

essential

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KITCHEN

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MIDAS TOUCHES

Pure White handleless furniture provides a clean backdrop, enlivened by a beautiful brass splashback

Style with **SUBSTANCE**

With careful planning and a streamlined design, Cecilia and Andrew Weiler now have a beautiful new kitchen that's both practical and stylish

PICTURES LIND & CUMINGS DESIGN PHOTOGRAPHY | WORDS AMELIA THORPE

WIDE OPEN

Floating shelves break up the wall cabinetry, and allow the family to add personality to the room with their choice of ornaments and books to display



STORE & ORDER

Every inch of space is carefully planned: behind the bar stools are cupboards for infrequently used items such as vases, while the drawers (left) are designed to store household admin, with a drawer for each family member



Most would agree that good kitchen design is a balance of style and substance. But style over substance was what lawyers Cecilia and Andrew Weiler were presented with when they, together with their two teenage children, moved into their late Victorian home in south west London. 'The kitchen was beautiful, but maddeningly impractical,' recalls Cecilia. 'There was literally so little space between the island and the fridge that you could barely open the door, and the same applied to the dishwasher. As well as that, the kitchen island was way too high and too big, so that it acted as a divider between the work area and the rest of the space.'

Not wanting to throw away a new kitchen, Cecilia was able to sell the cabinets via a website specialising in second-hand kitchens (for similar, try The Used Kitchen Company or Used Kitchen Exchange). Then she and Andrew set about planning their new kitchen, visiting a number of companies before meeting senior designer Rhiannon Phenix and settling on Sola Kitchens as their supplier of choice. 'She listened to what we wanted and helped us build on our ideas, instead of telling us what to do like the staff at the other places,' says Cecilia.

Cecilia hails from Sweden, Andrew from America, and together they share a love of simple, linear design. Working with Rhiannon, they planned the room carefully to achieve a good sense of flow. The island, though considerably smaller than the previous version, is built to the right height, and forms the focal point of the design. 'The cabinetry takes up less floor area than before, but it also has more worktop and storage space,' says Cecilia. 'It is so much more enjoyable and usable, with everything in the right place.'

Picking up the golden colours of the framed wedding shawl from Pakistan that hangs on one wall of the room, as well as the rich Panga Panga wood floor, Rhiannon suggested a brass splashback. 'It was such a good idea as it adds warm contrast to the cool white of the cabinetry, and lifts the design,' she says.

'This kitchen is a joy,' says Cecilia. 'I love the long, clean lines and the way the sunlight reflects off the brass, making it a lovely place to work, to sit with friends or just be together. And it takes a millisecond to clear up, because now everything has a place - that level of practicality makes a huge difference.' **EKBB**



SLEEK AND SLIMLINE
A streamlined run of wall cupboards with drawers below provides plenty of storage

'I love the long, clean lines and the way the sunlight reflects off the brass'



BUILT-IN BEAUTY
An integrated extractor is concealed in the wall cabinet above the induction hob



IN THE DETAIL
20mm worktops of Unistone Carrara Bianco quartz have a precise, square edge, in keeping with the linear design of the cabinetry

Kitchen profile

Form 2 handleless cabinetry in Pure White has a crisp finish, topped with slender worktops of ultra-durable Unistone Bianco Carrara quartz. Streamlined appliances contribute to the sleek look, while a bespoke brass splashback adds contemporary warmth.

SOLA KITCHENS
121 Munster Road, London, SW6 6DH.
Tel 020 3004 0898. solakitchens.com
Kitchen prices from £35,000.



NICHE DESIGN
Built-in ovens are flanked by an integrated freezer (left), and fridge (right)





AISLE STYLE

The golden colours of the framed wedding shawl from Pakistan (left) inspired the choice of brass for the splashback



‘When furniture runs right up to the ceiling it tends to close in the space. By stopping short the room feels larger and open’



SCENE STEALERS
Left Simple clear hand-blown glass globes are hung at two heights to catch the eye above the island

RAISE THE BAR
Right Height-adjustable bar stools slide under the island overhang, ready to be pulled out when friends arrive



RHIANNON PHENIS
 SENIOR DESIGNER,
 SOLA KITCHENS

Q&A

How did you begin the project? I listened carefully to Cecilia's wish list and asked lots of questions about how the family use their kitchen. The previous island was very dominant in the space and created a block, so one of my first steps was to reduce its size and ensure there was sufficient space between the island and wall run to produce a better sense of flow. We also spent a lot of time working out exactly how to best include enough storage and arrange the

appliances in easy reach, even the handles on the fridge and freezer are positioned so that they are in the right place when the doors are opened from the cooking area.

Why does the wall cabinetry stop short of the ceiling? That is a clever design trick. So when furniture runs right up to the ceiling, it tends to close in the space. By stopping short, the room generally feels larger and more open, and in keeping with the airy feel that Cecilia

and Andrew wanted to achieve. A dimmable, extra-warm white light strip along the top of the cabinets creates a beautiful glow in the evening.

Can you tell us about the brass splashback? An all-white room can look clinical, so the brass adds contrast and warmth. It is finished with a nanotech coating, which means it only needs a quick wipe down to keep it clean, making it a practical choice too.