

grand central

Feature by **Amelia Thorpe**
Photography by **Justin Paul**

Despite its glorious garden and indoor swimming pool, this Hertfordshire home's brand new kitchen is the star attraction.



Designer Paul Marazzi's reputation for coming up with something a little out of the ordinary draws new buyers through the doors of his Living In Style showroom on a regular basis. "People often see too many similar concepts so I like to inspire my clients with a scheme that will really excite them," he says.

Purchasers usually come to him through word-of-mouth recommendations of friends and relations. This was the case for the owners of this Hertfordshire home's new family-friendly kitchen.

The property was constructed in the 1920's and has been modernised over the years, most recently enjoying a total refurbishment. "I was asked to design a kitchen with plenty of 'wow' and visual impact, but it had to be practical from a working point of view, especially because they like to cook and have young children too," explains Paul. "The couple had looked around for a scheme to suit their needs, but weren't satisfied with anything they'd already seen," he adds.

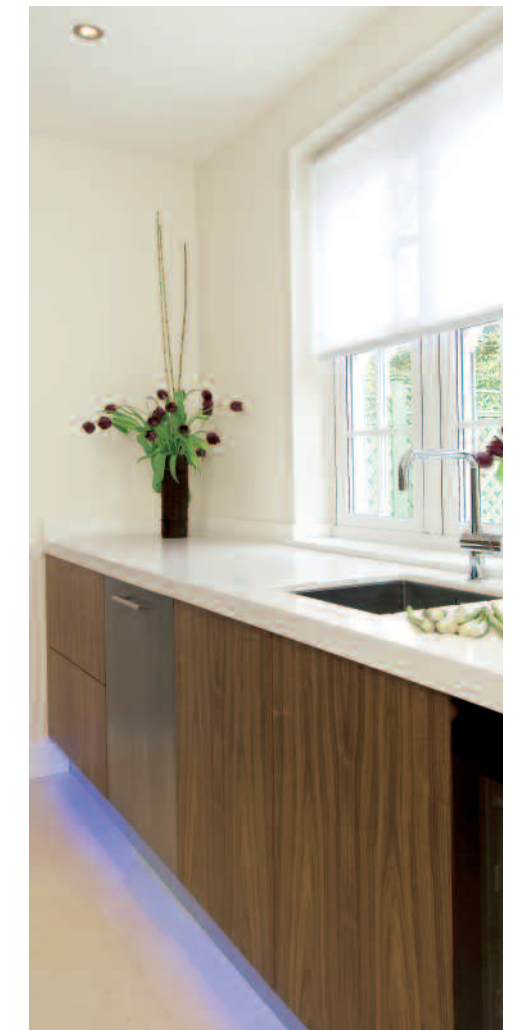
above The long island is an absolute delight for a cook, with plenty of preparation and serving surface plus maximum storage solutions below.

left The main eating area of the room, the dining table sets the scene for informal family meals and, when dressed to impress, for special dinner parties.

kitchen profile

Smart book-matched walnut veneer adds a sense of warmth and contrast to smooth Blanco Zeus Silestone worktops and sleek steel appliances in this contemporary kitchen. The linear design by Living In Style creates a crisp and clean finish; its handle-less cupboards and open-plan layout add to the seamless flow of the room.

Living In Style, Unit 1, 162 Coles Green Road, Staples Corner, London NW2 7HW.
Tel: 020 8450 9555. www.livinginstyle.co.uk
Expect to pay from £20,000.



left Double doors provide access to the garden and luxurious indoor swimming pool complex.

above & below A spacious wet area is vital in a busy kitchen and should include a large sink, a dishwasher and effective draining.

above Tall housing is framed in steel and finished with blue LEDs for an ambient, glamorous touch.

A friend suggested they pay a visit to the Living In Style showroom. "We started talking and it became clear that they wanted something quite classic compared with my circular designs, but with a real contemporary edge. It also had to stand the test of time," recalls Paul. He suggested the mix of smooth Silestone and rich walnut finished with touches of steel. "The dark wood brings a sense of warmth and prevents that cold, clinical look," he adds.

The layout was the next consideration. The 3.2m. island is the main focal point. Designed for the preparation and serving of meals, it's complete with a sink, a powerful gas hob and even a Zip Hydro tap. This provides both instant boiling and chilled filtered water – great for making quick drinks (or porridge, according to Paul).

right The powerful gas hob makes light work of whipping up the likes of stir-fries for hungry guests.

"From a practical point of view, the cook can be at the hob with the ovens and fridge freezer behind, so everything is within easy reach," he explains.

To add to the feeling of space, one side of the island has a semi-depth panel; the effect accentuated by glamorous blue down-lighters. He applied the same attention to detail to the bank of tall housing incorporating most of the appliances and ample storage. A wide steel frame built around the cupboards complements the crisp, clean shapes while the steel plinth is a neat and useful finishing touch. "The smart, handle-less design enhances its flow, as does the book-matched veneer," explains Paul. "The beautiful lines of this eye-catching wood grain create an exquisite, seamless look," he adds.



While the island incorporates a breakfast bar, the family wanted a dining table to use for meals. Paul designed one in the same materials, then added a streamlined computer station alongside it. "This way, the parents can see what their children are up to when they are using the Internet," he explains. To blend in with the kitchen furniture, the owners chose to add internal doors in the same walnut.

Their timber and glazed design has an Oriental-like style. "They supplement the calm feel of the room, without taking away from its warmth," says Paul, noting that the doors lead to the entrance hall, utility room, garden and indoor swimming pool. "It's a huge house with lots of space on the ground floor, including living and dining rooms, but the kitchen is the real hub of this home," he concludes. ■



above The desk comprises a keyboard platform that can be easily pushed in when it's not needed.

below The Zip Hydro tap serves both boiling and filtered chilled water – great for filling pans or cold refreshment during the warmer summer months.



"They were looking for something that was quite classic, but with a contemporary edge."

above The computer's position means the cook can keep an eye on the children surfing the Net.

left A well-planned design always embraces the 'working triangle' for ease of movement and use.

useful information

Appliances

G1272SCVi integrated **dishwasher**, £855; H4250B **single ovens**, £793 each; M8261 combination **microwave**, £540; DG2661 **steam oven**, £1116; KWT4154 UG-1 **wine cooler**, £958, at Miele. **Tel: 01235 554455. www.miele.co.uk**

SBS5713 side-by-side **fridge freezer**, from £1979, at Liebherr. **Tel: 0870 898 5050. www.liebherr.co.uk**

CT36G gas **hob**, around £1395, at Wolf. **Tel: 020 8418 3800. www.westy.co.uk**

Square 800 **extractor hood**, £1987, at W.S. Westin. **Tel: 01484 421585. www.westin.co.uk**

Fixtures & furnishings

Zip **Hydro tap**, from £2100, at Water Coolers Direct. **Tel: 0800 731 1491. www.watercoolersdirect.com**

BlancoMaster-S **taps**, £387 each, at Blanco. **Tel: 020 8452 3399. www.blanco.co.uk**

Similar floor **tiles**, priced to order, at Solus Ceramics. **Tel: 0121 753 0777. www.solusceramics.com**

Suter PUS18U **prep sink**, £164; Suter PUS45U **main sink**, around £312, at Home Creations. **Tel: 0845 126 0731. www.homecreations.co.uk**

Blanco Zeus Silestone **worktops**, £290 per linear m., at Living In Style. **See kitchen profile for details.**

Similar **chairs**, around £35 each, at Dwell. **Tel: 0845 675 9090. www.dwell.co.uk**

Similar **tableware**, from £3, at Debenhams. **Tel: 0844 561 6161. www.debenhams.com**