says Rhiannon.



House hunting may be time-consuming, but it can also be a great source of inspiration for remodelling interiors, as Henry and Laura Everett discovered when searching for a home in Fulham. “We got some great ideas whilst looking at properties and also did a lot of research on estate agents’ websites to look at floor plans and designs in similar spaces,” Henry explains.

Thus by the time they were ready to renovate, about a year after moving in, they had a clear idea of what they wanted to achieve. They extended out at the back of the house with bi-fold glass doors to connect the space with the garden. The kitchen itself had to be stylish and contemporary but also family-friendly as they have a three-year-old daughter, Sophie. A local showroom, Sola Kitchens, had exactly what they were looking for and designer Rhiannon Phenix drew up a plan that suited their requirements perfectly.

“Laura and Henry wanted a kitchen that was practical but pretty, with plenty of storage so that things could be placed precisely where they needed them, rather than just where they fit,” recalls Rhiannon. “So we created a large, double larder with spice racks on the inside of the doors and a dresser next to it for displaying glassware and photos. The pair also wanted more space for their dining table, as the room was originally much narrower, with the table pushed up against a wall,” she continues. “We didn’t go for an island layout, therefore, but there is still plenty of work space, plus a breakfast bar has been created along the wall dividing the kitchen from the playroom. The wall is structural so we couldn’t just get rid of it, and if they had just a half wall there would still need to be a pillar somewhere, so putting this opening in was the perfect solution. It creates a fresh, open-plan feel and allows them to keep an eye on Sophie.”

After looking at various samples for the cupboard doors, the pair decided on a lovely light oak, breaking it up with steel plinths and handles. “We chose these units because they have a contemporary feel that blends well with the rest of the house,” Laura elaborates. “The inset handles, coupled with the horizontal grain on the doors, create a distinctive look and we liked the floating appearance of the units, created by the plinths.”

Blue pearl granite has been used for the worktops, providing a striking contrast with the oak. It is complemented by a large, black fridge-freezer and grey barstools and dining chairs. The upholstered chairs soften the room and enhance its luxurious feel whilst ensuring family and friends dine in comfort. Indeed, it’s a great room in which to entertain, thanks to a host of top-end cooking appliances and clever lighting.

“The lighting was particularly important to us as it can be a great way to accentuate features and create ambience,” Henry elaborates. “We opted for lights under the wall units, on the plinth and in the glass cabinets, as well as spotlights on the ceiling.”

With the new bi-fold doors, guests can also now enjoy views of the garden, whilst pale stone flooring and clear glass splashbacks keep the space feeling light and airy. “It was crucial to us that the kitchen was a comfortable, warm and family-focussed space, and with a big extended family the two ovens are regularly put to good use,” says Laura. “Sola really has created our dream kitchen!”

KBB



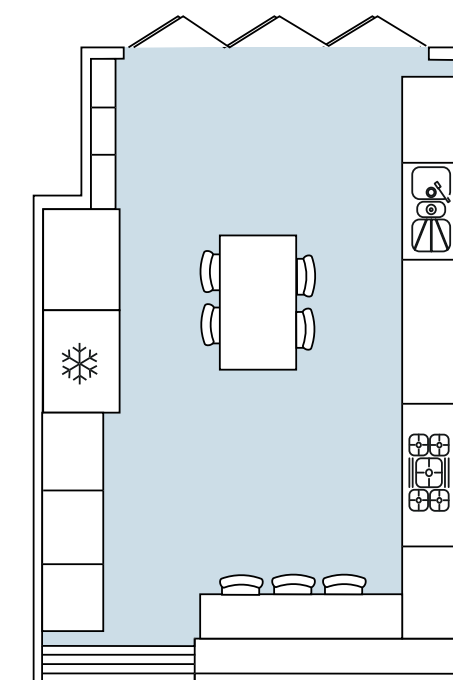
## Q&A

### Owner Henry Everett says...

**Where did you find your contractors?**  
We wanted local contractors so we kept our eye out for work being done in the area and approached them when we saw a project we liked the look of.

**Were there any major budget surprises?**  
The concrete floors had to be broken up and re-laid, with stone tiles, as they were not in good condition and this was not budgeted for.

**Is there anything you would do differently?**  
No, other than going a bit over budget, everything went to plan so we would not do anything differently.



**Above:** It made sense to create the cooking area under the one skylight and place the tall bank – for the larder and dresser – on the opposite wall where it wouldn't block out any light.

**Left:** "There were three different depths along this wall so our aim was to make it streamlined," recalls Rhiannon. "We did this by creating a shallow, glazed dresser at the far end, followed by an extra-deep larder and then the fridge-freezer."

**Right:** The couple opted for vegetable baskets in the base of the larder as well as two drawers and a shelf for dry food. They wanted to use the middle shelf as an extra worktop for storing and using small appliances so a power socket has been included here.

**Far right:** Henry and Laura chose this Elica extractor as it created a nice focal point and works well with the black fridge-freezer and worktops. The flush-fitting induction hob, meanwhile, blends seamlessly into the granite surface.





## SourceBook

### DESIGN

**Kitchen** Rhiannon Phenis of Sola Kitchens (020 3004 0898 or [www.solakitchens.com](http://www.solakitchens.com))

### KITCHEN

**Cabinetry** Sletten kitchen in oak, Sola Kitchens, as before  
**Worktops** Blue Pearl granite, sourced by Sola Kitchens, as before  
**Splashback** Glass, Sola Kitchens, as before  
**Flooring** Matt stone tiles. For similar try Stone Age (020 7384 9090 or [www.stone-age.co.uk](http://www.stone-age.co.uk))  
**Appliances** Fridge-freezer and wine storage unit, Rangemaster (0800 804 6261 or [www.rangemaster.co.uk](http://www.rangemaster.co.uk)); Oven, steam oven,

microwave combination oven, warming drawer, hob and dishwasher, all Neff (0344 892 8989 or [www.neff.co.uk](http://www.neff.co.uk)); Extractor, Elica (01252 351111 or [www.elica.co.uk](http://www.elica.co.uk))

**Sink** Decosteel ([www.decosteel.se](http://www.decosteel.se)), sourced by Sola Kitchens, as before  
**Tap** Franke (0161 436 6280 or [www.franke.com](http://www.franke.com))

**Barstools** Atlantic Shopping (0121 230 1644 or [www.atlanticshopping.co.uk](http://www.atlanticshopping.co.uk))

**Dining table and chairs** Great Furniture Trading Co (0845 653 2070 or [www.greatfurnituretradingco.co.uk](http://www.greatfurnituretradingco.co.uk))

### COST

Kitchens from Sola Kitchens start from around £28,000

**Above left:** Bi-fold doors have been used to create an indoor-outdoor feel during the warmer months. "Inside we have used large, neutral-coloured, matt stone tiles as this is in keeping with the modern feel of the house," says Laura. "The large tiles also give an impression of space in the kitchen."

**Top left:** The couple often entertain their friends and family, so the Neff oven and steam oven are invaluable.

**Top right:** Large drawers have been used in place of cupboards so that everyday items like plates and bowls are easily accessible. Recessed steel handles provide a nice contemporary touch and contrast with the oak.

**Above left:** Blue Pearl granite creates a practical work surface that adds texture and contrast alongside the oak.

**Above right:** These stylish dining chairs from Great Furniture Trading Co soften the contemporary kitchen scheme whilst ensuring family and friends dine in comfort.