

Well contained

This compact design ensures everything is within easy reach, including a bank of three ovens, which caters for the couple's big dinner parties



'We'd rented before buying this house so we knew how to avoid an awkward, cramped layout, and instead created a kitchen with good access to everything we need'

Sitting pretty

A large window lets in extra light, with the eye-catching zebrano wood extending into a neat window seat



When Amy and Joe Murray bought their detached Edwardian house they knew they had a major project on their hands. The whole property needed modernising, bar the kitchen, which had been newly installed to help to sell the place. But the couple weren't keen on its country farmhouse style, nor the lack of light.

With architect Wisam Kamleh of Architecture WK on board, the couple's ideal kitchen soon began to take shape. 'We wanted an open-plan layout that clearly demarcated food prep, dining and sitting areas,' says Amy. 'So we knocked the original kitchen, utility room and separate dining room into a spacious kitchen-diner with a cosy sitting area.'

In terms of decor, Amy and Joe both wanted a modern look and neutral-coloured cabinetry. 'Top of my list was a highly practical kitchen with a sensible layout that's easy to move around,' adds Amy. 'Wisam suggested using zebrano wood for the dining area floor, walls and ceiling, not only for its striking effect but to also break up the room. He also recommended the kitchen company DesignSpace London, which sourced matching zebrano cabinets. We were very lucky because the range was being discontinued and we bought the remaining four cabinets,' explains Joe.

The couple chose concrete tiles for the kitchen's breakfast bar and for the kitchen and sitting area floors. 'We got the idea from a hotel we'd stayed in and thought it looked really smart and a little bit different,' says Amy.

It took a whole year to complete the renovation work, during which the couple lived in rented accommodation. Now, Amy and Joe have their ideal kitchen. 'The design is eye-catching but it's also a practical room, with a perfect set-up to suit our busy lives,' concludes Amy.