



bold & beautiful

Feature by **Amelia Thorpe**
Photography by **Jake FitzJones**
Styling by **Diana Burt**

Dramatic tones, glossy surfaces and vibrant accent pieces give a contemporary new look to this four storey Victorian house...the Walker family's perfect urban oasis.



Camilla Walker didn't hesitate when it came to choosing a new kitchen, "I wanted something contemporary and black, with sleek lines," she says. She wasn't even worried that black furniture might be too dark. "I saw a display in Neil Lerner's showroom and was instantly struck by the way the glossy surface reflected light around the room. We've combined it with white floors and worktops to break it up and give a visual lift," she explains.

Take a look around her light-filled kitchen and dining area, and it's easy to see what she means. But it wasn't always like this. "The space hadn't been updated for many years," recalls Camilla, a GP, who bought the four storey Victorian house in north London with husband, Andrew, a publisher, a year ago. "There was a kitchen plus separate utility and dining rooms, so we knocked down a couple of walls to create one much larger setting," she explains. With their children, Theo, 12, and Sophia, ten, in mind, the plan was to achieve a sociable family area for eating and entertaining.



left & above After scrapping the idea of an island, clever planning has ensured that all storage, food preparation space and necessary appliances have been smartly housed within a U-shape run of units.



above Deliberately left on shown, even a coffee maker and bread bin follow the two-tone theme.

below Breaking up a wall of black colour, the silvery glass splashback reflects light back into the room.



kitchen profile

Sleek lacquer Edition Range furniture creates a smart and contemporary finish in this spacious kitchen by Neil Lerner. Its strong design makes for a clean-lined backdrop, enhanced by integrated appliances and the elimination of handles. Smooth white Corian® worktops, a silver glass splashback, limestone flooring and painted shutters set off the dramatic tones to perfection, resulting in a desirable, monochrome scheme.

Neil Lerner Kitchen Design, 487 Finchley Road, London NW3 6HS.
Tel: 020 7433 0705. www.neillerner.com
Expect to pay from £20,000.



With the building work complete, Neil Lerner set to work drawing up the kitchen plans. "The room was now large enough to lend itself to something dramatic," he says. "We talked about an island, but agreed that a U-shape of wall cabinets would create the most sleek finish. It also offers space for a large dining table at one end," he explains. Ample cupboards provide storage – a necessity in this busy home. "Using tall units allowed us to combine everything needed to make this a practical and good-looking kitchen," adds Neil.



Camilla chose appliances in black and stainless steel to add to the clean, streamlined look of the room, then Neil suggested worktops in smooth Glacier White Corian® to provide smart contrast. "The fusion of the two materials looks sharp, especially because we built up the Corian® to give added depth," explains Neil. Even the sink is moulded from the same material to enhance the seamless result, and, to accentuate the original shutters either side of the window, the worksurface runs right into the window bay.

"It may look super-modern, but it's actually very homely," says Camilla. "It feels warm yet surprisingly light, and that has a lot to do with the black lacquer finish of the cabinets. Wherever I stand in the room, I can see a reflection bouncing off them," she adds. To enhance this bright air and pull the colour scheme together, metallic-silver sprayed glass has been used to form the splashbacks, while painted wooden shutters, a lacquer dining table, a limestone floor and chic chandelier create pale accents to contrast with the polished black.



above Echoing the crisp lines throughout, an angular tap sits atop smooth, durable Corian®.

left Made from circular discs of capiz shell, the large chandelier adds a touch of femininity.

below Shallow cabinets are ideal for keeping the likes of spices, sauces and preserves organised.



During the summer months, the room has the added advantage of French doors beyond the dining area, that lead on to a secluded split-level garden complete with lush palms and ferns. It creates an unusual urban oasis, just as Camilla had imagined and desired. "The whole effect is so appealing that I try to sit out there as much as possible," says Camilla. "It's like a little jungle; the perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of the city to enjoy down-time with a cup of coffee and a good novel," she happily concludes. ■



above Offering privacy without darkening the room, shutters complement both the modern interior and Victorian exterior of the property.

left The chic dining area leads to the 'jungle-like' garden – the perfect setting for summer soirées.

below Finishing touches are key to a successful designer look; fresh flowers in a zesty lime-green vase, for example, instantly inject a little cheer.



useful information

Appliances

Similar oven, H4212B, £710; similar hob, KM5757, £1175, Miele. Tel: 01235 554455. www.miele.co.uk

Definition 3D fridge freezer, £2300, at Amana. Tel: 01737 231000. www.amana.co.uk

Fixtures & furnishings

BlancoPlaza tap, around £690, at Blanco. Tel: 020 8452 3399. www.blanco.co.uk

Glacier White Corian® worktops and sink, £5785; silvered glass splashbacks, £250 per sq. m., at Neil Lerner Kitchens. See kitchen profile for details.

Celine dining table, around £3225; Paola chairs, £217 per pair, at Ligne Roset. Tel: 020 7323 1248. www.ligne-roset-westend.co.uk

Capiz chandelier, around £365, at Graham & Green. Tel: 0845 130 6622. www.grahamandgreen.co.uk

Limestone tiles, priced to order, at Stone Interiors. Tel: 0870 066 5590. www.stoneinteriors.co.uk

Painted window shutters, prices available on application, at The New England Shutter Company. Tel: 020 8675 1099. www.tnesc.co.uk

Garden landscaping and planting, prices on request at The Botanical Gardener. Tel: 07731 553069. www.thebotanicalgardener.co.uk