

Twice is nice

Inspired by the kitchen in their previous home, the Beckers created it all over again – just bigger and better this time

PICTURES LIND & CUMINGS DESIGN PHOTOGRAPHY
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Ready as they were to move house to gain more space, there was one room in particular that Karoline and Mark Becker were especially reluctant to leave behind. ‘The kitchen was perfect,’ says Karoline. ‘We loved its cool and calm simplicity, and it worked

beautifully over all the years that we lived in the house.’ So when they decided to move next door to a house with more bedrooms and a larger garden in order to accommodate their growing family, including four children aged between seven and 14, they knew exactly where to go for their new kitchen. ‘We went straight to see Sola Kitchens, who had done such a good job designing and fitting the room in our old house and said, ‘same again please,’ she laughs.

Their new home is a 1920s-built, six bedroom property, spread over three floors, in South West London. ‘The house had been lived in for 45 years by an elderly couple, and needed renovation and modernisation,’ explains Karoline. ‘Although we had to keep the front of the house intact, because we are in a conservation area, we were able to extend across the back and

side to create a lovely, large open-plan living-dining-kitchen area, which we felt would suit our family life best.’ That, explains Karoline, meant a defined kitchen area with practical, working space and everything needed for cooking in easy reach, as well as affording the space for a separate utility zone with more storage. ‘Because we are a large family, the room needed to work hard and be very practical,’ she says. ‘But we also wanted a relaxed living and dining space where we could all be together at the same time without feeling cramped.’ Karoline says she is a fan of the Scandinavian cool and clean, white and wood aesthetic, which Swedish company Sola, led by managing director, Sofia Bune Strandh, does so well. ‘We wanted to create a beautiful, calm mood with shades of white and grey,’ says Karoline. ‘Sofia persuaded me to go with the wood worktop and floor. I was worried that they wouldn’t wear well, but they actually cope brilliantly and prevent the space looking clinical by adding warmth to the space.’ ‘The room works very well when we have friends for dinner – something that we love to do – but that wasn’t our main concern when we began the project,’ says Karoline. ‘The most important thing was to create a space that works for family life, every day. And that is what this room does so perfectly.’ **EKBB**

NATURAL HARMONY
A palette of grainy wood with white and grey creates a fresh, clean and modern look

‘The layout is a practical U-shape, making use of the three walls of the room. It made sense to include a large island in the centre of the space’



EASY ESSENTIALS

Shopping bags can be unloaded easily from the island worktop straight into the tall larder and fridges

SOAP STAR

Above left The second sink is positioned on the island end, so that it can be reached from three sides

CALM & COLLECTED

Above right This compartmentalised drawer, made of birch, is ideal for storing cutlery and a knife rack



SOFIA BUNE STRANDH
MANAGING DIRECTOR,
SOLA KITCHENS



How did you begin your plan of the kitchen design?

It was an easy start, because Karoline simply said she wanted exactly the same as her previous kitchen. So we knew that we would be using the same streamlined and handleless doors in a warm white (just one shade off bright white). But, of course, this is a completely different room, so the layout needed to be designed to suit, and we needed to make sure that there was sufficient storage, worktop space and room to house all the appliances immaculately. This time, we built the tall cabinets to about

2750mm high to take advantage of the height of the ceiling, so that there is now room to store less-often-used platters and serving dishes.

Can you tell us about the plan of the central island?

The layout is a practical U-shape, making use of the three walls of the room. It made sense to include a large island in the centre of the space. This serves as a focal point and bridge between the base units on one wall, tall cabinets on the other. In Karoline's previous kitchen, we had used the same worktops throughout, but this time we

introduced some soft contrast by using a white stained oak finish for the island top.

How did you plan the utilities into the scheme?

To provide more storage, we designed a walk-in utility zone next to the breakfast area. It features cabinetry that is more classic and pantry-like in style than the contemporary handleless design of the kitchen, and it is painted in a soft grey. It also makes a very useful space to tuck messy pots and pans out of sight when guests arrive, so that the open-plan room can be kept calm and uncluttered.



NEW HEIGHTS
Extra tall housing accommodates two integrated fridges, a freezer and a wine cooler, plus ovens

SERENE FEELING
From the dining table to the kitchen, the colour scheme continues, united by the same timber flooring

‘The room needed to work hard and be very practical but we also wanted a relaxed living and dining space for all the family’



‘We wanted to create a beautiful, calm mood with shades of white and grey’



TABLE PLAN
Banquette seating surrounds the breakfast table, ensuring there is plenty of room for this family of six



NORDIC INFLUENCE
A glimpse into the utility zone with its classic cabinetry in grey



DOG'S LIFE
Cocker Spaniel Holly enjoys a snack from her special dog bowl drawer



Kitchen profile
Sletten furniture features integrated finger channels and is spray-painted in warm white for a clean, streamlined and modern look. Worktops of Samsung Everest White composite stone echo the cool colour palette, while an island top of white stained oak on the island introduces a warmer note. A utility in classic Frillen furniture, spray-painted in soft grey, completes the Scandinavian-inspired design.

SOLA KITCHENS
121 Munster Road, London, SW6 6DH.
Tel 020 3004 0898. solakitchens.com
Kitchen prices from £30,000.

LUXURIOUS
& OPEN

The kitchen looks
out over the spacious
living and dining areas
in the new extension

*‘We had to keep the front of the house intact,
but extended across the back and side to create
an open-plan living-dining-kitchen area’*





Stockists

APPLIANCES

H6460 BP oven, £1,749; DG6400 combination steam oven, £2,249; K37222 iD fridges, £1,225 each, all Miele. CI481 induction hob, £1,409; RF413 freezer, £4,218; RW414 wine climate cabinet, £4,044, all Gaggenau. SMV53A00GB fully integrated dishwasher, £503, Bosch. Stratus ceiling extractor unit, £1,914, Westin Design.

FIXTURES AND FURNISHINGS

Gessi Oxygen taps with pull-out rinse, from £268 each, Sterling. Modern boiling water tap, £890, Quooker. BlancoClaron 550-U undermounted sink, £438; BlancoClaron 180-U undermounted sink, £337; BlancoRondo Sol-IF flush-mounted prep sink, £128, all Blanco. Samsung Everest White composite stone worktops, upstands and window sills, £350 per linear m, excluding templating and installation; Spekva white stained solid oak worktop (on island), £300 per linear m, all Sola Kitchens. For a similar white oiled oak flooring, try The Natural Wood Floor Company. Made to order banquette seating, cupboards and shelves. Oak Slice dining table, from £1,669, Adventures in Furniture. Caravaggio Matt pendant lights (above island), from £178 each; Knoll Tulip chairs, from £960 each; Knoll Saarinen oval table, from £3,492; Hay About A Chair dining chairs, from £197 each; Secto Atto 5000 pendant lights, from £960 each, x Skandium. Fermo sideboard, from £1,359, BoConcept. Jonah sofa, £499, Made.

FOR STOCKISTS, SEE PAGE 180



LIGHT & SHADE

Sunlight floods the new room, accentuating the crisp and fresh feel of the white, grey and blonde wood scheme

‘The room works really well when we have friends for dinner, which is something that we love to do’

