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'The secret to a sociable kitchen is the ability to go from day to night'

TOP LEFT The stone mullion window falls lower than worktop level so Martin Moore & Company created a wood-clad 'well' behind the sink where washing-up supplies can be stored. The Belfast sink is by Shaws of Darwen and the taps are by Perrin & Rowe

ABOVE This bi-fold dresser houses baking appliances and the family's everyday crockery

ABOVE RIGHT The rear of the Aga alcove is clad in mirrored glass, allowing anyone cooking to see guests behind

drinks. A dedicated wine cooler is an essential piece of equipment for any serious entertainer, and the Grays have a built-under model integrated into their island unit. It deliberately faces inwards, towards the main sink, to avoid corrupting the kitchen's classic design. 'If you are sitting at the dining table, looking towards the Aga, there is very little evidence of modern technology,' adds Matthew.

Although this kitchen doesn't appear commercial by any means, it's actually well equipped for entertaining many people. The wall directly opposite the main sink boasts large side-by-side refrigeration plus a built-in coffee machine and plenty of food storage, and the Aga has four ovens as well as an additional hotplate. There is also a domino-style induction hob to the left of the Aga, which acts as back-up support

both in the summer months, and when the Gray family hold one of their frequent dinner parties for family and friends. Even when not in use, it offers useful service as a trivet for hot pans.

One exception to this kitchen's classic aesthetic is the contemporary suspended glass island light, which consists of two layers of plate glass that sandwich tiny LEDs. By day its transparent construction is barely visible, but the sparkling illumination it provides in the evening creates the perfect atmosphere for entertaining. 'The secret to a really sociable kitchen is the effortless ability to go from day to night, which this kitchen achieves. The only complaint the Grays now have is that they barely use the rest of their home any more,' says Matthew smiling. ←

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