

1 'Red units brought this room to life'

Fed up with their dreary, characterless kitchen, Fiona Dunbar and Pano Pliotis used a bold red and white colour scheme to give it impact



The problem

The old pine kitchen looked tired and unimaginative, and didn't provide enough storage space.



The solution

Install streamlined modern units that provide more storage, and make space for a dining area.

What it cost

Units	£9,000
Worktops	£3,000
Splashbacks	£700
Appliances	£2,839
Sink and tap	£945
Total	£16,484



The kitchen's new layout includes space for a seating area. A glass table and high-gloss units in fresh white keep the room feeling light and airy

When children's author Fiona Dunbar and her husband, Pano Pliotis, moved from New York to London eight years ago, they bought an early Georgian house in North London that was ideal for them and their two children, Helena and George, now 13 and 10. However, much of the interior was dated – including the kitchen. 'It looked cut-price and old hat,' says Fiona. 'We wanted to give it an individual look and style, but we couldn't afford it at first as other rooms needed renovating. It ended up being the last room we did.'

Q What kind of kitchen did you have in mind?

A We wanted the room to be somewhere we could cook and entertain, and the kids could

also do their homework. We also wanted it to feel uncluttered and streamlined.

Q What inspired you to go for a strong colour?

A I saw the red gloss units displayed in the window of a local showroom and fell in love with the colour instantly. It's a beautiful Japanese lacquer red.

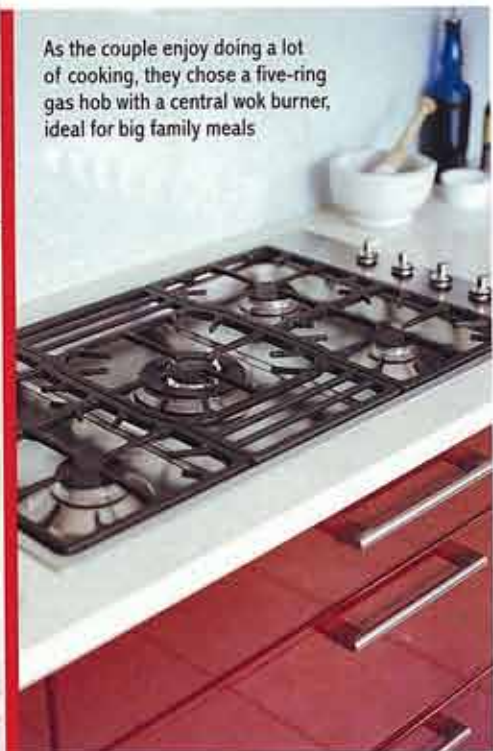
Q What did you do next?

A Although I was quite clear about the look I wanted, I felt it was important to get help from an expert who could suggest the best materials to use and create the perfect layout, so I asked a designer from the kitchen company to draw up a plan for the room. We agreed that the red had to be an accent colour and she suggested balancing it ▶



'The kitchen is now a wonderful family-friendly space,' says Fiona, a children's author best known for the Lulu Baker trilogy. 'The bright red and white units, combined with the more soothing aqua green of the splashback and the door, creates a really refreshing feel.' The larder, with its space-saving pull-down roller door, provides lots of storage space

KITCHEN MAKEOVER



As the couple enjoy doing a lot of cooking, they chose a five-ring gas hob with a central wok burner, ideal for big family meals

◀ 'We kept our old American-style fridge but clad it in stainless steel to match the ovens,' says Fiona. 'It looks great and was cheaper than buying new'

with white gloss units and aqua glass splashbacks. We also decided to keep the existing floor tiles as they're neutral and work well with the new units.

Q What changes did you make to the layout?

A Very few – we just made the existing layout work better. We installed a combination microwave at eye level and fitted the main oven below – it's great not having to bend down. The old kitchen had lots of impractical

storage that was hard to reach – by installing a corner carousel cupboard, pull-out larder and wide drawers for cutlery, dishes and pans we've transformed the space.

Q What did you learn from the project?

A Good planning is everything. We scheduled the work for summer so we could cook our meals on the barbecue and wash the dishes using the outside tap. The professional designer's input was a big help, too. 🍷

The details

Systemat kitchen **units**, from £320 for a 600mm unit; Quarella stone **worktop** in Creme Clara, from £380 per linear m; Neff B1451 single **oven**, £604.20; Neff H7881 combination **microwave**, £798; Neff D4972 telescopic **extractor**, £381.90; Smeg PGF951 **hob**, £635; Neff G4344X4 built-under **freezer**, £420; Franke GAX120 **sink**, £262.15; Perrin & Rowe 4866CP **tap**, £683; glass **splashbacks**, from £220 per linear m; stainless-steel **cover panels** for existing appliances, around £275 per linear m; all Funktional Kitchens. Salmi **dining table**, £74.90; Gilbert **chairs**, £29.90 each; all Ikea. **Floor tiles**, find similar at Checkalov