

Vintage TWIST

For Louise Asher and Warwick Okines, a fully-stocked spiral wine cellar was top of their wish list when it came to planning their new kitchen

FEATURE HAYLEY GILBERT
PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREW DEE



When Louise Asher and Warwick Okines first spotted their semi-detached Edwardian house in Berkshire, they were still living in London and had no serious intention of relocating. 'We saw the details online a few years ago and fell in love with the character of the place,' explains Warwick. 'We'd always seen ourselves in a period property and couldn't believe our luck when it came back on the market just as we were looking to buy in 2010.'

The couple moved into their new home in May of that year, and while the house itself was exactly what they wanted, the kitchen wasn't ▶

Kitchen FACT FILE

THE FAMILY Louise Asher, a former museum curator, Warwick Okines, a research analyst at an investment bank, and their two-year-old son Wilfred

THE HOME A five-bedroom Edwardian semi in Berkshire

THE PROJECT Extending the back of the house to create an open-plan kitchen-diner with a subterranean wine cellar

PRICE GUIDE

£13,400

for a similar Second Nature design from C&C Kitchens, cabinetry only



LAYOUT

An extension has created a light-filled space that's perfect for entertaining. 'We wanted a boundary between the kitchen and dining area,' reveals Warwick, 'and the rounded peninsulas make that division less harsh. It's also safer for Wilfred.' The Second Nature Broadoak Painted cabinetry, from C&C Kitchens, features Chalk and Stone units



Real inspiration Painted oak



CABINETRY
The furniture in the dining area has a dresser-style feel, with curved drawer fronts and glazed display areas

DESIGNER'S TIP 'Different worktop materials can help prevent a large space from appearing bland. Quartz is more durable in wet areas than timber, which needs lots of maintenance' **VICTORIA HUDSON**



WINE STORAGE
Injecting instant wow factor, the underground wine store from Spiral Cellars holds 1,530 bottles and is hidden beneath limestone floor tiles

quite up to scratch. 'It had lovely granite worktops but the flooring, units and lights were a bit tired and there was limited storage space,' recalls Warwick. 'It did, however, have a beautiful 1960s Aga, which we kept for a while, and we also asked our electrician to get the original servants' bell system working again. We just like to combine old and new touches for a characterful, contemporary feel.'

ADDING SPACE

In terms of structural improvements, the couple felt that an extension would create enough space for a much-needed utility room, a large dining area and a more efficient kitchen layout. 'We like to entertain and needed somewhere that could cater for large

numbers,' says Warwick. 'We also wanted a functional scheme for everyday family living.'

A three-metre extension at the back of the house and a single-storey structure at the side were built, followed by the installation of a new kitchen. It was during this time that the couple's son Wilfred was born, so they decided to enlist the help of project coordinator Will Cawrey, who recommended C&C Kitchens to supply and fit the cabinetry.

'It was important for us to try to come up with a scheme that felt right in a 100-year-old house,' says Warwick. 'After seeing a C&C Kitchens design in a house nearby and also visiting its Enfield showroom, we had no doubts that they were the right people for our project. What impressed us was the quality

APPLIANCES

A new two-oven, gas-fired Aga in Pewter adds warmth and character to the classic scheme. It's supplemented by a Neff single oven, which is handy when extra cooking space is needed and also in summer when the Aga is switched off. The integrated fridge freezer is also by Neff



OUR KITCHEN SECRETS

DO go online and find fixtures and fittings yourself if there's something in particular you want. We sourced our tap on the internet and got it for a good price.

DON'T incur unnecessary expense if your budget's tight. We saved by not tiling around the worktops, and all the walls are simply painted white.

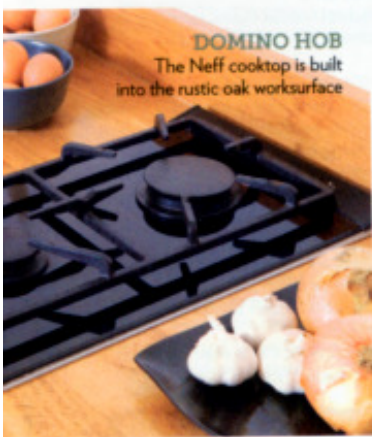
DO ensure that you opt for a four-ring hob to be used when your Aga is switched off in summer. Ours has just two rings, which makes dinner parties very challenging.

of the finish and the fact that the designer, Victoria Hudson, was really creative.'

WHAT LIES BENEATH

Louise and Warwick opted for curved in-frame cabinetry from Second Nature's Broadoak Painted range, in Stone for the base units and Chalk for the wall cupboards. The two-tone effect looks bright and fresh, and also makes the low ceiling appear higher. For the worktops, a mix of solid oak and white quartz was chosen for warmth and practicality.

Top of the couple's wish list, and a great talking point whenever they entertain, is the spiral wine store. 'Having a cellar had been something we'd wanted for years, so it was an obvious thing to do at the same time as ►



DOMINO HOB
The Neff cooktop is built into the rustic oak work surface



STORAGE
A pull-out larder and fridge freezer, with ice and water dispenser (right), are housed within one unit



SINK AREA
Paired with the Perrin & Rowe tap, a Blanco White Silgranit sink echoes the quartz worktop



the kitchen refit,' says Warwick. 'It's basically a spiral staircase that leads to nowhere but has wine bins built into the sides.'

TRADITIONAL TOUCH

When it came to the appliances, a brand-new Aga set the scene. The Aga that came with the house was a converted solid-fuel model that wasn't very efficient,' explains Warwick. 'As we liked the way it made the kitchen into a warm hub of the house, we decided to replace it with an updated range. It's a great investment and

we love the instant heat it provides. It's also much nicer to use than the old one – in fact, we successfully cooked Christmas dinner for 14 people, six weeks after the kitchen was completed. For the rest of the appliances, we simply followed Victoria's recommendations, which have turned out to be excellent buys.'

The couple love their new kitchen and guests are equally impressed. 'It's a great place for entertaining,' says Warwick. 'Wilfred is always playing in there, too, and even has his own cupboards for all his toys.'



DINING AREA

The open-plan kitchen-diner is perfect for entertaining and the rustic table and chairs match the wooden worktops, giving the space a warm and relaxed feel

SHOP THE LOOK

CABINETS

■ Spray-painted solid-oak furniture in Stone and Chalk from the Broadoak Painted range by Second Nature from C&C Kitchens. Price for a similar design, cabinetry only, £13,400

WORKSURFACES

■ 27mm full-stave rustic oak. Price per sq m £400
 ■ 40mm Snowfall Strata quartz. Price per sq m £654

SPLASHBACK

■ Toughened glass in Linen, Deco Glaze. Price per sq m £432

FLOORING

■ Mooredale limestone tiles, Stoneworth. Price per sq m £39.95

APPLIANCES

■ Two-oven, gas-fired Aga £7,000
 ■ Built-in single oven, Neff £318
 ■ Existing freestanding microwave, for similar, try John Lewis £149
 ■ Built-in two-burner domino gas hob, Neff £380
 ■ Integrated fridge freezer, Neff £1,471
 ■ Fully integrated dishwasher, Neff £350

SINK AND TAP

■ Blanco Subline 700-U undermounted single-bowl sink in White Silgranit, Blanco £379
 ■ Rubiq U-spout monobloc mixer tap in chrome, Perrin & Rowe £210

FINISHING TOUCHES

■ 2.5m spiral wine cellar, Spiral Cellars, including installation £34,000
 ■ Dining table, for similar, try Pine Farmhouse, Padgetts Pine £310
 ■ Kaustby dining chairs, Ikea, each £40
 ■ Justina chair pads in Natural, Ikea, each £4
 ■ Delaware Ebony curtain fabric, Villa Nova. Price per m £35.50
 ■ Lusto Mink roller blind, Blinds Direct, from £36.08
 ■ Pure Brilliant White matt emulsion, Dulux Trade. Price per 5 litres £34.99

FOR STOCKISTS, SEE PAGE 134