

BESPOKE DESIGN

The in-frame tulipwood cabinetry was made by Greenheart Kitchens and has been painted in Old White and Shaded White, both by Farrow & Ball. The small table is also by Greenheart Kitchens and was designed to match the cabinetry

DOUBLE cream

Using two off-white paint shades has allowed Tessa and Phil Matthews to create a kitchen that's deliciously rich in style

FEATURE NICOLA WILKES • PHOTOGRAPHY MATT CANT



CENTRAL ISLAND

The large island has been topped with European oak, to contrast with the dark granite surfaces elsewhere. Designer Steve created a bookcase at one end, so the couple can display their collection of cookery books

Kitchen FACT FILE

THE FAMILY Tessa and Phil Matthews. Tessa is a nurse practitioner and Phil is a consultant surgeon. They have a Labrador, Becky, and a cat, Saffy
THE BUILD A Grade II listed, four-bedroom former rectory in South Wales
THE CABINETS Bespoke, hand-painted, in-frame tulipwood furniture

PRICE GUIDE
£24,000

for a similar Greenheart Kitchens design, cabinetry only



Advice from the OWNER

DO try out lots of paint shades. When we opted for the two-tone cabinetry, the base colour was always meant to be slightly darker than it actually turned out. In hindsight, we should have gone for a bit more contrast.

DON'T be afraid to take your time and, if need be, change your mind. We did several times before we settled on the final design.

DO have back-up options. The ceramic sink we'd originally chosen was discontinued, so we opted for a Franke model instead.

SINK AREA

The Kubus sink by Franke looks great set against the dark granite worktop and overlooks views into the garden. The blinds are in Tamaki fabric by Romo



COOKING AREA

A Rangemaster Toledo cooker has been set into an alcove. Steve designed a chimney surround around the outside, with small cupboards that the couple use to store cooking condiments



DOOR DETAIL

Glass inserts in the cupboard doors to the left of the cooker break up the otherwise solid run of wooden cream cabinetry

After living in their idyllic countryside home in the Vale of Glamorgan for 25 years, and with their three sons having moved out, Tessa and Phil Matthews decided to bite the bullet and go for a complete kitchen transformation. 'Although we'd installed a new kitchen just five years after moving in, it had become really quite dated,' explains Tessa. 'It seemed like the right time for a revamp.'

A FEELING OF SPACE

Relishing the opportunity to start from scratch, the Matthews visited Greenheart Kitchens, which had been recommended

to them by friends. 'Our existing kitchen was very small, with a separate dining room next to it. We knew we wanted to rearrange the space, but weren't sure how,' explains Tessa. 'With the help of designers Steve Stokes and Ceri Hill, we came up with a new layout.'

It was decided to knock down the wall between the kitchen and dining room to enlarge the space, and to extend at the side of the kitchen to create a second, more relaxed seating area. 'This meant we could make the most of our lovely garden views which, in turn, made the room a lot lighter,' says Tessa.

The new design not only changed the look and feel of the space but gave the couple the

extra worksurfaces and storage they were so badly in need of. 'It was such a different experience to design the kitchen based around what we really wanted, rather than just installing a new scheme into an existing layout, as we'd done before,' says Tessa.

DESIGN DILEMMAS

The couple debated various cabinetry styles with Steve, but finally decided on hand-painted doors, with a large island unit to house pots, pans and crockery. 'Deciding what we wanted took the most time,' recalls Tessa, who chose all-black appliances to coordinate with the dark-coloured granite ▶



DESIGNER'S TIP

'We made the cabinet with the glass doors shallower than the other wall cabinets, as it's easier to store glasses – if the space is too deep, the odd glass can get lost at the back. We also made it sit lower so that the glasses are easier for the couple to reach'

worktops. 'We'd decide on one thing, then change our minds and go back to the drawing board. We opted for a ceramic undermounted sink as Ceri felt the lightness would introduce some relief against the dark granite. Plus, it would look more traditional than a stainless-steel finish, particularly as there is no stainless steel used anywhere else in the design.'

KEY ELEMENTS

With the cabinetry decided, Tessa and Phil turned their attention to the dining area and in particular the table. 'We used to have a large dining table rather than the neat, compact design we have now,' says Tessa, 'but at the time, it was essential for a family of five. Now, if we have a large number of friends and family to entertain, we do so at

the more formal dining table off the living area. Our new kitchen table was also designed by Greenheart Kitchens to match the rest of the cabinetry – it's perfect for us.'

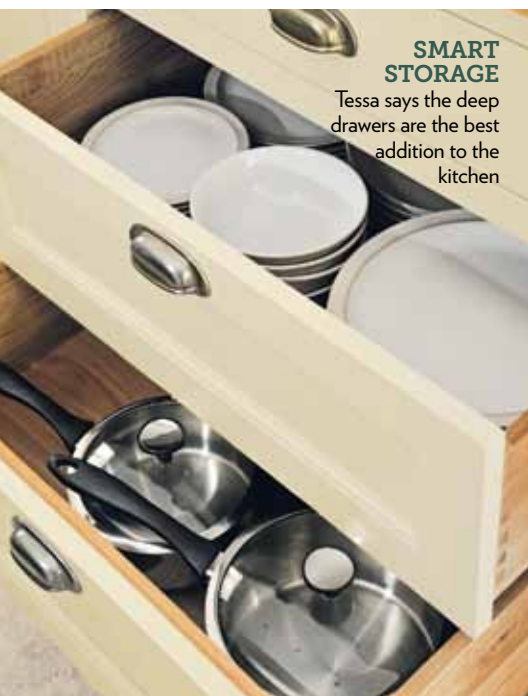
Along with the table, the large island offers the couple extra food preparation space. 'Phil is a keen cook so Steve recommended we place the island within easy reach of the range cooker,' says Tessa. 'It's great for laying out plates and other bits when we're entertaining.'

'Spending so long making DECISIONS meant we minimised the risk of making a MISTAKE. We're so HAPPY with our design'

STYLISH SCHEME

To add a traditional feel to the room, Steve worked a full chimney mantel into the design. By contrast, existing faux beams were removed in order to modernise the space. 'The design process was a real meeting of minds,' says Tessa. 'We worked on the plans for the best part of a year with Steve and Ceri, until we finalised a layout. Although the building work took a long time, the kitchen installation itself took just a week!'

The couple adore their new kitchen, which fits perfectly into their country-style home. 'Ironically, whenever the boys come home with their partners and families throughout the year, there's now loads of space,' smiles Tessa. 'It feels so much more sociable than it ever did before.' 📸



SMART STORAGE

Tessa says the deep drawers are the best addition to the kitchen



WELL CRAFTED

Making the most of every inch of space, small cupboards have been built into the faux mantel



MODERN TAP

The Phoenician mixer tap by Perrin & Rowe was chosen for its curved shape



CLEVER DETAILS

A cupboard reveals a large plastic storage bin that slides out, perfect for keeping Becky the Labrador's dog food to hand

SHOP THE LOOK

CABINERY

■ Bespoke, hand-painted, in-frame tulipwood furniture by Greenheart Kitchens. Prices for a similar kitchen, cabinetry only, £24,000

WORKSURFACES

■ Impala granite. Price per linear m £444
■ European oak. Price per linear m £312

SPLASHBACK

■ Tiles, for similar try Moderna Roccia, Fired Earth. Price per sq m £90

FLOORING

■ Tiles, for similar try Grand Villa Seashell Alea, Mandarin Stone. Price per sq m £60

APPLIANCES

■ Toledo 1100 range cooker, Rangemaster £1,980
■ Built-in microwave, Neff £236
■ Canopy extractor hood, Neff £224
■ Fully integrated fridge freezer, Neff £650
■ Fully integrated dishwasher, Neff £370

SINK AND TAP

■ Kubus undermounted one-and-a-half-bowl sink in white, Franke £353
■ Phoenician C-spout monobloc mixer tap in chrome with white levers, Perrin & Rowe £215

FINISHING TOUCHES

■ Cast-iron handles by Crofts & Assinder at Greenheart Kitchens, each £6.26
■ Dining table, Greenheart Kitchens £950
■ Blind made from Tamaki, Romo. Price per linear m £33
■ Christmas decorations, from a selection at Cox & Cox
■ Shaded White estate emulsion, Farrow & Ball. Price per 2.5 litres £29.50
■ Old White estate emulsion, Farrow & Ball. Price per 2.5 litres £29.50

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