**CLIENT BRIEF**

This project was for a family home comprising of two adults & three children (ages 10,5 & 4)

The client brief was quite specific (outlined below.) They explained that they had a busy home in which lots of entertaining both family & friends took place. The final finish was to look stylish, bright & inviting. The clients were adamant that the finished look would appear almost ‘beach like in style,’ but still remain warm & inviting.

**KEY FEATURES**

Client Requests:

* Style: Classical New England in frame with a some contemporary touches, large working island with seating for four, if possible that the four seats would not necessarily be side by side. Mantle (not the traditional, something ‘unfussy!’) No angles, soft edges. Hand painting essential.
* Worktops: Unsure, they wanted something hardwearing & versatile, but not cold (their previous worktop was Star Galaxy granite)
* Appliances: Large fridge with freezer, oven, combi-microwave, hob, dishwasher, waste disposal, prep sink on island
* Utility: Easy access storage for lots of coats, shoes & sports gear for three kids. Laundry appliances to be hidden if possible as the utility provide access to bathroom.

**BUDGET**

Maximum of €40k, to include appliances, utility, worktops, cabinetry.

**OTHER CLIENT REQUIREMENTS**

The client’s main priority was that we spend as little time as possible in their home with the least amount of disruption. They needed continued access to cooking & water/sink facilities. A new floor was to be laid in the kitchen, hall & utility & therefore clients wanted the project as a whole to be completed in steps as close together.

**CLIENT WISH LIST**

We like to suggest to clients to come up with a ‘wish list,’ not just for the exterior cabinetry, but to actually decide what their requirements are for inside the cabinets, from a completely practical point of view. We find that lots of clients don’t take much time to consider storage within the cabinetry itself. It is paramount that the kitchen ‘works’ practically as well as aesthetically. Our clients had seen a mirrored splash back behind the hob, as they had seen it in our showroom, it adds great depth to a room, but when we pointed some of the impracticalities (steam & splashes from the hob, as well as being able to see yourself in the mirror when cooking) they changed their mind!

*Storage within the mantle for spices etc Easy access for all cooking utensils but not in drawers. Larder with drawers for baking storage. Drawers under the sink for storage Glass display cabinet for crystal, but not a dresser. Also, some open display for cookbooks etc. Radio & ipod in a position that it can be heard, not on the counter! Hidden wine storage . Utility that doubles up as cloak room for three kids*

**OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME**

There weren’t a huge amount of obstacles to overcome in this project. However there were some design elements & features that we felt would really add to the overall finish & add to the continuity of design, within the room. We wanted some cabinetry features to give a subtle wow factor to the room that would only be possible with a bespoke design. Minor obstacles included making four different radius curved door, which can be time consuming. Curved sections of the mantle & ensuring it opens & closes smoothly were also tricky & ensuring our false door functions perfectly!

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**DESIGN**

We spent quite a bit of time with the clients, as we changed the complete layout of the original kitchen, ie: cooker hob & mantle, which at first they were opposed to, as they found it difficult to visualise the finished product! However on presenting the final drawings in 3D, they loved our ideas & felt that the change of layout would really enhance the end result. One of the clients favourite elements was our curved mantle. Their kitchen is incredibly bright with wonderful sea views, so the New England style, would work really well.

**TIMING**

The lead time for this project as generous, however we felt that due to the timing constraints within the clients house, that as much work as possible should be completed in our workshop, trying to keep disruption in the client’s house to a minimum. Some services needed to be moved from one area of the kitchen to the other, i.e. power for cooker & hob & plumbing to the island for a sink. This was co-ordinated with our plumber & electrician to time with fitting of our client’s new floor.

**CHOICE OF MATERIALS**

We were able to show our clients the various door styles, timbers, carcasses in from the various kitchens inour showroom. Our clients decided on oak melamine carcasses, frames & doors in Poplar with All drawers in solid beech & dovetailed.

**INNOVATION & CREATIVITY USING BESPOKE ELEMENTS**

It is imperative in this industry that creativity, design & ideas stand out from others, particularly as we feel that the bespoke & handmade cabinetry is under constant threat from mass production. Additional ideas that can bring a client’s project from ‘just another kitchen’ to a truly outstanding room, is key to being at the top of this business. We always endeavour to give the clients our ideas that might bring the project a step further to achieve the style & look that they set out at the beginning.

We decided to incorporate a false door into the utility which balanced the look on either side of the fridge & added surprise feature to guests!

* Small glass doors were included over the units for display purposes. The glazing bars are part of the cabinetry, constructed using halving joints as opposed to being glued to the glass. We used oak inside the cabinets, to keep the look soft & warm when lit.
* In order to facilitate the clients request to have four seats *(but not side by side*) we decided to create a circular divide in the island. This allowed for two seats on each side, with a disc to divide the two spaces & to act as a centrepiece for entertaining, it serves as a table when eating & as a nice spot for wine & canapés when guests arrive, as our clients entertain a lot.
* False cabinet drawer fronts are used at the seating end of the island to create symmetry & to balance the drawer fronts at the opposite end.
* An in frame set of double doors were used under the sink to keep the look, but in fact is a drawer.
* Integrated dishwasher
* The curved pillars at the front of the mantle are hinged in order to conceal spice & oils.
* The 250mm units on either side of the cookers pull out as one drawer unit where we fitted storage containers for tall utensils on one side & tall chopping boards on the other side, which were all part of our clients wish list .All pot drawers/cutlery drawers are on the Island for ease of access for cooking & convenience.

**WORKTOPS**

After a considerable amount of thought & assistance from both ourselves & worktop suppliers, the clients decided on countertops.

* From a practical point of view, Silestone (quartz)was chosen for the island in cream.
* Solid oiled oak was chosen for the periphery counters, as the clients felt that Silestone on all counters was too cold.
* We fitted a circular solid oak top on the curved corner area of the island to divide the two seating areas
* A practical butcher block chopping board in oak, slides up & down the island & allows for chopping & pushing vegetable peel etc. straight into the prep sink which houses the waste disposal.
* We went with 60ml silestone on the work surface with the ‘new york’ edge, to add some detail. 30ml was chosen for the breakfast bar.
* 30ml solid oiled oak was chosen for all other counters to soften the look.

**UTLITY/LOCKER ROOM**

We decided to create three individual lockers with dedicated hanging space for each child, storage drawers below for shoes etc. & containers with further storage above. We incorporated small cabinets above each, with a large tall cabinet for utility storage. Another tall unit was made to house the washing machine & dryer with room for laundry basket on top.

The clients chose their own appliances, based on previous user experience & assistance from ourselves. We introduced Hotpoint’s high end appliances LUCE to our showroom this year. Although it is difficult to sell a product that is new to the market, these clients were impressed with the look & the functionality of the cooker, hob & microwave. The induction hob is really stream lined & quite contemporary looking, which the clients really liked.

• Amana wide fridge clients own

• Luce induction hob @€999

• Luce cooker @€1099

• Luce combi /microwave @€999

• Neff dishwasher clients own

• Insinkerator @€479

**OVERALL COST**

APPLIANCES €3,576

WORKTOPS €5,900 (Silestone) OAK €2,400

CABINETRY €26,000

DINING TABLE: €2,500

RADIATOR COVERS: €600

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**OVERALL COST**

APPLIANCES €3,576

WORKTOPS € 5,900 (Silestone) OAK €2,400

CABINETRY €26,000

RADIATOR COVERS: €1200 (plus Panelling)

**TOTAL COST €39,076**

**FITTING THE CLIENTS KITCHEN**

In our opinion, this can be the area that can turn a really positive client experience into a negative one! Timing is imperative in all projects, but in particular where renovations to existing homes are taking place & families are still in situ.

The first step was that all our service requirements had taken place when the new floor was laid in the client’s home. The original island had to be removed at this point. We relocated the position of the gas hob at that time from the island, which still left the clients with a full working kitchen until fitting took place.

Fitting began on the day that was originally scheduled. The fitting project was fairly straight forward, as much work as possible had been completed in the workshop in advance. Our intention was that fitting & finishing would take three days including the utility & we allow a week for hand painting .The trickiest part of our fitting is always ensuring a full seal around our false door into the utility. All went according to plan with hand painting scheduled to take place when the client’s children were at school

**END PRODUCT/OVERALL DESIGN PROCESS**

We won’t say that the clients were delighted with the end result, as we feel it is just a cliché! The bottom line is that EVERY client should be thrilled with the end result of a bespoke kitchen. If the design process is fulfilled correctly by spending the time at the outset with clients ensuring that their every wish is understood & catered for from design to creation, to the end product.

**WHAT WE LOVED**

We chose this kitchen over many others for the IKT awards. It is easy to choose a kitchen that has unusual design features, styles, cutting edge cabinetry etc. However, we wanted to showcase a kitchen that appeals to many tastes, is both ergomically practical, in design & functionality. Stylish yet family friendly. with classical & contemporary touches. Finally, we feel this kitchen really captured the ‘New England’ look that our clients desired.