



Hans Wegner's classic Wishbone chairs surround the table, which was custom-made from the same Dinesen Douglas fir planks as the floor. [Right] Bar stools from Rockett St George at the walnut-edged island. Note the pair of Gaggenau ovens built in to the wall of Bulthaup units – they are the only appliances on display



KITCHENS

CASE STUDY RICH AND PURE

This uncomplicated and uncluttered kitchen-dining room is a masterclass in simplicity and the art of allowing beautiful materials to speak for themselves

Photography David Butler Words Judy Diamond

When Simon and Claire, owners of this spacious house in Chelsea, embarked upon a full-scale refurbishment of their home, they wanted the best possible craftsmen for the job. It didn't matter if these were based in Denmark, Eastern Europe or even as far afield as South America – if they were the best, they were hired. When Edinburgh's Cameron Interiors got the call to take on the key task of creating the new kitchen, then, it barely raised an eyebrow. "The clients came to us through word-of-mouth recommendation and we were delighted to become a part of this handpicked team," says Pauline Denholm, the firm's design manager.

"We were determined from the outset that distance wouldn't become an issue. Any potential problems with the logistics of managing such a detailed project from our Scottish base were overcome thanks to forward thinking and detailed planning, combined with frequent and good communication with the architect, client and onsite build team."

As part of the £2 million top-to-bottom refurbishment (which included several structural alterations to the property such as lowering floors, ►

BRIEF To create a dual-purpose kitchen-dining room in the lower ground floor of a London house, making it suitable both for a family with two young children and for large-scale entertaining.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE Working around the underfloor heating, positioning a 1,200kg island and dealing with the architects, contractors and builders employed on this whole-house project from the designer's base in Scotland.

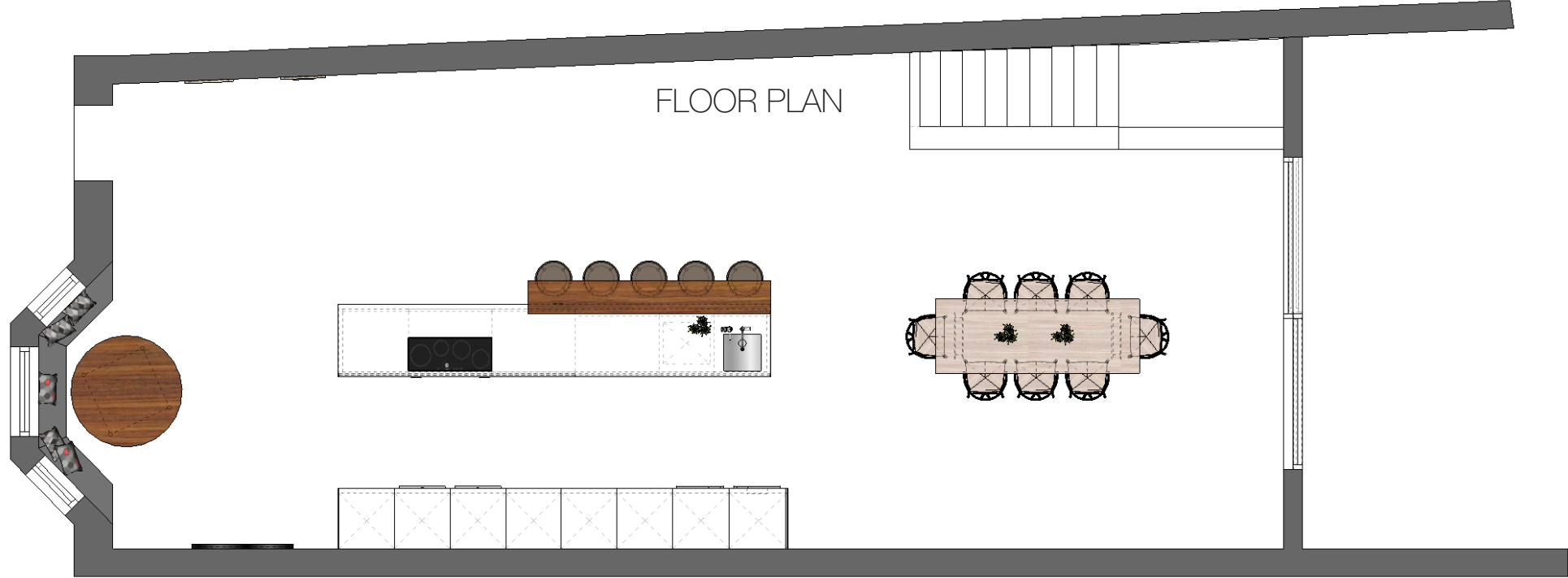
BUDGET £100,000 (£70,000 on furnishings and appliances, and the remainder for specialist craftsmanship).

DESIGNER Cameron Interiors, www.cameroninteriors.co.uk

raising ceilings and adding a double-height rear extension with 3.5m-high sliding doors), £100,000 had been allocated for the creation of a kitchen. This was to be a sophisticated and contemporary space with all the essential elements for practical family living but none of the fuss and clutter. “Simon and Claire wanted a pared-down environment that would blend in perfectly with a cool, calm Scandinavian aesthetic but also have a real wow factor,” says the designer.

It was to be primarily an everyday family kitchen but also suitable for occasional large-scale entertaining. At 12m long by more than 5m wide, there was no shortage of space – which was just as well, since it also had to accommodate a glass-and-steel staircase connecting the kitchen to the rooms above.

The only other restriction concerned the flooring. To create their desired aesthetic, the clients had specified Dinesen Douglas fir for all the floors throughout the house, including the kitchen. Not that Pauline objected: “It created a unique look, and it is particularly special because of the lengths (up to 15m) and widths available,” she says. “We knew it was absolutely imperative that our design-led solution and use of alternative timber complemented the floor.” To that end, she chose Bulthaup’s ▶





b3 design for the units. “Painted in Farrow & Ball’s Wevet and juxtaposed with the Bulthaup walnut on the island, it brings a lovely warmth to the space,” she says.

The 4m-long walnut-edged island is a key element of the layout. Pauline knew that to satisfy the clients’ brief it had to be clutter-free, so a number of clever internal drawer and unit configurations were deployed. It has a low-profile induction hob with removable controls, and other appliances such as the microwave, dishwasher and coffee machine were all concealed in order to keep things looking as simple as possible. Coupled with classic pieces (Hans Wegner’s Wishbone chairs, for example, and a table custom-built from Dinesen Douglas fir), the result is a serene, minimalist, sophisticated and considered space.

Simon is delighted: “Cameron Interiors gave us a world-class service,” he says. “Their willingness to embrace a complicated brief from a very demanding client was impressive and reassuring. I think the photographs speak for themselves, but actually living in the space is even better.” ■

KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

Pauline Denholm’s insider tips

- We liaised with architects, interior designers and structural engineers throughout the project. It was evident right from the start that we would have to take direct responsibility for the space in the house we were tasked to deliver. This occasionally meant some robust conversations to ensure that we were able to meet the brief.
- **We were organised and kept the lines of communication open.**
- The staircase caused a bit of a headache as it was moved a few times. And during the build an internal disused drain was uncovered that hadn’t shown up on any survey.
- **With two young children in the family, you would instinctively be concerned using such a neutral palette, but it’s actually easily maintained thanks to the simplicity of the surface design. And the floor can be washed with just soap and water.**