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DREAM KITCHEN

Smallbone's Stuart Miller balances classic cabinetry with decorative pattern to create a kitchen made for entertaining

WHAT STYLE OF PROPERTY IS IT?

It's a beautiful nine-bedroom Georgian mansion house in Aberdeenshire. Since Donna and Keith Pirie moved here a couple of years ago, it has been completely gutted and reconfigured, with en suites added upstairs and original features painstakingly restored.

WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL KITCHEN LIKE?

The first kitchen was at the back of the house and rather small and gloomy. Late into the project Donna called and said they were moving its location so that the new kitchen would be much brighter and have garden views. It was a major upheaval but really worthwhile.

WHAT WAS THE CLIENTS' BRIEF?

I had worked on the Pories' previous kitchen, so we were on the same wavelength. The couple wanted a sociable kitchen with plenty of seating, as they often entertain. Before, they had a modern design from our Walnut & Silver range, but the couple felt that this house needed something more classic. The main kitchen is from the Hand Painted Kitchen collection but I've added some one-off details to adapt it to this grand space.

HOW DID YOU PLAN THE LAYOUT?

The position of the fireplace dictated the location of the range cooker which needs external extraction, so I installed built-in refrigeration to the right and an island with plenty of worktop and the main sink behind to create a tight working area. The two islands bridge the gap to the other side of the room, which features two symmetrical dressers. It's a vast space but the balanced layout effectively prevents it from appearing cavernous.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE A DUAL ISLAND?

I had proposed a single island for the original kitchen location, which Donna loved, but as this room is much bigger I suggested two islands. One has a tall breakfast bar and enjoys great garden views, while the other is a bit bigger so good for plating up dishes. They're also easier to navigate than one huge piece.

WHAT MATERIALS DID YOU USE?

The wallpaper is a Farrow & Ball pattern, which makes a wonderfully strong statement and teams beautifully with the furniture. We chose a soothing cream for pieces that touch the wall, while the islands match the terracotta hue of the window seat fabric. For the worktops, we used Antiqued Nero Assoluto granite. Donna wanted marble on the islands but I suggested Silestone's composite in Yukon, which has the lightness of marble but is more robust.

ANY EXTRA SPECIAL FEATURES?

Mirrored glass on the dresser doors means contents stored within are not visible, while the top compartments are painted inside with terracotta and internal lighting creates a warm glow by night. Above the range cooker clear glass protects the wallpaper, and each of the islands' maple chopping block units has a 50-litre pull-out bin beneath.

WHY IS THIS DESIGN SUCCESSFUL?

The versatility of the Hand Painted collection enabled me to create details such as cornices and curved corners, which suit this room's grand scale. It also helped that Donna and I had worked together before, and she has a great eye - the globe chandeliers in different sizes are inspired. ■



FACT FILE

OWNERS Donna and Keith Pirie.

DESIGNER Stuart Miller, Smallbone of Devides, 0845 606 6568,

smallbone.co.uk.

BUDGET Kitchens start at £35,000.

SOURCES Cabinets and worktops, Smallbone, as above. **Range cooker and extractor**, Wolf; **fridge-freezer**, Sub-Zero; all 020 8418 3800, westye.co.uk.

Microwave and warming drawers, Miele, 0845 365 6600, miele.co.uk. **Sinks**, Franke, 0161 436 6280, franke.co.uk. **Taps**, Perrin & Rowe, 01708 526361, triflowconcepts.com.

Dishwashers, Fisher & Paykel, 0845 066 2200, fisherpaykel.co.uk. **Boiling water tap**, Quooker, 020 7923 3355, quooker.com.

Globe chandeliers, Sweetpea and Willow, 0845 257 2627, sweetpeaandwillow.co.uk.

Wallpaper, The Lotus Papers, Farrow & Ball, 01202 876141, farrow-ball.com.

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