



The kitchen was designed to look good when viewed from the overhead gallery. An L-shaped design allowed for a dining table to fit comfortably within the space.



# ARTISTIC LICENCE

A treasured painting was the inspiration behind the colour in this light-filled kitchen.

PHOTOS PAUL CRAIG WORDS EMILY PECK



*'It needed to be a practical kitchen as the couple have a real passion for cooking.'*

**Above** A stylish Gutmann hood offers powerful yet quiet extraction, while knife and kitchen utensil rails ensure the worktop remains clutter-free.

**Left** The innovative pull-out cupboard doors feature Blum hinges.

**Opposite** Natural light floods in through the six skylights that have been positioned above the kitchen and dining area.

**W**hen Abigail and Nick Vaughan set eyes on the recently renovated contemporary house in Hertfordshire that they now call home, they were instantly attracted to the double-height space that housed the kitchen. 'We weren't keen on the actual kitchen units that came with the house, as they didn't reflect our style, but it was the high vaulted ceilings and large galleried landing that overlooks the kitchen space that we found impressive,' says Abigail. 'We moved in just after the previous →

#### KITCHEN PROFILE

Second Nature's subtly textured Fenton Graphite cabinetry contrasts with the simple matt Fresco White wall units. The space features a polished concrete heated floor and three zones for food preparation, dining and relaxing, while a denim blue glass splashback adds a burst of colour.

**Kitchen project management and design:** Matthew Parnum at Ice Interior, 323 High Street, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 1AL. Tel: 01442 864178. [iceinterior.co.uk](http://iceinterior.co.uk). Kitchen prices start from £8,000. Kitchen cabinetry: Second Nature. [sncollection.co.uk](http://sncollection.co.uk). Frontals with custom-made cabinetry from Ice Interior.





owners had finished renovating. They had modernised the three-bedroom bungalow, raising the ceilings and building into the attic to transform it into a five-bedroom property with lots of light and a contemporary feel. The new extension that they added also made room for the open-plan kitchen area.'

The couple, who now have a one-year-old son called Joshua, moved into their new home in 2007, but it wasn't until mid 2010 that they ventured on designing a kitchen that suited their personal style. 'The appeal of our new home was that it didn't need structural changes, but we did want to fit a new kitchen as soon as possible,' says Abigail. 'Although the

freestanding kitchen that we bought with the house was perfectly functional, we felt that it didn't suit the space. But, a year after we moved in, the kitchen roof started sagging, and when it rained it began to leak. It turned out that the wrong windows had been installed when the previous owners renovated so we had to refit the ceiling, replacing the four square windows with six new skylights. This ate into the budget we'd put aside for a new kitchen, so we had to wait a few more years before we could afford one that we felt did this amazing space justice.'

To enhance the area and provide a suitable backdrop for the new kitchen, the couple were desperate to replace the floor. 'The previous →



**Above** A denim blue glass splashback adds a sleek injection of colour that complements the monochrome palette.

**Right** A Neff American fridge freezer is neatly housed within the Fresco white units.

**Left** A sleek bank of appliances features warming drawers, as well as coordinating steam ovens, microwave and coffee machine.



A polished concrete floor provides a neutral base and makes sure the kitchen is the real star of the show.

*‘What we love about this room is the separate zones for food preparation, dining and relaxing.’*

owners had put down a stone carpet floor with underfloor heating, which looked great at the time, but it wasn't sealed,' says Abigail. 'In a high traffic area such as the kitchen it just wasn't practical. We couldn't clean the floor properly.' Abigail and Nick shopped around for a company who could replace the floor and refit the electrics. 'We eventually found a company who suggested laying a polished concrete floor on top of the existing stone instead of replacing it completely,' says Abigail. As a result, the floor, which now leads seamlessly into the utility and adjacent cloakroom, has been raised by half an inch. It was around this time that the couple came across Ice Interior, who designed and project managed their new kitchen. 'They were really appealing because, as well as fitting kitchens,

they also offered an interior design service. I went in and talked through with them their range of contemporary kitchens and they said they could project manage the job too, including liaising with the flooring company. This was terrific news as it meant that Nick and I ended up having a stress-free time.'

For inspiration on what colour and finish to choose for their new kitchen, Abigail and Nick looked to a treasured piece of artwork and briefed designer Matthew Parnum, from Ice Interiors accordingly. 'The denim coloured blue glass splashback was inspired by an original piece of artwork in the snug area of the kitchen,' says Matthew. 'This colour is echoed in the cushions and wallpaper also in the snug area, which was chosen with the help of designer, Kate Parnum.'

Abigail and Nick wanted a modern kitchen design, but it needed to be a highly practical cook's kitchen as they have a real passion for cooking and entertaining. To create a streamlined feel, as much space for storage was incorporated into the area as possible. 'The room is very large and, with a vaulted ceiling and an overhead gallery, the bird's-eye perspective demanded an original design solution, so that the kitchen would look equally impressive from above as from the ground,' says Matthew. 'Many layouts were considered, but Nick and Abigail wanted the kitchen to have a dining space and feature a large table, that can seat up to 14. So the optimum kitchen layout was an L-shape with an appliance bank.'

Having an L-shape design means that →



The large galleried landing overlooks the vast kitchen and dining space. The oak table extends to fit up to 14 people, which comes in ideal when the couple have family get-togethers.





*'We recently had a party for 100 people, with doors opening to the garden.'*

worktop space is limited. 'With this design we knew we had to compromise but, with lots of storage and by hanging knives and kitchen utensils on the wall, it gives us more than enough workspace to use,' says Abigail.

As a keen cook, the latest appliances come in very handy to Nick. 'Two ovens with doors that neatly slide underneath on opening, a steam oven and a combination microwave are just some of the useful and great-looking appliances we've got here,' says Abigail. And fitting a large table instead of an island unit was a conscious decision that has worked out well, both ergonomically and aesthetically. 'What we didn't want to do was include an island unit, because we didn't want anything that would break up the space - with a table it can be easily moved into the corner when we want to have a party,' says Abigail. 'We did experiment using cardboard boxes to see how an island unit would look, but it didn't feel right within the space.'

'What we love about this room is the separate zones for food preparation, dining and relaxing,' adds Abigail. 'It's ideal for the family - Joshua loves to draw at the dining table while I'm cooking, for example, and Nick and I often chill out and read the papers in the snug area. And it's also ideal for entertaining. We recently had a party for 100 people - with the doors opening up onto the garden thanks to our new kitchen design. This is now a really enjoyable space to be in.' ■

Plenty of glass creates an open, light-filled space, while the colour inspiration came from a treasured painting on wall in snug area.

## STOCKISTS INFORMATION

### APPLIANCES

2 x B46W74 Series 5 Evolution Slide-away ovens, £1,111 each; C57W40 Series 3 Compact combination microwave, £570; C47C62 Series 5 Circo steam oven, £948; C77V60 Series 5 coffee machine, £1,063; T44T90 Series 5 90cm 5 Zone induction hob, £922; K3990 Series 5 American fridge freezer, £1,876; 2 x N21H40 warming drawers, £320 each; N21H10 accessory drawer, £205; all Neff; RF801S 2 x Texas sink, £422; RF32 tap, £350, both Reginox; boiling tap, £830, Quooker; Blanco cooker hood Model 517, £2,275, Gutmann; all appliances supplied by Ice Interior.

### FIXTURES AND FURNISHINGS

Decoglaze Denim blue glass splashback, from £432 per sq. m; Samsung Radianz Everest Quartz work surfaces, from £316 per linear m, from Original Marble and Granite Ltd supplied by Ice Interior; Second Nature Fenton Graphite cabinetry in Fresco White, which includes Le Mans Arena Corner Storage; Pull-out larder; Grass Novapro drawer system, Blum Aventos hinges on top boxes, Blum Soft Close hinges on cabinetry, Egger 18mm MFC carcasses (glued and dowelled), supplied and fitted by Ice Interior. Flooring, £8,600, The Stone Carpet Company; Cushion fabric, from £43 per m; Wallpaper, from £47 per roll; both Romo supplied by Ice Interior.

\* Prices are approximate. For stockists, see page 192.

