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No. 15

DIVIDE & CONQUER

BEAUTIFUL FINISHES EXTENDING ACROSS THIS OPEN-PLAN KITCHEN, LIVING AND DINING SPACE CREATE A COHESIVE WHOLE

WORDS SUE WHEELER STYLING BREE OLIVER
PHOTOGRAPHY SUE STUBBS

DRAWERS A genius feature is a set of hidden sockets for charging mobile phones, laptops and iPods. They are installed conveniently in one of the island drawers so gadgets can be corralled and charged at the end of the day. The trio of pendant lights, above, were devised by homeowner Tanzim, who commissioned an electrician to create them from a set of bowls.

FINISHES Any potentially clever space-saving spots – or space-giving for that matter – have been skillfully utilised by designer Melissa. A custom-made wine rack and cookbook shelves in blackbutt timber give definition to the wall of 2-pac cabinetry in Dulux Vivid White that surrounds the Fisher & Paykel fridge-freezer. Both finishes are echoed across the whole zone, tying the scheme together. "Repetition of materials and cohesiveness is how you achieve that relaxed feeling of home," says Melissa. The striking timber screen at the top of the steps acts as a divider between the cooking and living areas, and the more formal dining zone on the ground floor.

TIP A mirrored splashback visually expands the space and helps bounce light around, helpful in a compact space. Given that it reflects everything on the benchtops, it's a great idea if you are tidy. Messy? Think again.

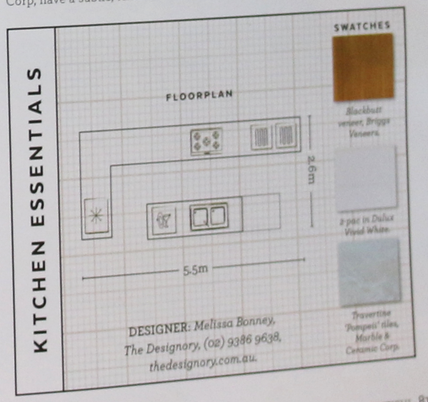
SYDNEY COUPLE TANZIM and Jon had hit a reno roadblock. They wanted to turn their living room and kitchen into one big space, but the two areas were on different levels. They have three children and frequently entertain at home; then there's the family from overseas who visit regularly and stay for more than just a weekend. So they needed more space and were determined to find a solution. There was no easy answer, until they met Melissa Bonney of The Designory, and builder Brendon of Bz Construction. Melissa arranged for the kitchen and living zone floors to be lowered to the same level, bringing them in line with the garden. With the basic footprint resolved, Melissa delineated the dining area from the living area by adding steps, storage cabinetry and an eye-catching timber screen, and devised an elegant kitchen that repeats the beautiful finishes across the open-plan space, unifying the whole zone.

"We wanted the screen to be beautiful and purposeful, but we needed to see through it to keep the space flowing... so it couldn't be solid" ~ *Melissa, designer*

STORAGE The double bank of three-tier drawers on the living room side of the island complement those in the cooktop bench, supplying plenty of extra storage. On the island bench is an Afa 'Flow' double sink, teamed with a Sussex 'Trinity' pull-out mixer, both from Reece. The undermounted sink not only gives the island a stylish, continuous line, but also allows vegetable peelings, crumbs and moisture to be wiped straight from the benchtop into the sink.

ISLAND A multi-functional island works perfectly for the family. "I wanted a table where the children could do their homework or just sit down and chat while I was cooking," says Tanzim. "But I didn't want the usual breakfast bar where everyone sits in a row." The Caesarstone benchtop in Organic White on the island extends into a blackbutt timber table that echoes the cabinetry in blackbutt veneer from Briggs Veneers. "It's just what I had envisaged!" says Tanzim. On the floor, travertine 'Pompeii' tiles, from Marble & Ceramic Corp, have a subtle, textured look, and run throughout the open zone.

KITCHEN ESSENTIALS



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