

HEART OF THE HOME

# Kitchen sink drama

From pink cabinets to lavish larders, kitchen design is becoming increasingly bold. Angelina Villa-Clarke talks to local interiors experts on how to achieve a dramatic but timeless look



**THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT** The kitchen has become a space to host guests – like in this Georgian Shaker kitchen from Willis & Stone



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or modern-day homeowners, the role of the kitchen continues to evolve. The room has now morphed into a space that not only encompasses its main role of cooking, but also dining, working and entertaining. Where once kitchens were simply neutral, practical spaces, they have developed into stylish rooms at the heart of the home.

From genius design solutions, such as multi-use pantries and clever drawer storage, to fresh colour palettes spanning moody forest greens and dusty pinks, kitchen companies are continuously coming up with creative, new ideas for creating a dream kitchen.

When it comes to the latest must-have design features, curved cupboards, reeded-glass cabinets and free-standing pieces are just three that are currently on trend. Over at Henry Rose Interiors, a family-run company based in Cambridge, hidden utility rooms and pantries are in high demand. “Both are at the top of our customers’ wish lists,” says the company. “Having a secret room hidden behind kitchen cabinets that doesn’t interrupt the flow of the kitchen is a clever use of space and keeps all the essential kitchen paraphernalia out of sight.”

At Ely-based bespoke kitchen expert Willis & Stone, glazed dressers are having their time in the spotlight. “Using a glazed dresser as a bar area is proving popular with customers at the moment,” states designer Molly Chandler. “These can be personalised with storage solutions, like racks for wine bottles, hooks for stemware and drawers for smaller bar tools and accessories. They often include a wine fridge and are great for people who like to entertain at home while providing a stylish, sophisticated storage solution. From a practical point of view, the glass doors provide protection from dust and breakages, which is especially useful if you have valuable or rare bottles that you want to preserve in good condition.”

Meanwhile, Clara Ewart – head of design at London-based interior design studio Kitesgrove – says that when ➡



**ISLAND LIVING**

These fitted kitchens from Willis & Stone (right) and Henry Rose Interiors (below) embrace an open-plan aesthetic

**WHAT'S COOKING?**

Aiden Holmes at Inspired Kitchens Cambridge reveals his top three kitchen trends

1. Pastel colours like stone, moss green and barely-there pink are in vogue.
2. If you have room, opt for open-plan layouts to incorporate a living space, with matching sideboards and built-in TV units.
3. Our mock in-frame kitchens create the look of a luxury in-frame design while keeping costs lower and having the functions of a normal kitchen.

**“Using a glazed dresser as a bar area is proving popular at the moment”**



**MADE TO MEASURE** Willis & Stone (inset and right) designs, builds and installs bespoke kitchens



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## HOW TO ACHIEVE AN ON-TREND KITCHEN

Simon Temprell, interior design manager at Neptune, gives his sage advice

**1.** There is a renewed interest in dark, rich, cocooning colours, such as navy, chocolate, charcoal and inky green.

**2.** Use two colours on kitchen cabinetry by mixing timber with painted elements, for example. Kitchen islands can be painted in a contrasting colour from the rest of the cabinetry, or base cabinets might be a different colour from those above. It can also be very effective to paint a contrasting colour on the interior of cabinets and drawers to create interest every time you open something up.

**3.** For dramatic effect, combine rich colours such as teal and chestnut with antique brass or copper hardware. Navy and Old Rose also make a well-balanced scheme that's strong but softened by warm pink tones.



**COLOUR SCHEMING** Kitesgrove (above) and Tomas Kitchen Living (below) suggest sophisticated kitchen palettes

designing a kitchen, it is important to balance the overall aesthetic with functionality, especially when it comes to a smaller space. "Creating a kitchen with cabinetry that spans from floor to ceiling means each centimetre is well-considered to provide hard-working storage, freeing up the rest of the space for open-plan living."

She adds: "Architectural detailing and quality materials, such as marbled walls and counters, can transform the feel of a kitchen. The interior architecture of a space helps to create the narrative of the home as well as defining and elevating its identity. The introduction of natural materials in a kitchen, like marble, creates a warm but sophisticated feel – and can be included in smaller areas for a touch of personal style, or in a more significant way for an immersive yet quiet luxury."

Colour palette is possibly the most defining feature of a kitchen. At Cambridge-based Tomas Kitchen Living, founder and director Tomas Hinton says that pink is the latest on-trend colour for kitchens. "Like most of our colours, the pink we use – called Poppyfield Pink – is inspired by my father and grandfather's abstract oil paintings. It's a very subdued and sophisticated colour – almost neutral. Surprisingly to some, it works well with many other shades."

Tomas continues: "Saying that, I advise customers to choose colours they've always loved... be inspired by trends, but don't follow them slavishly! Changing a kitchen is not like changing clothes, so if you are unsure about colour on your cabinets, a wise move may be to add colour to walls or soft furnishings instead." ➡





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Allison Lynch at Roundhouse Design, which has a showroom in Cambridge, says white cabinetry should not be overlooked: "Calming white kitchens have a timeless appeal. We've found people are happy with a tall run of white units that can disappear into the background, which then lets the island become more prominent."

"Using natural pottery in organic shapes with dried grasses is a great example of how to soften the look of a kitchen and add a touch of creativity," she adds. "We're also seeing less of a need for lots of wall cupboards, with clients opting for open shelving instead, which is a brilliant way to display collections of sculptural vases, beautiful glasses and crockery."

Finally, M & J Abbs – local specialist in installing heating, plus Aga and Rayburn cookers – says that even practical elements of a kitchen can add a sense of style. The company offers classic radiators in a range of bold colours, claiming more customers are opting for natural colours – like stone and white – for Aga and Rayburn cookers.

"Customers are putting more thought into how the heating system features in their interior design scheme, rather than trying to make it invisible," says managing director Hayley Abbs. "They are opting for traditional cast-iron radiators in statement colours – even RAL colour matching. We're also seeing more thought in the positioning of radiators. Rather than opting for the standard 'under-the-window' location, homeowners want to give it prominence – perhaps next to an area that doubles for home working or in a cosy reading corner. After all, why not? These elements bring the warmth to the heart of the home." ●

**“Open shelving is a brilliant way to display vases, glasses and crockery”**



**HOT STUFF** Roundhouse Design (above) suggests ditching some cupboards for shelves, while M & J Abbs (below, bottom left) specialises in high-quality cookers

## STOCKISTS

### Henry Rose Interiors

01223 213231 | henryroseinteriors.com

### Inspired Kitchens Cambridge

01223 848620

inspiredkitchencambridge.co.uk

### Kitesgrove

020 3588 0400 | kitesgrove.com

### M & J Abbs

01954 267267 | mjabbs.co.uk

### Neptune

01223 643535 | neptune.com

### Roundhouse Design

020 7297 6220 | roundhousedesign.com

### Tomas Kitchen Living

0800 023 6471


tomas-kitchen-living.co.uk

### Willis & Stone

01353 361843 | willisandstone.co.uk







Woven placemats in forest green  
£19 for two, loaf.com



Emerald Mila decanter  
£50, nkuku.com



Sleek dome pendant, dark green brass  
£79, industville.co.uk



Terracotta stacked ceramic dec vase  
£18.99, giselagraham.co.uk



Amber wine glass  
£12, heavenlyhomesandgardens.co.uk

# Food for thought

Add a choice of kitchen accessories in on-trend colours for a statement effect



Totto stripe cotton tablecloth in radish  
£75 per m sq, torimurphy.com



Trend white terrazzo multicolour tile  
£29.95 per m sq, tilemountain.co.uk



Cabbage serving platter  
£30, micucci.co.uk



Aurora pink patterned tile  
£48 per m sq, porcelainsuperstore.co.uk



Green Eichholtz Avorio bar stool  
£481, sweetpeaandwillow.com



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STORE  
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MONTHARE YOU BEING  
SERVED?

While other high-street stores may be closing, Reeds Homestore is bucking the trend. Good service is key, says the owner. Angelina Villa-Clarke finds out more

**K**nown as the Harrods of the Fens, mention Reeds Homestore to any East Anglian local and they will no doubt be familiar with the name. Taking prominence on Downham Market's high street for some 117 years, the department store had been run by the Reed family since 1906, until retailer Jim Carlile took over in 2005.

Once frequented by Queen Mary in the 30s, the Bridge Street shop – then called Harry Reed and Son – was revamped and relaunched by Jim after he heard its sale to Jarrold in Norwich had fallen through.

"I had no savings, as such, but I raised £250,000 on my mortgage and a further £250,000 on a European-funded bank loan. I rebranded it Reeds Homestore, gave it a new colour and we haven't looked back. I started with 23 staff and now employ 62 – and we have a second site in Ely!"

Sprawling across 27,000 sq ft, the Downham Market store sells all you could want for the home – from furniture to bed linens, kitchen accessories to curtains. As well as browsing items, you can make a pit stop in the shop's successful Reeds Cafe, run by Jim's wife Rachel and her team.

"Reeds Cafe is unique," says Jim. "All the food is made onsite, and my wife

**HOME  
COMFORTS**

This family-run business keeps going thanks to fantastic customer care and a wide selection of homeware

bakes all the cakes. It simply adds to the customer experience.

"There are subtle differences between the two addresses," explains Jim. "Downham includes the cafe – our second-busiest department – and while both stores sell everything you need for the home, Downham offers even more, including gifts, jewellery, handbags and luggage. Ely, meanwhile, is an important store for the Cambridge community, giving people another option away from the usual high-street retailers. It's a large, 30,000 sq ft site on Lancaster Way Business Park, less than 17 miles from the centre of Cambridge, with free parking right outside the door. It has the largest selection of sofas, chairs, furniture and beds in the area."

The decline of bricks-and-mortar stores is visible across the UK but, going against the grain, Jim reveals he had a record turnover last year. "I think our success is down to the fact we are a family business, and customers feel they can trust us. They see that we always deliver on choice, price, quality and service. What's more, most people want to lay on a bed or sit on a chair before buying and you can't do that online."

As well as offering leading brands – such as Hypnos mattresses or Parker Knoll and G Plan furniture – Reeds Homestore also has a vast range of products under

two distinct themes – either contemporary or traditional. The company also provides made-to-measure blinds and curtains, flooring (including carpet and vinyl), as well as solutions for every room in the home, from a study to a child's bedroom.

"Our ethos is to provide great service and make customers feel special," says Jim. "We stand out because there is no hard sell. No staff are paid commission, a common practice in virtually every furniture retailer. Instead, they are paid to deliver amazing service every single time. The best form of advertising is the staff I

employ. More people come because they've been recommended by someone they know than any other way.

"When I bought the business, my aim was to ensure the

service we gave to customers was the best it could be. I'd been in retail since I was 16, so I knew what good customer service meant. I set about recruiting the very best people to join me and created a harmonious working atmosphere that would filter down to customers. I wanted them to recognise that we go one step beyond when it comes to good service, enjoy the experience and tell others about us; and 18 years later, I'm satisfied that I've achieved my goal." ●

[reedshomestore.co.uk](http://reedshomestore.co.uk)

