

FEELING BLUE

The run of wall cabinets creates a strong block of colour that gives the space its character



On a GRAND scale

Ali and Ian Johnson have built a spacious kitchen that oozes style and elegance

PHOTOS *Paul Craig* | WORDS *Sally Smith*

OPENING UP

The challenge for Ali was to create a light-filled space that retained a feeling of depth and warmth

‘Being bold with colour can be daunting, but you really reap the rewards in the end, especially when paired with metallic accents,’ says Peter



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hen Ali, an interior designer and co-founder of design consultancy Otta Design, moved into this substantial, Edwardian semi-detached property in West London, she was relishing the opportunity to use her design talents to give the house a brand new look.

‘This was going to be our home for the next 10 years, so we wanted to take our time to work out the practicalities as well as the aesthetics,’ says Ali. The couple, along with their daughter Eva, 11, son Sam, 13, and labradoodle Monty, lived here for two years before they began the renovations.

And there was certainly no holding back when they did start the works to their four-bedroom house in January 2017. In just nine months, they extended and reconfigured the loft to add a fifth bedroom and a second bathroom, as well as opening up the ground floor to create two living rooms and a stunning new kitchen with a utility room.

Ali’s vision was to create a luxurious and practical kitchen for the family to enjoy and to entertain friends. The project resulted in a room with impressive dimensions that you wouldn’t necessarily expect to find in this period of property. ‘We built a L-shaped extension that includes the standard permitted three metres to the rear and sought planning permission, not only to build over the side return but to incorporate the alley way alongside the house by building out to the neighbours’ boundary, adding another 1.2 metres to the width,’ she recalls.

‘I knew I needed to find ways to maximise the feeling of space so we decided to invest in lowering the ground level by 20cm, in effect raising the ceiling height,’ explains Ali. It was a challenge, but the extra work was transformative, as it meant they could install stunning, bespoke, three-panel bi-fold doors measuring 2.6 metres high, creating a kitchen that is flooded with natural light from their west-facing garden.

The finishes were chosen to contribute to a sleek, modern feel. The handleless cabinetry by NJC Kitchens’ Hacker Classic range, painted Aquamarine, are complemented beautifully by the subtle off-white walls, painted in Farrow & Ball Ammonite. A magnificent island, nearly three metres in length, makes a dramatic and sophisticated focal point to the kitchen.

Creating a new door connected to the living space has opened up the downstairs of the property, allowing Ali’s flair for design to flow throughout. The house is a rich mix of sumptuous colours with a warmth and sophistication that reflects her unique style. **EKBB**



RELAXED LIVING

'I didn't want to have a long line of stools - it's more sociable with corner seating, especially when my girlfriends are over,' says Ali



‘I wanted the design to be streamlined and an extractor hood would have ruined the effect’



DETAILS MATTER

The clean look has been enhanced by a six-ring induction hob that fits seamlessly into the worktop



Q&A

ALI JOHNSON

INTERIOR DESIGNER,
OTTA DESIGN

Who did you approach for the kitchen cabinetry? 'I was impressed with the quality of my friend's kitchen, designed by Nick Clisby from NJC Kitchens. We made a great team as his expertise proved invaluable throughout the project. Nick and I collaborated on all aspects of the design and layout and between us we came up with the idea of creating a second entrance to the kitchen directly from the living room, introducing much needed light to the scheme. We built recessed, vertically lit shelves to create a bar area which meant we could avoid a tunnel effect.'

Can you tell us about the splashback? 'I wanted something different, and the bronze mirrored splashback not only

reflects the light beautifully but adds that elegant finish I was looking for. I'm a bit of a perfectionist, so when Nick said I had to have a join in it, I wasn't thrilled. Thankfully, he came up with a clever design trick to have the join behind the tap, which was ingenious as there is a natural break in the line anyway.'

What inspired your design? 'One of the key starting points for me for any project is colour and it was definitely the case for my kitchen. I'd already chosen a palette of moody blues and greens with accents of blush pink throughout the house, so I knew the Aquamarine cabinetry would work perfectly as well as complement the rest of my décor.'



PLENTY OF STORAGE

The worktop wraps around the island to create a relief to the turquoise cabinetry, whilst generously designed drawers ensure the surfaces are kept clutter free

Essential kitchens



CLEAN LINES

Left 'We were restricted by the position of the boiler, so that was the obvious place for the floor-to-ceiling larder cupboard,' says Ali

UNINTERRUPTED VIEWS

Below 'The colour of the cabinets change throughout the day from light blue to grey as the light hits them,' says Ali

'The symmetry of the layout and position of the island is key to the success of the entire scheme'



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**KITCHEN
PROFILE**

This stylish handleless kitchen from NJC Kitchens' Hacker Classic range, painted in a matt finish Aquamarine, is complemented beautifully by a composite, cement-effect worktop and bronze mirrored splashback. The plinths have been painted the same colour to give a high-end finish.

NJC KITCHENS

29 ST MARY'S ROAD, LONDON, W5 5PR
TEL 020 8567 8955
NJCKITCHENS.COM

Kitchen prices start from £20,000

ON DISPLAY

The floating shelving adds a contemporary feel to the space and softens the lines of the room

MIXING STYLES

Introducing a range of mid-century accessories in the dining and living areas of the extension balances the overall contemporary design of the kitchen



‘We love to entertain, so it was important to include both formal and relaxed seating areas within the layout. We can comfortably sit 10 guests around the extendable dining table’



STOCKISTS

APPLIANCES HM676GOS6B single built-in electric oven with microwave, £1,549; HB672GBS1B single built-in oven, £899, both Siemens. Blanco BH467831 induction hob, £1,795; Caple Vapos Quad three-in-one hot water mixer tap, £1,006, both NJC Kitchens. KIV38X22GB fridge freezer, £669; SMV53M30GB dishwasher, £549, both Bosch. Hidden 90cm extractor fan, £389, Elica.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Unika pendant lighting by Northern, £266, Holloways of Ludlow, £266; Deco glaze bronze mirror splashback, £950; Compact ice cement worktop, £POA; Caple Zero55 single sink basin, £305, all NJC Kitchens. Aluminium bi-fold doors, £POA, Origin. Talia bar stools, £130 each, Habitat. Aged slate grey flooring 220mm width panels, £79 per sq. m, 3 Oak. Recessed bar shelving, £POA, Otta Design. For stockists see page 156