

Richly grained walnut furniture is perfectly suited to Diane and Peter's art deco-style home. Their daughter Marianne loves to prepare food at the island, while relaxing with her mum



LUCKY BREAK

Chance played a big part for the Rawlings when buying their home and when renovating their kitchen

For most people, finding their dream home involves scouring estate agents' windows and adverts in local newspapers but for Diane and Peter Rawlings, it was all down to chance. 'For years, I'd walked past a beautiful house with Rupert, our English Cocker Spaniel,' recalls Diane, whose two grown-up children have left home. 'One day, I decided to drop a note through the door asking the owners to contact us if they ever wished to sell.'

Little did Diane know that the previous owner of the house had sadly passed away. A few days later, a phone call from the executors of the owner's will brought some unexpected news for the couple – the property was for sale. The executors were looking for a speedy exchange and in a month, the house was theirs. 'It was all meant to be,' explains Diane.

Once they moved into the art deco-style property, Diane and Peter were happy to take their time renovating the kitchen. 'We wanted a scheme that wouldn't date but we felt it should suit the heritage of the house, too,' says Diane.

The couple waited 10 years before embarking on the project but finally began by extending the ground floor of the property. 'We worked with Tasos Asprou at 1010 Architects, who created a fantastic open space,' recalls Diane. 'It gave us the perfect blank canvas to create a wonderful kitchen.'

With the building work complete, the Rawlings then turned their attention to finding the right scheme and after a ▶

My favourite... design element is the tambour unit. It ties in with the other stainless-steel elements and, as there are electric sockets inside, we can keep the toaster and kettle out of sight.

DIANE RAWLINGS



Chunky handles team with the various metallic elements in the scheme, such as a sink and built-in cooking appliances

DESIGN & CABINETS

- Steve Stokes and Ceri Hill at **Greenheart Kitchens**, 18 Bessemer Road, Cardiff, Wales CF11 8BA (029 2039 0044) www.greenheartkitchens.co.uk
- Bespoke, hand-crafted and chamfered Shaker-style walnut furniture

WORKTOPS

- Star Galaxy granite. Price per linear m **£500**

SINK & TAP

- BOX160D Bolero undermounted one-and-a-half-bowl sink in stainless steel, Franke **£499**
- Orca top-lever monobloc mixer tap in Silk Steel with pull-out rinse, Franke **£310**

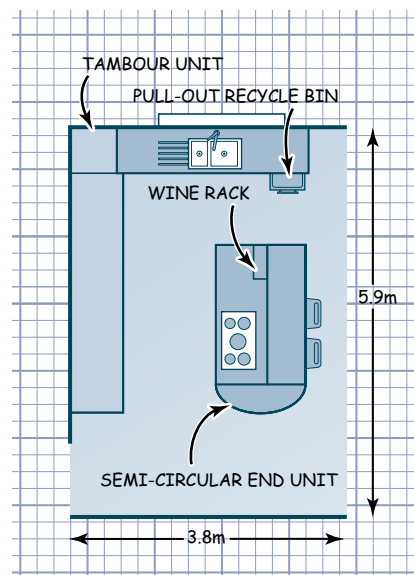
APPLIANCES (shown)

- B1664 built-in single oven, Neff **£1,015**
- H5642 built-in microwave, Neff **£470**
- B8762 built-in steam oven, Neff **£950**
- T4593 five-zone induction hob, Neff **£1,130**
- Twin island extractor hood in stainless steel, Elica **£1,400**
- N7140 built-in warming drawer, Neff **£330**
- SOV228GB integrated American fridge freezer, Maytag **£1,880**

APPLIANCES (not shown)

- Fully integrated dishwasher, Neff **£600**
- Freestanding washing machine, Zanussi **£300**
- Integrated tumble dryer, Hoover **£280**

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GUIDE PRICE

- Starting price for a Greenheart Kitchens design **£18,000**



My best buy... was the stylish extractor hood from Elica.
It's really efficient and something visitors often comment on as it looks great.'



chance drive past, they discovered local company Greenheart Kitchens. The couple met with designers Steve Stokes and Ceri Hill and they were confident the pair would be able to create their ideal room. 'Steve and Ceri took all the worry off our shoulders,' explains Diane. 'We thought they were amazing.'

Working with the couple, Steve and Ceri drew up a breathtaking scheme of bespoke, chamfered walnut furniture. The Shaker-style cabinetry was then teamed with striking Star Galaxy granite worksurfaces and stainless-steel appliances, while a central workstation acted as a stunning focal point in the room. 'We went through lots of different island designs but this one is practical as well as stylish,' says Diane.

With their kitchen complete, Diane and Peter are thrilled they are able to enjoy the benefits of open-plan living. 'It's lovely for one of us to be able to cook while the other sits and watches TV at the end of the day,' says Diane. 'The children also love coming home and sitting on the bar stools to chat to us. In fact, my daughter Marianne usually pushes me out of the kitchen so that she can cook because she loves our new room so much,' she smiles.

FAR LEFT Diane and Peter's wet area comprises a functional Orca tap and a stainless-steel sink, both from Franke, which complement the striking granite worktops beautifully. Clever storage solutions have been built under the couple's worksurface, where tea towels and cleaning products are housed in a pull-out unit next to a handy recycling bin

TOP RIGHT A smart five-zone induction hob from Neff has been sited within the island and forms a perfect working triangle with the American fridge freezer and nearby sink. 'Everything was very well thought out and placed within easy reach,' reveals Peter

RIGHT The couple were keen that their new kitchen should be free of clutter to allow their hand-crafted cabinetry to take centre stage. A tambour unit provides ample space for Diane to store her cookbooks and pretty floral crockery. The stack of ovens is located close to the worksurfaces, so that Diane and Peter can place hot dishes down quickly and safely

BELOW RIGHT Designers Steve and Ceri have utilised every inch of space in the Rawlings' kitchen, incorporating a wealth of storage options within the island. Cooking utensils, heavy pans and preparation knives are all conveniently located in custom-built drawers beneath the hob. 'I don't like knives on show,' says Diane, 'but the drawers mean they are close to hand when I am cooking'



The island is perfectly positioned so that Diane and Peter can enjoy views of the garden while they are preparing meals. Creamy porcelain floor tiles link the working zone to a comfortable seating area, which offers guests a spot to gather. The curved shelves display Diane's Lalique glassware