

Flying HIGH

Alex Cope's penthouse apartment is designed to maximise the spectacular views and provide an oasis of calm, contemporary style

PICTURES PAUL CRAIG | WORDS AMELIA THORPE



**A ROOM
WITH A VIEW**

- and what a view:
over to the Olympic Park in
the East, St. Paul's Cathedral
and beyond in the South, and
West to Wembley Stadium





'I lead a rather chaotic life so I really need my home to be an oasis of calm – I like it to be a neat, clutter-free and easy place to be'

One glimpse of the spectacular view across the London skyline to St. Paul's Cathedral, The Shard and even as far as the South Downs on a clear day, and Alex Cope was sold. The North London penthouse apartment, perched on top of an old office block, was the ideal city base for Alex, a pilot and director of a business jet management company.

He settled in and lived there happily for six years. 'Then I decided to try something different,' explains Alex, who then rented out the penthouse and moved into a Georgian townhouse. 'But it was a disaster,' he admits. 'I had gone from all this space and light to narrow rooms on lots of levels with hardly any light.' Within eighteen months, he gave notice to his tenants and moved back into the penthouse as quickly as he could. 'I wanted to start a new chapter in my life and make everything feel new and fresh here again,' he says. So he began a major overhaul of the entire apartment, including new lighting, flooring, bathrooms, re-decoration – and a total re-design of the kitchen-dining-living area. 'I lead a rather chaotic life,' he says of his global travels, 'so I really need my home to be an oasis of calm – I like it to be a neat, clutter-free and an easy place to be.' With a sink against the wall and a rather hotch-potch layout, Alex wanted a kitchen that was re-planned to make more of the view and to blend more readily with the dining and living area. It was architect Jake Edgley who led him to nearby Funktional Kitchens. 'I liked the contemporary, monochromatic and clean-lined design suggested,' he says, 'and, perhaps I'm old fashioned, but I like to support local businesses.' Masses of well-thought out storage was a key consideration, so that Alex could keep his surfaces clutter-free and ready for entertaining when friends drop round. 'I do cook, but probably not to the extent that the plethora of appliances I have on the wall here suggests,' he laughs, admitting that the full panoply was chosen for their symmetrical appearance, rather than his plans to cook up a storm. But once in a while, it's 'roast everything' and the apartment is full of friends and family – and everyone gets to enjoy that view. *CKBB*

EXTRACTOR

The downdraft extractor rises from the surface of the worktop when in use, and slides down again when not

LEICA CAMERA

A keen photographer, Alex takes his camera along on his travels and frames many of his favourite shots

STATEMENT TAP

The professional-style BlancoMaster-S Baby tap adds another sleek industrial touch



**APPLIANCE
WALL**

A balanced bank of ovens, combination microwave and coffee machine, all from Miele, is flanked by two larger cupboards, left, and integrated fridge freezer, and wine cooler, right



VICKY SHUDELL
DIRECTOR,
FUNKTIONAL KITCHENS

What was your brief?

The kitchen was to occupy the same area as before, but with a better layout. We designed a large island with hob, sink and work surface facing out into the room, so that Alex can talk to his guests and enjoy the view when he is preparing a meal or pouring the drinks. Storage and appliances are behind the island, within easy reach, making a very practical galley-style arrangement, which doesn't feel in any way cramped.

How did you choose the colours and finishes?

We balanced the kitchen cabinetry with the TV unit wall in the living area. They have a similar anthracite colour and gently textured finish. With the white worktops, concrete dining table and dark wooden floor, the look

is architectural and strong, but not cold, because there is depth to the anthracite and warmth in the stained oak floor. The palette of materials works across the whole space, and draws it together beautifully.

Given that Alex wanted a minimalist look, how did you design the storage and extraction?

The tall bank of units makes the best use of the wall space. They are sleek and unfussy with simple channel finger recesses that emphasise the linear design. Cupboard doors on the working side of the island conceal internal drawers, as well as the dishwasher and bins. The downdraft extractor rises from the worktop, so it doesn't obstruct those incredible views, while the ducting is hidden away along the back of the island.

Q&A

'The tall bank of units makes the best use of the space. They are sleek and unfussy with simple recesses'



GALLEY STYLE

The streamlined layout means that everything is within easy reach when Alex is preparing food or entertaining. The Miele induction hob sits flush in front of the concealed downdraft extractor

COOL CONCRETE

The concrete table is actually designed for outdoor use, but Alex liked its industrial feel so much that he bought the Danish-designed Cane-Line Pure table to use indoors







Kitchen profile

Doca Solar cabinetry is clean and crisp in design, its linear styling and anthracite grain finish emphasised by matching channel finger recesses, finished with steel insets concealed behind the doors. A Zodiac Chalk White quartz worktop provides fresh contrast, while Miele appliances are designed to fit as seamlessly as possible into the sleek, monochromatic design.

FUNKTIONAL KITCHENS

128 Crouch Hill, Crouch End, London, N8 9DY.
Tel 020 8341 2020. Also at 42 Cross Street,
Islington, London, N1 2BA. Tel 020 7359 4041.
funktionalkitchens.co.uk
Kitchen prices from £10,000.

WOOD GRAIN FINISH

Anthracite Doca Solar furniture adds definition to the design, its dark grey wood grain finish providing contrast with the crisp white worktop and walls. Kitchen-dining-living zones are now linked by the same flooring, a palette of greys and echoing contemporary linear design.

**TERRACE VIEW**

The richly stained oak flooring is a real feature of the room, linking the kitchen, dining and relaxing spaces of the room and contrasting with the pale statement chair in the corner. French doors open out onto the roof terrace beyond.

Stockists**APPLIANCES**

Similar appliances, H6260BP ovens, £1,450 each; H64006M combination microwave, £1,980; CVA6401 coffee machine, £2,375; KM6387 induction hob, £2,310; KFN3768210 fridge freezer, £1,559; KWT6831 5G wine cooler, £4,305; G52205d integrated dishwasher, £990, all Miele. Lusser downdraft extractor, from £1,677, plus motor from £277, both Westin Design. Pop-up socket, £286, Evoline.

FIXTURES AND FURNISHINGS

BlancoMaster-5 Baby tap, £470; Zerex 500-U undermounted sink, £396; Blanco Zodiaq Chalk White 60cm quartz worktop and side panels, priced to order, all Funktional Kitchens. For similar dark stained oak flooring, try The Natural Wood Floor Company. Cone-Line Pure dining table, £2,720, Go Modern. House by John Lewis Jasper dining chairs, £39 each, John Lewis. Charles Sofa, priced to order, BBB Italia. For a similar floor lamp, try Heathfield & Co. Alex made the marble topped coffee table himself. Try Mac & Mac for similar. Bespoke TV unit and storage, priced to order, Domus Furniture.

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