



HOLD THE FORT

Exposed brickwork and light timbers create a chic, rustic look.

PHOTOS ALISON HAMMOND WORDS VICTORIA METCALF

The rich red brickwork creates a striking background for the honey-toned oak units, while the kitchen is drenched in sunlight from large windows with stunning views of Alderney's coastline.



'The idea was to pick up on the regimented, uniform lines of the building – I wanted it to look like a work area within the fort.'

Towards the end of renovating their Napoleonic fort, on the island of Alderney in the Channel Islands, Diana and Stephen Mellor started work on their kitchen. With five children and 18 grandchildren that regularly visit, the kitchen was too small and needed to be moved from its previous location in a back room, to where a very large sitting room had been. 'We had inherited a long dining table with the house, so we decided to incorporate this into the space, to make one big, social area', says Diana.

The couple turned to their son-in-law, kitchen cabinet maker Dominic Ash, to design and build their kitchen. 'The biggest problem I had was the wall space,' says Dominic. 'Most of the walls had large windows so there wasn't much space left for cupboards.' He solved this by designing elongated shallow cupboards which he then balanced up with each seating area and oak panelling that frames the windows. The high vaulted ceilings allowed Dominic to make the most use of the space.

He designed a large kitchen island to accommodate all the integrated appliances +

KITCHEN PROFILE

The contemporary, cubic kitchen design emphasises the fort's previous, utilitarian function, while the English pippy oak and Cumbrian stone, highlights the fort's proximity to the elements, complemented by the exposed brickwork and high vaulted ceilings. Food storage is concealed in tall cupboards which make use of the room's height and a large island incorporates all the integrated kitchen appliances. Two stainless steel Franke sinks are stationed on opposing sides to maximise the usage of space. **Dominic Ash Ltd, The Saw Yard, Yanworth, Gloucestershire, GL54 3LJ. Tel: 01285 720219. dominicash.co.uk. Handmade, bespoke kitchens start from £20,000.**

Above The massive island unit offers plenty of storage and prep space – ideal for the large family.

Left The couple chose a nickel tap from Abode to complement the industrial feel of the kitchen scheme.

Right The soft, earthy blue slate worktop and splashback give a clean-lined edge to the traditional cream Aga.





'The stone hearth gives the kitchen a homely feel, while the room is softened with antique tables and ethnic tapestry.'

and kitchen storage. On the far side of the island, he built open shelving for pots and pans, which slide out, and either side of the Aga, are two more kitchen cabinets.

The fort's natural character, and the large family's needs, provided the basic guide and inspiration for the design of the kitchen. 'The

idea was to try and pick up on the regimented, uniformed lines of the fort,' says Dominic. 'I wanted it to look like a work area within the fort.' Dominic decided to go for a straight and square kitchen, but chose a heavily knotted, pippy oak for the units and a rough blue slate for the worktop to soften the edges. 'We gave

the kitchen a contemporary angular design, with a rustic feel,' he explains. Diana and Stephen chose a nickel mixer tap by Abode and installed a Franke sink to complete their utilitarian look. There are two sinks located on either side of the island – a small one for washing vegetables and a double sink on the

other side of the island for washing up.

The units were built back in Dominic's workshop in Gloucestershire and then shipped down to Alderney. 'A lot of the work that we do is in the West Country or London, so I am used to shipping everything,' he says. 'The island is well equipped with builders' =

The hearth, with its striking silver flue, sits in the middle of the room, with soft tan leather chairs to relax in.



merchants, but Dominic took no risk, and packed everything he needed so he could get the job done efficiently.

The kitchen took two weeks to install and fortunately, everything went remarkably smoothly. During the build, Diana and Stephen decided to block off a walkway into the kitchen. A large glass panel was then fitted into the corner of the room which brings more light into the space.

The brickwork was left exposed to create a rustic, industrial look, and a new oak floor was laid throughout to complement the scheme. The couple chose green pendant lights that had previously been used at the Norton Villiers engine factory, and positioned them over the kitchen island for a splash of colour. Diana also bought a simple 18th Century wrought iron chandelier from Christie's to hang over the

long dining table for a touch of understated elegance. For less formal occasions, such as casual suppers, the couple use a smaller round table, which can easily be moved nearer the hearth when required. The stylish tan leather lounge chairs came from a trip to Sri Lanka; 'I took them back with me on the aeroplane,' laughs Diana. The stone hearth and cream Aga gives the kitchen a homely feel, while the room is softened with two antique dining tables and a rich ethnic tapestry.

Now that the kitchen is complete, there is plenty of space for the family to entertain guests, cook meals together, and admire the stunning views over the coastline. After all the work, are the couple pleased with their new home? 'It always takes courage to live in a remote spot,' says Diana, 'but ultimately, it is always worthwhile.'

STOCKISTS INFORMATION

APPLIANCES

Stainless steel 1PLB2.40cm flush Lab domino gas hob, £709, at Barazza; Similar Aga, OC Two oven oil fired Aga, £6,195, at Hills of Ledbury.

FIXTURES AND FURNISHINGS

Sink KUBUS 110-34 stainless steel, £187, at Franke; Mixer tap Tuscana in nickel, £244, at Abode; Sea Green honed Slate worktop from £342 per sq. m, at Kirkstone; M4 D drawer handles in aluminium coloured steel, £4, at Hafele; Similar dining table and chairs, at John Bly Antiques; Similar green factory pendant lights medium green Coolicon 1930s American Reflector Factory lights, at After Noah; 18th Century Italian wrought iron chandelier, at Christie's; Similar antique chandeliers, at Fritz Fryer; leather chairs by Geoffrey Bawa, at Paradise Road, Sri Lanka. For similar, try The Conran Shop.

*Prices are approximate. For stockists, see page 160.

Above left The oak panelled window boxes conceal valuable storage cupboards.

Above The space is large enough to accommodate the long dining table for family and dinner parties. A smaller round table, is used for casual dining.

Right The fort sits at the edge of a picturesque cliff and was built in 1846 to protect the island against Napoleon.

