

The positioning of the island gives a convenient working area, plus a pleasant seating area without interrupting access to the garden. The Geometric Callerton kitchen, with Chelsea oak and painted alabaster doors, has strong curves that are contrasted with bold side units to create an impressive open-plan kitchen. Available at Kitchens International, from £12,000

GO WITH THE FLOW

Open your kitchen out onto a garden, terrace or balcony and bring a feeling of light and space to your home all year round

Report: Ruth Bell



Top: The Chelsea collection by Smallbone of Devizes is inspired by the interplay between kitchen and garden. The beautiful European oak kitchen is built here within a contemporary orangery, and folding glass doors open right up to the garden. Colours and textures are carried through between kitchen and garden, blurring the distinction between inside and out. Kitchens from £35,000

Middle: This open-plan Leicht kitchen is shown in a matt lacquered vanilla, which tones well with the outside landscape, and the huge glass windows allow it to be a very open kitchen. Floor units that are 120cm deep form a freestanding island. Kitchens from £12,000

Above: Featuring the Frillen kitchen from Sola Kitchens, this is a 10 x 5m living space with large sliding doors along the 10m wall. Outside is a terrace overlooking a lake. "When the doors are opened up it feels like the kitchen-dining area is outside and you can even hear the waves lapping on the beach," says Sofia Bune Strandh of Sola. Kitchens from around £26,000



"A young family wanted a big, open-plan living, eating and entertaining space centred around the kitchen and then flowing out into the garden beyond," says Alternative Plans' Laurence Pidgeon. "The whole ground floor has been used to create the space and while it is broken into zones, visual continuity is maintained through use of colour and by keeping sight lines open from the street end to the back of the garden." Kitchens from £25,000



CASE STUDY

Outside in

Underwood was commissioned to design this kitchen for a client who wanted to keep the kitchen light and bright, taking advantage of the natural daylight streaming in from both ends of the room. The glazed dining area looks out onto the garden, extending the kitchen and creating a perfect area for relaxation.

Different areas of the kitchen are defined by mixing woods: walnut with walnut burr inlay and, by the AGA, maple with

Mazur birch inlay. Glass worktops were chosen to maximise the reflected daylight and the bright blues and greens add to the outside feel. The main focus is the striking island, so Underwood used all curves, which make it easier to move and work around. Also, it was important that the section facing the eating area and garden didn't look like the back of the island, so shelving for books was included. Overall, the room feels as though the outside is very much part of the design.



Above: This penthouse flat in an exclusive development by Hadley Homes in Windsor opens onto a balcony that overlooks Windsor Castle. With so much light in the room, a contrasting black kitchen looks stunning – it's a combination of kitchens from Schiffini's Cinqueterre and One collections. Kitchens from £25,000 at DesignSpaceLondon

Right: The owners of this kitchen by Holloways Kitchens wanted light from the glazed room panel and sliding doors to stream onto uncluttered worktops, so plenty of storage was important. With dark colours on wall units, worktops and appliances, colour contrast is limited to lighter base units, which capture the sunlight. Kitchens from £25,000

“

By making use of doors, glass and light and reflective surfaces, we can introduce the feel-good factor of the great outdoors into the home. In the summer, nothing breathes life into a home more than throwing open those doors.

”

Wayne Dance, InHouse





Above: This kitchen by Higham Furniture was designed to be a real cook's kitchen for a couple who like to entertain a lot. The island faces the garden so whoever is working there can chat to guests and work in good natural light. Bookcases were integrated for the owners' extensive cookery book collection. Kitchen from around £30,000

Left: A link with the outdoors can be as simple as a pair of French doors by the dining area, as is shown here. The highly contemporary Studio Spectrum from Magnet adds bright colour, even when the sun isn't shining. Priced from £343 for a 600mm single floor unit

CASE STUDY

Party central

As part of a complete renovation, the owners of this large home in Southwest London situated the kitchen in a new extension at the side and rear. The brief given to Neil Lerner was to create a kitchen with an open-plan living and dining area, a good amount of work surface and plenty of natural light. As the clients were keen entertainers, with frequent visits from family and friends, the design had to include a gas stove with wok burner for stir-frying, plus a powerful extractor and ample refrigeration.

Contemporary materials such as composite worktops, silver glass splashback and stainless-steel appliances were teamed with graphite oak veneer and white gloss cabinets. These clean, simple lines perfectly complement all the light flooding in from skylights and the floor-to-ceiling glass doors.

"Folding doors blur the boundary between inside and out and instantly transform a room into a lighter and more airy space," says Neil. "These folding doors are understandably popular in the UK as they enable you to enjoy the garden whatever the weather. When the sun shines, they can be opened wide, creating a seamless link between house and garden – and a wonderful open space for a party!"





We British have always loved our gardens and eating outdoors, but it's only recently that the alfresco lifestyle has started to be designed into our houses. This has been influenced by architecture from warmer climates, but we have now adopted it as our own."



Steven de Munnich, *Smallbone of Devizes*





Above: In this room, the shape of the beams is echoed in the windows, unifying the kitchen-living area with the outdoors. Mereway Kitchens' Lincoln range comprises a solid timber Shaker-style door in warm oak finish combined with complementary pastel ash doors in Pantry Cream. Kitchens from £12,000

Right: Monoslide from Sun Paradise is a system of glass panels that can stack next to each other into the side of the room or can be designed to fit neatly inside a hidden wall – offering the maximum outlook to a garden or view. Priced from around £3500, depending on size and application

Design notes

- Using the same floor materials – perhaps in stone or timber – inside and out makes the indoor and outdoor space feel like one and creates a sense of elongated space
- “Though you don’t have to spend a fortune to match your flooring, if you have wooden floorboards or even laminate, you can echo this outdoors with decking. Just remember to run the boards in the same direction,” advises Anjum Ahmed from Magnet
- Keeping the indoor and outdoor area on the same level without any steps up or down also enhances the feel of it being one space
- Flooring, walls, furniture, doors and worktops should use a neutral, natural palette of colours, which will allow the garden to stand out in the background
- “Adding clever lighting to the outside space enables you to enjoy it when it’s dark outside and makes the inside space feel larger throughout the year,” says Sofia Bune Strandh of Sola
- The layouts of indoor-outdoor kitchens tend to have units round the walls and a large breakfast island facing outwards, creating a safe barrier for the working part of the kitchen
- “Consider extraction regulations and make sure that you have the right type of extractor for the size of the space of the room,” says Ginette Crowther of Mereway. “Also, ensure you have good insulation and UV glass protection so furniture and décor do not fade over time”



SourceBook

ALTERNATIVE PLANS 020 7228 6460 or www.alternative-plans.co.uk
 HIGHAM FURNITURE 0800 047 0235 or www.higham.co.uk
 HOLLOWAYS KITCHENS 020 8487 9422 or www.hollowayskitchens.com
 INHOUSE 01661 842304 or www.inhouseuk.net
 KITCHENS INTERNATIONAL 0845 074 0022 or www.kitchensinternational.co.uk
 LEICHT 07802 402921 or www.leicht.com
 MAGNET 0845 123 6789 or www.magnet.co.uk
 MEREWAY KITCHENS 0121 706 7844 or www.merewaykitchens.co.uk
 NEIL LERNER 020 7433 0705 or www.neillerner.com
 SCHIFFINI 020 7487 5077 or www.designspacelondon.com
 SOLA KITCHENS 020 3004 0898 or www.solakitchens.com
 SUN PARADISE 020 8538 9585 or www.sunparadise.co.uk
 SMALLBONE OF DEVIZES 020 7589 5998 or www.smallbone.co.uk
 UNDERWOOD 01296 771801 or www.underwoodfurniture.com

This kitchen doesn't open directly onto the garden but reflected light on the units keeps the spaces linked. From Schüller's C Collection, the Veneto is shown in Truffle high-gloss combined with ash cabinetry. Kitchens start from £7560 at InHouse

