



Yerna chose Graphite Oak veneer units to add warmth to the kitchen and blend with the Crystal high-gloss lacquer cabinets, adding a timeless modern feel.

MODERN OPULENCE

Luxurious materials and a clever open-plan design resulted in a stunning, stylish and comfortable family home.

PHOTOS: JUSTIN PAUL | WORDS: EMILY PECK



When Verna and Mike Ford embarked on a project to create their dream home, they knew it would need to be meticulously planned and monitored every step of the way. 'We could have let the project management team and interior designer take over and plan the whole thing for us,' says Verna, 'but we knew it was important to be involved in every last design detail - after all, we're the ones who live here,' she explains.

The freshly designed five-bedroom home, where Verna and Mike, company director at Responsible Power, now live with their three young children, Eleanor, nine, Mikey, seven, Jonny, three, is a far cry from the property they first set eyes on.

The most important criteria for Verna and Mike in the redesign was to create a large open-plan family space that was practical as well as beautiful. 'We were going to buy somewhere that had already been decorated,' explains Verna, 'but we couldn't find anything

that had a large enough room. We kept seeing houses with separate drawing rooms and dining rooms and we thought wouldn't it be great if we could create one large family space where we can all be together'. The children are still at the age where they like to be in the same room as their parents.'

Once the couple bought the property, they

called upon the help of Alaister Kelsey of Space Cubed Ltd. to help extend and reconfigure the area. Plans for a single-storey extension at the back to make room for a new open-plan, kitchen/dining/living room were drawn up. 'I was a major job,' says Verna. 'We literally stripped the property down to two walls in a bid to make better use of the permitted

DESIGN PROFILE

A mix of Graphite Oak veneer and Crystal high gloss lacquer cabinets, teamed with Glacier White Corian and Matrix granite worktops create an eye-catching design for this kitchen. Spot-lit glass splashbacks add to the sophisticated feel. The main cooking and preparation island incorporates a stunning raised breakfast bar with accompanying bar stools and stylish pendant lighting. The Graphite Oak veneer is echoed in the living area across the room, which has low cabinets to house the cables and entertainment equipment. Upstairs, a palette of charcoal and silver features predominantly in the master bedroom and pieces such as the Kaldewei Conoduo bath with whirlpool system in the en suite make for a luxurious setting.

Kitchen: Sheen Kitchen Design, 208 Upper Richmond Road West, East Sheen, SW14 8AH. Tel: 020 8876 6106. Priced from £25,000.

Design, construction and project management: Alaister Kelsey of Space Cubed Ltd., 1-2, 7 Station Road, SL1 6JJ. Tel: 01628 661272, spacecubed.co.uk.

Interior designer: Melloney Thorne of Fig Tree Interiors. Tel: 01344 883 426, figtreeinteriors.com.

Above The eye-catching breakfast bar is the main focus of this gorgeous room. The icy white Corian contrasts well with the sparkly granite.

Left This entertainment-loving family love to socialise with friends and relatives. A high-performance wine refrigerator keeps their champagne chilled.

Right A well-positioned working triangle makes this kitchen very practical and easy to navigate, while looking good too!





'A welcoming, open-plan kitchen space was exactly what the family wanted.'

Above The large kitchen/dining space is dominated by the statement breakfast bar, which looks out over the large garden.

Left A glamorous pendant light was chosen as it cleverly zones the elegant dining area.

Opposite Verna can prepare food at the crisp, white island and still socialise with her family when they're relaxing on the sumptuous sofa.

development space,' she explains. From 2,000 sq. feet, the house now has 3,000 sq. feet. 'I wanted the extension to blend in with the rest of the house and to feel that it had always been there, and Alaister did a great job.'

To help with the kitchen design in the new extension, Lucy Hallett of Sheen Kitchen Design came on board. 'Space Cubed Ltd. created a warm and open structure, with a three-panel sliding door leading onto the sunny garden and six ceiling lights which let natural light flood in,' says Verna. 'When it came to choosing the kitchen, I wanted materials and finishes that would look good in the light. We began by looking at classic designs, but then Alaister recommended Sheen Kitchen Design and we were impressed by its portfolio of modern yet timeless projects.'

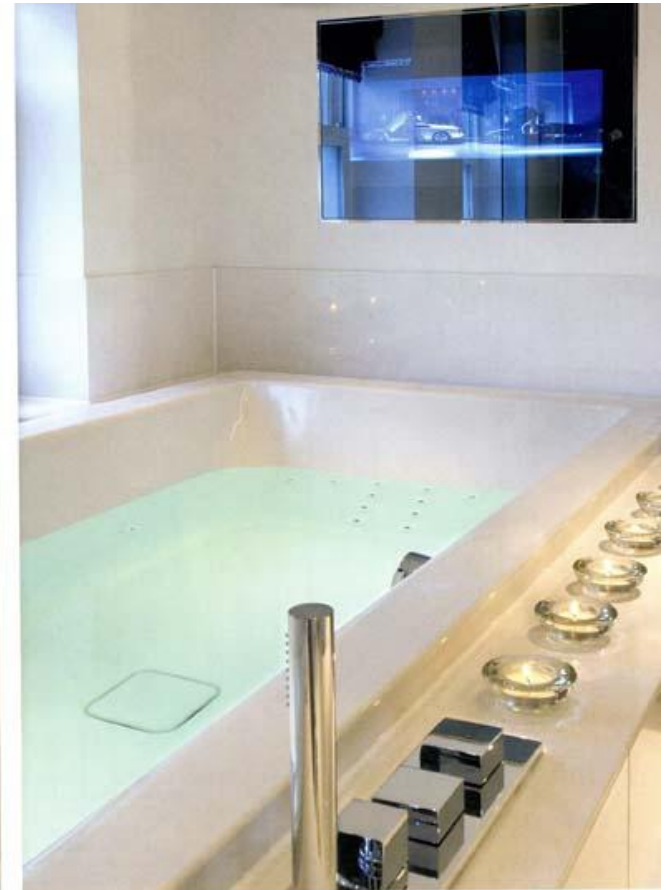
Verna's brief to Lucy was straight to the point. 'Verna knew what she wanted - good storage and the 'wow' factor - and needed it to be put into action,' says Lucy. 'I created two triangles - the preparation and cooking -





'We wanted to create a stylish, boutique feel, so went for a chic palette of silvers and greys.'

A luxurious mix of silk, linen, chenille and velvet combine to create a sophisticated, chic feel in the master bedroom.



Above Verna wanted to create a spa feel in the en suite bathroom, so chose a Kaldewei Conoduo bath with integrated filler and whirlpool system and a large shower ceiling head from Hansgrohe.

Left The contemporary bedroom is kitted out with the latest entertainment technology and has a cool and elegant, en suite bathroom attached.

Top right The integrated bathroom TV from Aquavision ensures soaking in the bath is an entertaining affair.

area on the island and the wash area,' Lucy explains. The fridge and ovens were placed near the island to give maximum work area to prepare and then cook. The space was designed in this way so that more than two people could work in the kitchen without bumping into each other. The height of the room was on the low side so all the cabinets had to be manufactured at a special height.

When it came to materials, Lucy advised Verna to choose neutral colours, which could always be added to with vibrant colours at a later date if desired. A fuchsia rug and cushions are an example of this experiment with colour. 'I was taken with the warmth of the Graphite Oak veneer, which looks stunning with integrated stainless steel appliances,' adds Verna, 'but wanted lighter units too, to add a modern feel. I looked high and low for the perfect material for the breakfast bar, I went to the warehouse and saw a large slab of the Matrix granite. When the

light shines on it, it looks like swirls of volcanic lava with silver.'

Glazing was used to create a particularly clever feature in the kitchen, which leads onto a gym and utility room on one side and through to a living room, study and playroom on the other. The playroom sits next to the main kitchen space so instead of tiling the splashback area on a worktop run, glazing was fitted here,' explains Verna. 'This means we can sit Jonny in the playroom and still keep an eye on him when we're cooking in the kitchen.'

While the kitchen was taking shape, Melloney Thorne of Fig Tree Interiors came in to help with the furnishings in the kitchen and to put the scheme together for the master bedroom and bathroom on the first floor. 'Verna wanted to create a stylish boutique feel in these rooms using silvers and greys,' says Melloney, 'so we used lots of rich charcoal in the carpet, walls and curtains to add depth to the scheme,' she explains. The wonderful

range of textures; silk, linen, chenille and velvet within the room, balance beautifully together to create an oasis of calm within a busy family home.

The bathroom has an equally opulent feel, with stunning Bisazza mosaic tiles along the shower wall and an integrated television above the bath. 'I wanted a wet room style shower, which you could just walk in to, with a big showerhead and separate hand shower,' says Verna. 'Sleek and contemporary white tiles add to the clean feel, while uplights highlight the mosaic feature wall and dimmerable LED lights throughout create a soothing and relaxing mood.'

By the following spring, the majority of the building and design work was complete and the family could finally move in and enjoy their new home. The latest technology is the icing on the cake. Each space benefits from a Sonos system, which gives the family access to their music library in any room in the