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A country classic

This Cotswold kitchen has enjoyed a traditional Arts & Crafts makeover using natural materials and a spring-fresh colour palette

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Lucky Grace and Graham Dudleyke live in a fabulous Cotswold stone house in Gloucestershire. Designed by the famous Arts & Crafts architect and craftsman, Norman Jewson (1884-1975), the house was built using traditional methods with an emphasis on natural materials and enduring craftsmanship. So, in 2003, when the couple moved in with their three children (Oliver now aged eight, Lauren, six and Imogen, two) they knew that any alterations they made would have to respect the building's Arts & Crafts heritage.

'The house hadn't been decorated in 50 years,' says Graham. 'The kitchen was a mixture of Formica units, lino flooring and high-gloss walls, which, viewed all together, made it look like a hospital ward.'

'A year later, we gutted the entire house from top to bottom, retaining the exterior and restoring all the rooms in such a way that every feature is evocative of the original. We even had the cornices and doorways lime-plastered by hand to create soft edges and added a stone mullioned bay window to the rear.'

As a key family room, the kitchen needed the most urgent upgrading. Not only was the room dark, >



Kitchen fact file

Oven Oven, hob and cooker hood all from Miele

Fridge freezer Frost-free American-style fridge freezer with chilled water dispenser from Samsung

Flooring Limestone flooring from Classical Flagstones

Worktops Nero Assoluto antiqued granite worktops from The Bristol Marble Company

Sink and taps The stainless steel under-mounted island sink is 'BOX11017'; the main Belfast-style stainless steel sink is 'BFX 710', both from Franke. All taps are from Perrin and Rowe

Paint Units are hand-painted in 'Wickan' from The Little Greene Paint Company; walls are painted in cream from Farrow & Ball

Kitchen units and design Woodchester Cabinetmakers – units in American black walnut hand-painted as above. Kitchens start from £18,000







poky and very uninspiring – the 1960s Formica units looked totally out of place in their stone house.

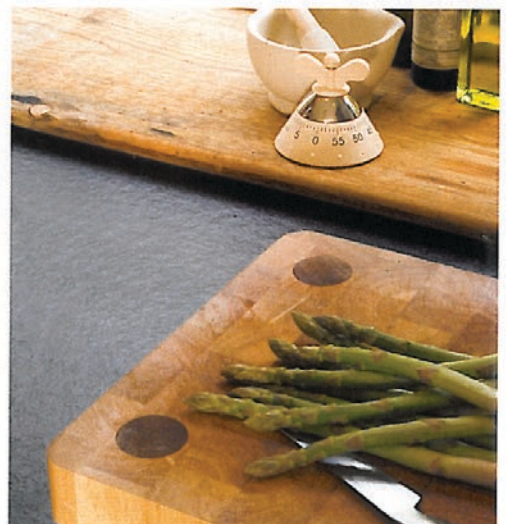
‘The original Arts & Crafts style was plain, unfussy and pared down,’ says Graham. ‘And we decided that we wanted our kitchen to reflect the same qualities. So we selected hand-painted Shaker-style cabinets rather than units with lots of decorative details.’

Having viewed half a dozen showrooms, the couple appointed Woodchester Cabinetmakers. ‘We had a fixed idea about what we wanted and the team at Woodchester understood the philosophy behind it,’ says Graham.

Before installation could start, they had a wall taken down between the kitchen and dining room to create a more airy, open-plan space. ‘After that we aimed to rescue or restore as many of the original kitchen elements as possible,’ explains Grace. ‘Our ancient four-oven Aga, for instance, had started off as a coal-fired one, with a back boiler for heated water, but had been modified over time to be oil-fired. We arranged to have it reconditioned

ABOVE Central to the kitchen is an island unit with a stainless steel under-mounted sink from Franke, plus an integrated bin

RIGHT Grace and Graham chose granite worktops, which are both beautiful and hard-wearing



Arts & Crafts

The Arts & Crafts movement began as a search for authentic design for the 19th century, and as a reaction to the eclectic revival of historic styles during the Victorian era and to machine-made production fuelled by the Industrial Revolution. The machine was felt to be the root cause of all things repetitive and mundane, so supporters of the movement turned to handcrafters, who tended to favour sympathetic and well-heeled patrons.

'Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful,' William Morris advised. Arts & Crafts champions hoped to improve people's living conditions and strengthen the character of the individual. But they differed in their approach; consequently, Arts & Crafts interiors vary greatly, from minute detail to overall character.



'The Arts & Crafts style was plain, unfussy and pared down'

and re-painted black, then we moved it into a purpose-built inglenook to attach to the existing chimney flue.'

The chalky heritage colour palette of cream and muted green creates a delicate contrast for the taller solid walnut cabinets and limestone floor – just the sort of emphasis on textures and natural materials that Norman Jewson would have approved of. The result is a sophisticated blend of traditional design with practical flourishes, such as the hidden dishwasher. The couple's giant American-style Samsung stainless steel fridge freezer with chilled water dispenser is fitted into a large walnut cabinet, which contrasts nicely with the hand-painted units beside it.

'We didn't have space for socialising before, but now we can enjoy having friends over,' says Grace. 'The new kitchen has become much more central to our daily lives – it's where we spend the majority of our time.'
 Turn to page 91 for classic country-style kitchens for all budgets – from less than £5,000 to £20,000 plus

ABOVE The tall larder cabinet is in American black walnut with integrated spice racks
 TOP RIGHT As well as a four-oven Aga, Grace chose a Miele single oven with gas hob and extractor above
 RIGHT A dishwasher is cleverly hidden inside the cabinets below the windows overlooking the garden, usefully situated to the left of a Belfast-style sink

