

# CORNISH *Dream*

THE RUGGED ST IVES COASTLINE AND YELLOW MEADOW FLOWERS  
INSPIRED LISA AND RICHARD HARVEY'S CONTEMPORARY KITCHEN

Feature **CAROLINE FOSTER** | Photography **DAVID PARMITER**



## *Factory finish*

Industrial-style lights help anchor the dining area and add a splash of colour. The table has been colour-matched to the worksurface for continuity



### Island view

Elaine repositioned the freestanding unit to separate the kitchen from the dining zone. 'It's a much more attractive outlook, with views of St Ives through the sitting room entrance,' she says

**L**isa Harvey and her husband Richard spend the majority of their time working abroad in the financial capitals of the world. Seeking a bolthole, they were drawn to St Ives on the Cornish coast, where they found a Victorian mid-terrace with wonderful sea views. Although elegant from the outside, the interior – especially the kitchen – needed complete refurbishment.

The long, narrow room had been previously extended and, at one end, a wall with two irregular-shaped windows looked on to the neighbouring property. The island directly faced the extension wall, which limited the space for a dining table and, with just one electrical socket, extension leads cluttered up the room. There was a distinct lack of storage and worktop space plus a disused chimney breast that suffered from severe damp

problems, resulting in a musty smell. Also, a large ceiling support beam was not only obtrusive, but created it's own design challenges.

Work commitments meant the Harveys had no time to oversee the property's transformation, so they employed Elaine Skinner of Camellia Interiors to manage the entire project. 'Lisa and Richard wanted a kitchen with clearly defined zones,' says Elaine. 'It was vital that the interior looked as if it had evolved over the years. The existing layout was jumbled, so it was important we had an organised space, with plenty of options for storage and food preparation,' continues Elaine. 'The existing shelving was open and the Harveys wanted storage with door fronts for a minimal, uncluttered look. Lastly, they wanted a dining area that could accommodate up to 10 people.'

### Project profile

**THE OWNERS** Lisa and Richard Harvey, who are both finance professionals

**THEIR HOME** A Victorian mid-terrace in St Ives, Cornwall

**THE PROJECT** Improving the layout to include plenty of storage and worksurfaces and space for dining

**ROOM SIZE** 6.2 x 5.4m

**DESIGNER** Elaine Skinner, of Camellia Interiors

**CABINETRY** Bespoke kitchen by Camellia Interiors, £25,000

**PROJECT BUDGET** Undisclosed

'IF YOU WANT TO DRAW THE EYE AWAY FROM A STRUCTURAL BEAM OR AN UNATTRACTIVE FEATURE WITHIN A ROOM, SIMPLIFY THE PALETTE AND THE LAYOUT'





**Balancing act**

The Harveys opted for a handleless, contemporary kitchen with a matt anthracite finish. The new layout has clearly defined zones for modern living



**Clean lines**

A fridge freezer is housed within a run of built-in units that creates a useful bank of storage. Taking the cabinetry to ceiling level gives a clean finish and creates extra storage

**‘I’M COMPLETELY AGAINST NAUTICAL-THEMED INTERIORS WITH STRIPED CUSHIONS OR SEAGULLS ON STICKS. I PREFER TO LOOK TO NATURE AND THE COASTLINE FOR INSPIRATION’**

**DESIGN SOLUTION** *Elaine Skinner explains...*

**What was the greatest challenge?**

The room itself had a number of dominant structural features that could not be changed and that proved an obstacle at first. However, the biggest challenge was to persuade Lisa and Richard that a completely new layout would give them the working kitchen and dining area that they wanted. By using CAD images, I could show them that positioning the new island on the horizontal would not only allow the cook a more pleasing view through the sitting room, but would also free up space to include a spacious dining zone within the kitchen.

**How would you describe the kitchen style?**

I would describe it as clean and with an eclectic mixture of textures rather than a particular style. It's a design and colour scheme that's relevant to the St Ives location, and has a lived-in, furnished feel. The clients' needs came first and foremost, rather than the look or cost of the kitchen, so this was entirely a needs-based design. Lisa had always said that she wanted an interior that appeared to have come together organically over the years and didn't look like an interior designer had been involved. That's much harder to accomplish than people realise, but the results are definitely worth it.

**Tell us the inspiration behind the colour scheme**

The Harveys owned pieces of artwork that were a combination of charcoal tones with splashes of vibrant yellow. I wanted to find a link between the property, the clients' personalities and the location. Seeking inspiration, I took a walk along the coast, accompanied with photos of the Harveys' artwork. I suddenly noticed the combination of charcoal grey cliffs and beautiful yellow cow parsley, and in that moment, I found the connection I was searching for.

**Did much structural work have to be done?**

The far wall was uneven, so we squared it off to create a flat surface that could be used to position a sink unit and to hide the utility pipework. We replaced a modern glazed door with a Victorian-style half-glazed wooden version that was more sympathetic to the period of the property. A floor-to-ceiling sheer curtain was then added to visually simplify that corner.

**How did you deal with the ceiling beam?**

Painting the ceiling white helped the beam disappear, but it still had a great impact on the kitchen layout, particularly the island and the lighting scheme. The Harveys wanted a bigger island initially, but I explained that the cooker

and drawers would look off-centre. I had to site everything correctly to centralise the island and extractor, positioning them around the RSJ, while still maintaining balance and symmetry within the room.

**What informed your choice of flooring?**

It wasn't cost-effective to save the existing underfloor heating, so I advised the Harveys to rip it all out. I replaced the old ceramic tiles that had previously dominated the space with engineered timber, which was laid on the vertical to emphasise the length of the kitchen. By opting for a grey driftwood finish, the flooring is less dominant and naturally brings the eye up rather than down. To create the cohesive look the couple wanted, the timber floor has been continued into the sitting room to subtly connect the two spaces.

**Describe the client/designer relationship**

The entire project was conducted remotely, using Skype and email, so Lisa and Richard handed the refurbishment job to me and only saw the house again when it was finished. It's easy to misinterpret people's wishes online, so I had to be very particular. When they saw the completed interior for the first time, Lisa cried – happy tears, I might add!





### *Light work*

A once ugly extension wall with irregular-shaped windows has been transformed by the Cole & Son wallpaper, which echoes the vintage yellow pendants

‘CONSIDER HOW THE KITCHEN IS USED AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF THE DAY AND THE TRAFFIC FLOW, TO GIVE EACH AREA FUNCTION AND DEFINITION’

### *The layout*

#### *The details*

**CABINETRY** Bespoke high-pressure laminate units in a matt anthracite finish. **Kitchen**, around £25,000, Camellia Interiors

**SURFACES** Blanco Zeus worktop with integrated sink and upstands, £580sq m, Silestone; granite splashback, £310lin m, both sourced through Camellia Interiors

**APPLIANCES** Fisher & Paykel range cooker, £2,241; Liebherr fridge freezer, £2,518; fridge freezer surround, £630, all sourced through Camellia Interiors. Integrated dishwasher, £389, Hotpoint.

Samsung combination microwave, £179, John Lewis

**SINK AND TAP** Sink, an integral part of worktop, Silestone. Dual-flow mixer tap, £295, Bristan

**FINISHING TOUCHES** Lau dining table, £1,423; driftwood mirror, £160; Moroccan jar, £57; wall clock, £120; blackboard, £55; white vase, £38, all Camellia Interiors. Comback dining chairs, £408 each, Kartell. For similar lights try the Jackson industrial pendant, £59, Made. Heritage Dualit toaster, £179; John Lewis

