

# KITCHENS BEDROOMS & BATHROOMS

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# Small wonder

A microscopic space was the price for this flat's central London location. Luckily, the owner was full of ideas on how to make every inch count

Report: Fiona Reid Photography: Richard Glover Styling: Angie Herzberg

**W**hen designer Adam Dawe first bought his 'mini-flat' in Pimlico, the challenges were clear. "Walking in, I thought it was a tiny space," he recalls, "but I quickly realised I could rearrange what was there in a more intelligent fashion."

Unable to rejig the size of the rooms, Adam set about squeezing as much space as he could from each one. With the kitchen measuring just 1.8 x 1.2m and the bathroom 2 x 1.1m, innovation was required in simply making the basics fit, never mind doing so with strong aesthetics. For all those who've ever complained that their flat is simply too small to do anything with, observe and learn.

Take the kitchen, where stainless steel units line one wall, paired with a solid oak worktop cut in a gentle curve and incorporating the hob in the shorter stroke of the L-shape. "This space is very angular," Adam explains, "so, while the stainless steel reflects light making it feel bigger, the wood warms and softens the steel. The curve also feminises the space and gives it a flow." Below counter level, Adam slotted in a Liebherr stainless steel fridge-freezer – a freestanding model chosen for its greater internal dimensions – along with a stainless steel Whirlpool oven on the far wall. "It's the little things that make a difference, like buying an oven housing with a pan drawer in the bottom," he adds.

Similarly effective, the round sink is relatively shallow, ensuring that only one drawer space was lost within the cupboard below. The hinged wall units open upwards rather than outwards, a simple design choice because, as Adam says, doors opening vertically here would simply have got in the way. Visually these units also 'stretch' the room, while the height-adjustable lighting system has the effect of lowering the ceiling. As Adam observes, "With a considered design you can really change the way you read a space."

Such innovation is typical of Adam's work, his set designs having appeared in the likes of *Vogue*, *Harpers &*







**OPPOSITE PAGE:** THE LUXURY IS IN THE DETAILING. THE CURVES OF THE COUNTERTOP AND BOWL CREATE A UNIFIED THEME

**LEFT:** A SHAPELY WOODEN WORKTOP LENDS FLUIDITY TO THE KITCHEN AND SOFTENS THE HARD EDGE OF THE STAINLESS STEEL

**TOP:** ADAM CHOSE A TELESCOPIC WIRE-TRACK LIGHTING SYSTEM AS A WAY OF VISUALLY LOWERING THE CEILING

**ABOVE:** THE STAINLESS STEEL UNITS OPEN UPWARDS SO AS NOT TO IMPINGE ON SPACE ABOVE THE WORKTOP





*"Walking in, I thought it was a tiny space, but I quickly realised I could rearrange what was there in a more intelligent fashion."*

Queen and The Face – clients who are looking for a distinctly creative take on ideas. In his own flat, the creativity appears in unexpected ways, such as the washing machine inserted in dead space in the corner of the kitchen and accessed not from the kitchen but from the adjacent bedroom. "In practical terms, it makes a lot of sense," he says. "You get changed in the bedroom, open a door in the wall, and shove your dirty washing straight in." In the kitchen, rather than adding an extractor hood that would have dominated the end wall, Adam installed a Vent-Axia fan above the wall units, which provides sufficient extraction for a kitchen of this size.

When it came to the floor, Adam was concerned with creating the right look at an accessible price. He opted for oak-effect vinyl flooring from the Colonia range at Polyflor, which ties in with the richness of the worktops.

The same finish carries into the bathroom, creating a unity enhanced by the curvaceous solid-oak countertop. "I wanted the spaces to gel together as it makes the whole flat feel bigger," Adam says. His first task in this room was to lower the ceiling from 3.5m to 2.2m, making a mini loft space that houses the hot water tank as well as the WC cistern. "The curved counter is 600mm high and a cistern would only have got in the way," he elaborates.

Adam also removed the two half-doors into the bathroom, installing a pocket sliding door that disappears into the wall. Choosing the right fittings was key. The rounded shape of the WC, from the Space range at Ideal Standard, was favoured for being more compact than the usual oval. A circular Colourwash basin sits just on the edge of the counter, but while the pieces spill into the room, the floor space itself is kept to a maximum. The wall-



**TOP:** A SIMPLE BASIN AND WALL-MOUNTED TAP SIT ABOVE THE COUNTER, WHICH IS CURVED TO ECHO THE KITCHEN'S LINES

**ABOVE:** IN-BUILT SHELVING IS BACKLIT WITH A STRIP-LIGHT FITTING, CREATING A WARM GLOW AGAINST THE UNGLAZED PORCELAIN MOSAIC TILING

**RIGHT:** A MIXTURE OF TEXTURES AND STREAMLINED PIECES CREATES A SLEEK INTERIOR THAT DEFIES ITS SIZE RESTRICTIONS

mounted mirror (steam-free thanks to a de-misting heating pad hidden behind it) is fitted flush with the unglazed porcelain mosaic tiling, the reflected doorway giving the impression of space beyond. "It's not an expensive item," Adam says of the mirror, "yet it still gives that feeling of detail and luxury."

In fact, nothing – from the Ecolec slimline electric radiator to the Colourwash tap – is expensive, just carefully selected for a unified, sharp look. The overhaul of the entire flat cost no more than £15,000. "There's only so much you want to spend in a small flat," Adam acknowledges, "but I did have to really work on the spaces. The important thing was getting clutter out of the way." A good instance is the in-built shelving in the bathroom, backlit by a strip light to create a feature in an otherwise redundant corner. Indeed, there are no redundant corners in this home: where the shelves end, boxy alcoves accessed from within the shower enclosure use the remaining volume. Clever design indeed.

#### BARE ESSENTIALS

**DESIGN** Adam Dawe Design, 20 Barby Gardens, London W10 5LW or e-mail [adamdawedesign@hotmail.com](mailto:adamdawedesign@hotmail.com)

**KITCHEN** UNITS, Magnet, call 09002 192192 (50p per minute) or [www.magnet.co.uk](http://www.magnet.co.uk); FLOORING, Polyflor, call 0161 767 1111 or [www.polyflor.com](http://www.polyflor.com); HOB, AEG, call 0870 535 0350 or [www.aeg.co.uk](http://www.aeg.co.uk); OVEN, Whirlpool, call 0870 600 8989 or [www.whirlpool.co.uk](http://www.whirlpool.co.uk); LIGHTING, Mr Light, call 020 7352 7525 or [www.mrlight.co.uk](http://www.mrlight.co.uk); EXTRACTOR FAN, Vent-Axia, call 01293 530202 or [www.vent-axia.co.uk](http://www.vent-axia.co.uk)

**BATHROOM** BASIN AND TAP, Colourwash, call 020 8944 6456 or [www.colourwash.co.uk](http://www.colourwash.co.uk); SANITARYWARE, Ideal Standard, call 01482 346461 or [www.ideal-standard.co.uk](http://www.ideal-standard.co.uk); SHOWER, Hansgrohe, call 01372 465655 or visit [www.hansgrohe.co.uk](http://www.hansgrohe.co.uk); TILING, Reed Harris, call 020 7736 7511 or [www.reedharris.co.uk](http://www.reedharris.co.uk); RADIATOR, Ecolec, call 01902 457575 or [www.ecolec.co.uk](http://www.ecolec.co.uk)



