



**BUILT BY**

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**KITCHEN MAKEOVER 1**

# ‘MY PRIORITY WAS A LIGHT SPACE’

*It took Susan Porter-Thomas 16 years to get round to renovating her dark kitchen, but it was well worth the wait*

**STYLING TIP**

*Rather than neutral units, add cupboards in a complementary shade, then incorporate a pop of colour, such as a splashback, to create a feature wall*

**← FOCAL POINT**

An excellent place to prepare food, as well as a sociable spot for family to congregate, the island is the heart of the redesigned, open-plan kitchen

**↓ TALL & SPACIOUS**

Large skylights and bi-fold doors help to flood the kitchen with natural light. Reflective surfaces add to the airy feel of the room



**BEFORE**

## KITCHEN DETAILS

**HOMEOWNERS**

Susan Porter-Thomas, a portrait photographer, and her husband David, a professional singer

**AGES** 43 and 51

**FAMILY** Sam, 15, and Jamie, 9

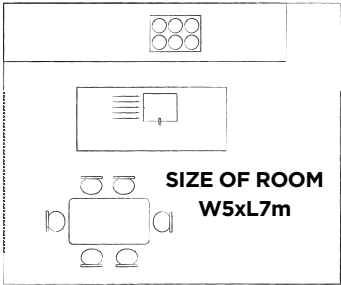
**LOCATION** Ealing, London

**PROPERTY** Three-bedroom Victorian terrace

**COST OF NEW KITCHEN**

<b>Units</b>	£9,980
<b>Worksurfaces</b>	£3,566
<b>Appliances</b>	£2,757
<b>Sink &amp; tap</b>	£445
<b>Splashback</b>	£1,044
<b>Flooring</b>	£800
<b>Furniture</b>	£1,839

**TOTAL £20,431**



**SIZE OF ROOM**  
W5xL7m

## WORK CARRIED OUT

The ground floor was extended into the garden and skylights added. A supporting wall between the kitchen and dining room was knocked down to create an open-plan living space with bi-fold doors and an island







### GOOD IDEA

A built-in larder gives your scheme an uncluttered feel and keeps essentials close by



## IDEAS TO STEAL

Add your own sense of style by adopting Susan's design flourishes



### ↑ INTEGRATE USEFUL FEATURES

Turn an island unit into a handy prep zone by adding a sink and mixer tap



### ↑ ACT ON A BRIGHT IDEA

Build spotlights into wall-hung cabinets to illuminate worksurfaces



### ↑ ORGANISE STORAGE

Think about the hidden elements of drawers when designing your layout

**W**hen they bought their first house together, just over 16 years ago, Susan and David Porter-Thomas knew it was a home for life.

A young couple planning on having a family, they also realised that it would have to be redesigned if it was to fit their future needs, starting with increasing the size of the separate kitchen and dining rooms, which they extended by five metres into the garden. 'These spaces were dark, so we also had three skylights fitted to bring in maximum light,' Susan explains. 'Looking back, it would have been so much better if we'd knocked down the wall between the two areas then. Open-plan wasn't trendy at the time, so the idea never crossed our minds.'

It was only when Susan became a portrait photographer, with most of her work based at home, that she began to re-evaluate the space, especially as she needed an uncluttered environment for her clients. 'The kitchen was too narrow and dingy, and the view of the garden was blocked by the WC and utility room,' she says. 'I wanted spaciousness and light streaming in.'

Designing the open-plan area wasn't a problem, as the couple knew what they wanted, which included bi-fold doors across the width of the extension and a brightly coloured splashback. They enlisted the help of Rob Williams of RW1Build to get the project started. 'He is great at solving problems,' says Susan. 'For

### ↑ DESIGN APPLIANCES

Position integrated ovens at eye level for both convenience and safety, particularly with young children



*'I can't believe how much this revamp has improved our lifestyle'*



instance, to be able to remove the internal wall, a supporting pillar needed to remain in the centre of the room, or a visible steel lintel would have to be installed across the extension, but it was in the way of where we planned to place the appliances. We couldn't make a decision, but Rob came up with an idea – to incorporate the beam into the design of the kitchen, which allowed us to keep the pillar as well.'

The couple didn't have to go far to get their units – just to the end of their road, at Ebstone Kitchens. 'We really like the Nolte Lux range,' says Susan, 'especially the sleek, matt-silver handles.' And they got the splashback they always wanted from there too. 'Susan wore a purple-burgundy dress when we married, and I've always loved that shade,' says David.

The pair were determined to continue the same wood flooring used throughout the ground floor into the open-plan space, but they reasoned that the original boards might not exist any more. 'Fortunately, I found a company called Heritage Reclamation that managed to source the exact same oak flooring from Scotland,' recalls Susan. 'It's made such a difference to the scheme – it now looks nice and cohesive.'

The entire renovation took nine weeks to complete, despite being carried out during one of the coldest winters for many years, with temperatures of minus

two degrees. 'We had a huge hole in the wall for three weeks while we were waiting for the bi-folds to arrive,' explains Susan. 'Even with all the interior doors closed downstairs, the house was absolutely freezing.'

Susan is a keen baker, so the extra space and new layout works perfectly for her. 'I love having the island unit. It's fantastic for kneading bread,' she enthuses. 'And after using the kitchen-diner for nearly a year, we wouldn't change a single thing. We just can't believe how much it's improved our family's lifestyle.'

#### ↑ EATING OUT

During the warmer months, the patio area becomes another room for entertaining

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## Shopping list

**UNITS** Nolte Lux high-gloss lava & white finish, £9,980, Ebstone Kitchens  
**APPLIANCES** Neff B15E52N3GB single oven in stainless steel, £517; Neff C57M70N3GB combi microwave, £571; Neff T22S46N0GB four-ring gas hob, £198; Neff D4618X0GB 60cm telescopic extractor, £104; Neff K8524X7GB integrated fridge-freezer, £324; Neff W5440X0GB integrated washing machine, £576; Neff S71M63X2GB 60cm integrated dishwasher, £467, all Ebstone Kitchens. Dualit Architect kettle in polished steel, £79.95, John Lewis  
**WORKTOPS** Compac Carrara-style with 3cm pencil edge, £3,566, Ebstone Kitchens **SPLASHBACK** Bespoke glass in purple, £1,044, Ebstone Kitchens **SINK & TAP** Blanco Idessa 6S, inset ceramic sink & tap pack, £445, Ebstone Kitchens **FLOORING** 55 gauge three-strip oak flooring, £800, Heritage Reclamation  
**LIGHTING** Rococo pendants in purple, £75 each, Ocean Lighting **DOORS** Bi-folds with internal blinds, £6,000, 1st Sliding Folding Doors **FURNITURE** Kite bar stools in white, £79 for two, Made.com. For a similar dining table, try the solid-oak Neptune; for similar dining chairs, try the Suffolk, all John Lewis