



Delicious Design.



The dinner party scene before us is like any other, tempting smells drift through the house as the kitchen comes alive with cooking, good wine and chatter. Only the keen eyed though will pick out the kitchen's subtle design differences that divulge more of the story behind what is a beautiful, homely kitchen, as we discovered.

Two years ago Kit and Penny Noble, owners of Nonsuch House, one of Dartmouth and Kingswear's leading B&Bs, decided enough was enough with their original kitchen and the time was right to make drastic changes. According to Penny "We always wanted a kitchen that would encourage our guests to sit down with a glass of wine and chat away to Kit as he created their meal. Shut behind a swinging door and a partition wall, the old kitchen meant Kit was always isolated from guests, which is simply not how we wanted to run our business."

We find out the story of how an Ashgrove bespoke kitchen has transformed what is both a home and a business, and just happens to be one of Devon's leading luxury B&Bs.

So the Nobles set about investigating companies who could deliver a bespoke design that would not only satisfy Kit's very specific requirements but create that extra special point of difference for their business.

A recommendation from a friend led Kit and Penny to Ashgrove Kitchens, a Crediton based company creating bespoke kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms for more than twenty years. Tasked with creating a kitchen that ticked all the boxes for the Noble's was senior designer Mike Lawrence, who himself can claim over 40 years specialist design experience within the industry.

For Mike the biggest challenge of any job is creating something that intricately matches the customer's personal preferences. However, hand in hand with this, is the opportunity to advise customers on gadgets and solutions that will make life in the kitchen more enjoyable and effortless.

This was of particular importance when working with Penny and Kit, considering the need to perfectly balance a functional commercial kitchen with Penny's desire for a relaxed room in which guests gather, share life stories and relax into their holiday.



Above top: One of the guest rooms that overlooks the stunning harbour.

Above: The House retains many of its original features like the stained glass windows in the entrance hall.

Inset: The Penny and Kit Noble who's B&B business was awarded 5 AA Stars.

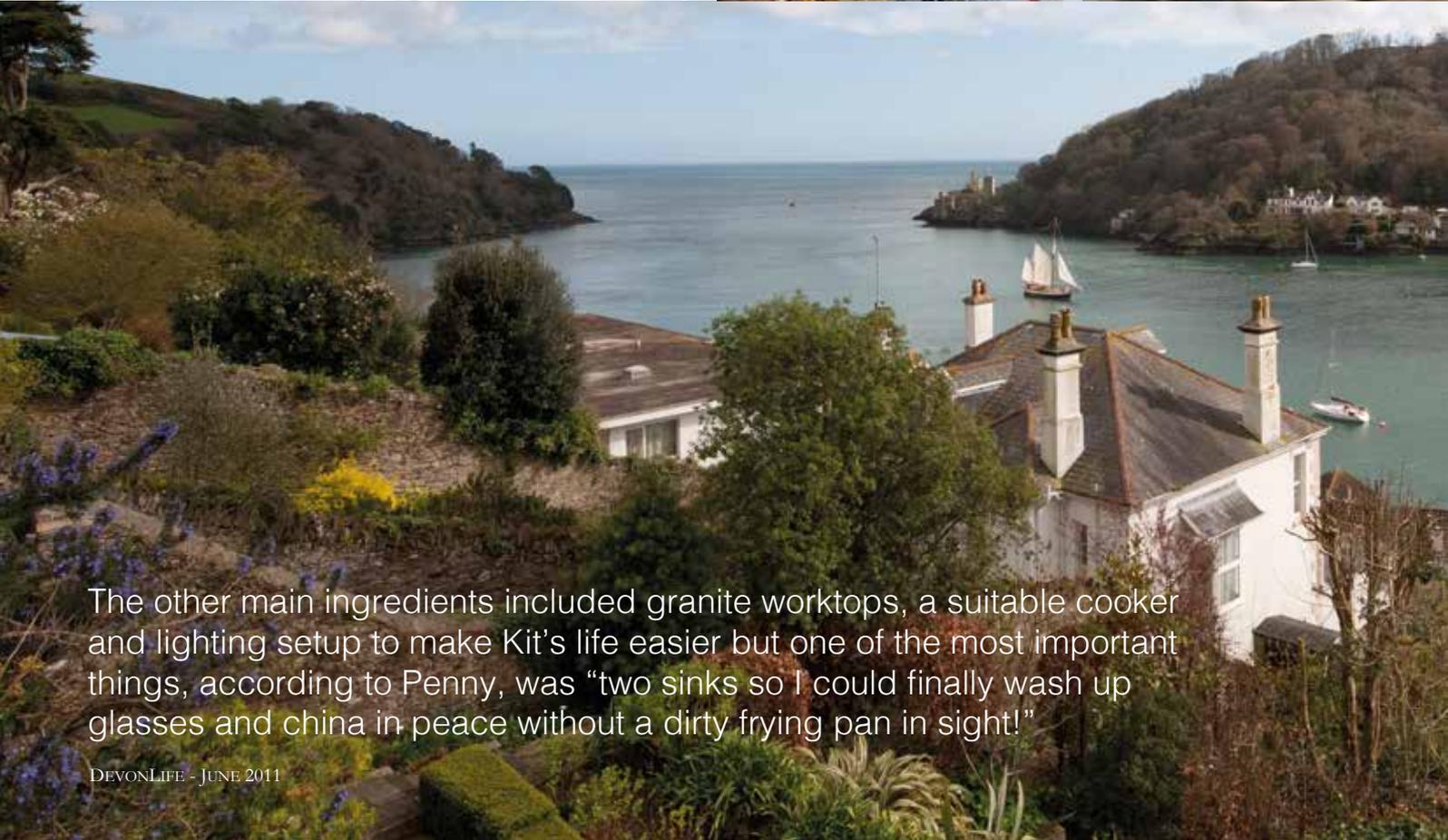


The original kitchen certainly provided a real challenge but one that would see Ashgrove transform it from a narrow, cramped working space to into the stunning, open plan kitchen that suited their needs completely. As Mike explained, "While Kit and Penny took a well earned leave of absence in Peru, we moved in to Nonsuch House, knocking down the original kitchen's wall to create one large space from two small rooms. The key trick here was to create interlinking spaces that gave depth to the room to get away from the fact that the space naturally formed a narrow corridor."

At the same time Ashgrove Kitchens undertook much needed re-wiring and plastering work before Mike's hand-drawn plans were brought to life by the company's craftsmen, with a look and feel inspired by the property's unsurpassed landscape views. Fabulous sweeping vistas of the River Dart winding its way past the famous town of Dartmouth, coupled with the sweet coastal smell of sea air meant soft New England colours were a must.

The other main ingredients included granite worktops, a suitable cooker and lighting setup to make Kit's life easier but one of the most important things, according to Penny, was "two sinks so I could finally wash up glasses and china in peace without a dirty frying pan in sight." Ashgrove recommended a practical stainless steel sink for Kit and a beautiful Belfast sink for Penny, both adding something to the kitchen.

Left: Beryl, who has been working with Kit for over fifteen years, brings in freshly delivered eggs. Below: Kit gets busy with the breakfast. Bottom: the extraordinary view from the dining room.



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These are all examples of how subtle design considerations formed the bigger picture for the Nobles, reflecting their personality and their need for functionality, which resulted in a kitchen that seamlessly performs to requirements.

According to Penny, "Since we've transformed the kitchen, it has become the very heart of our B&B. Not only do we encourage our guests to use the kitchen as they would their own, but what better way to welcome them into our home than to sit down with them for good old cup of English tea and homemade cake while we check them in. It is responsible for changing the way we live our lives and how we interact with our guests, many of whom return year after year."

For Kit, one of the greatest outcomes is the connection guests can have with his suppliers. As Kit recalls, "I cook up breakfast for friend and fishmonger Mark Lobb each Monday. The other day as Mark ate, he got chatting to a couple who consequently took home half a dozen fresh fish to share with their family. The kitchen has literally become a focal point for everyone, whether us, our suppliers or our guests. It's something we just couldn't re-create with our old, hidden away kitchen."

The Nobles now have a kitchen that works in all ways to enhance their lives and to contribute to the unique experience savoured by guests of Nonsuch House. It just shows how kitchens have the ability to bring people together and truly do make the heart of any home.



Want a Beautiful Bespoke Kitchen? Here are Ashgrove Kitchens' top five things to consider before taking the plunge.

- 1. Choose your designer carefully.** Are they creative, do they interact, do they listen? Are they experienced and professional in their approach?
- 2. Choose your supplier carefully.** Ask lots of questions. Do they manufacture and install? How long have they been in business and do they belong to a professional body? Can you see photographs of their work and can they supply testimonials from previous customers in respect of quality and timeliness?
- 3. Before briefing your designer spend some time thinking about the 'look' you want, the features you**

require, the practical day-to-day working requirements, the mood, the lighting.

- 4. Clarify how much you need to spend.** Seek preliminary cost advice. Be realistic if you are going for top of the range finishes and appliances. Make sure you are getting value but 'don't spoil the ship'.

- 5. Make sure you fully understand the agreed contract and the work required by your chosen kitchen supplier.** Get an agreed work schedule. Make sure your supplier can liaise with any other specialist contractors employed by you.

