

# DARK BEAUTY

A VIBRANT MIX OF KITCHEN FINISHES AGAINST NEUTRAL-COLOURED FLOORS AND WALLS ADDS UP TO A STRIKING RESULT ON A TIGHT BUDGET

WORDS/STYLING **ANDREA CAMPOS** PHOTOGRAPHS **AMANDA PRIOR**

**ARCHITECT'S TIP** "EVERY KITCHEN NEEDS TO WORK AESTHETICALLY WITH THE HOME," SAYS SHANE BLUE OF BOURNE + BLUE ARCHITECTURE. "IT NEEDS TO HAVE A CERTAIN LOGIC ABOUT HOW THE FOOD IS STORED, COOKED AND SERVED, AND HOW THE CLEANING IS DONE. A KITCHEN SHOULD BE TAILOR-MADE TO SUIT THE CLIENT AND THE HOUSE"





→ **BRIEF** A busy professional and accomplished chef, the client wanted a practical new kitchen. She expressed a preference for high benchtops, windows at bench level (allowing visual access outside) and colour. She also wanted her kitchen to complement the adjacent living area.

→ **BUDGET** \$13,700 plus appliances.

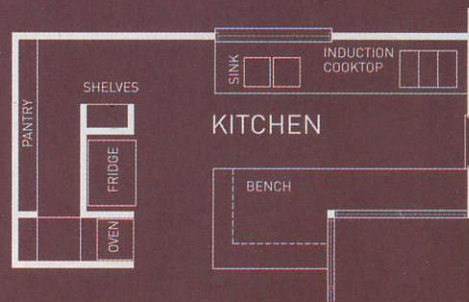
→ **SOLUTION** Architect Shane Blue designed a kitchen to tantalise any culinary enthusiast. The storage is at one end, while the cooking, serving and washing areas are set to one side. A bench for food preparation and entertaining faces the living space. This kitchen fit-out was part of the construction of a new two-level residential dwelling also designed by Shane.

#### → **ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN**

Shane Blue of Bourne + Blue Architecture, Newcastle NSW (02) 4929 1450.

#### → **JOINERY** KJ & PM Thomas,

Newcastle NSW (02) 4942 6385.



**OPEN STORAGE** The expansive storage shelves beneath the benchtop have several advantages, according to Shane. As well as providing plenty of storage space that is easily accessible, visually and physically, the shelves allow a sleek, minimalist kitchen to display the client's collection of favourite cookware and tableware.

**BRIGHT BENCHTOP** MAX Laminate in Red was chosen for the new kitchen benchtop, for both its rich, welcoming colour and the variety of dimensions in which it is available.

"One of the main advantages of using laminate for a benchtop is that it comes in sheets large enough for a bench like this to be in one sheet," explains Shane. "I also find it to be a much warmer material to be close to and sit and look at." →





**DURABLE FINISHES** Shane thought about texture, serviceability and colour when choosing the kitchen materials. The working benchtop on the wall side was to be used for cooking, cleaning and serving, so he selected stainless steel.

"It's a good option for a custom-shaped sink," he says. "It's also superior to many benchtop materials for durability, ease of cleaning and serviceability." The benchtop cost around \$2000 plus installation.

The kitchen's joinery, including cupboard doors, drawers and pantry, are in Formica Chocolate Pear laminate. Shane decided to use this material because of its interesting, inviting colour and texture.

"A laminate such as Formica Chocolate Pear is not a timber or timber-look product, but it does have much more depth and variation than any block colour," he says.

**COOK'S COMPANIONS** The client investigated appliance options that would suit her budget and cooking ambitions – she wanted slimline, fuss-free pieces of equipment. After much research, she approached one company, Kleenmaid, to supply all her kitchen appliances, as it meant ease of purchase, delivery and product warranty. For the details, see Appliance List.



#### APPLIANCE LIST INDUCTION

**COOKTOP** ICK 60X, \$2999.

**SLIMLINE STAINLESS-STEEL**

**RANGEHOOD** RH60, \$1499. **BRANDT**

**DISHWASHER** DW17X (SINCE SUPERSEDED BY DW21X, \$2699).

**MULTIFUNCTION STAINLESS-**

**STEEL PYROLYTIC OVEN** T0700X,

\$3499. **AMANA FRIDGE** XRSS267BB

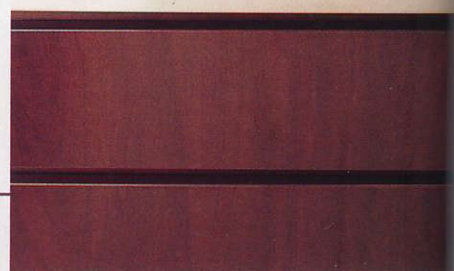
(SINCE SUPERSEDED). ALL

KLEENMAID APPLIANCES

ARE AVAILABLE NATIONALLY

(EXCEPT WHERE NOTED) 13 13 08;

[WWW.KLEENMAID.COM.AU](http://WWW.KLEENMAID.COM.AU)



**LOOK, NO HANDLES** Shane opted not to use conventional door handles. Instead, he inserted a shadow line beneath the benchtop and between each drawer, to provide space for easy gripping of doors and drawers.

This was also a safety consideration. Handle-free joinery is an important device in spaces where the benchtop is flush with the underbench cupboards. Door handles jutting out from joinery can become caught on passers-by and cause damage, especially to children.

The result fits in with Shane's wish to produce a stylish area that still suits the requirements of his client. "Above all else, a kitchen needs to be simple and convenient to use," he says. "Renovating a kitchen is always a significant investment – especially if the client is on a budget – and no two kitchens should be the same."



**HIDDEN SPACE** The new kitchen is cleverly designed. At the end of the benchtops is a separate storage and appliance area, which houses the fridge and oven. It also hides an L-shaped walk-in pantry accessed via an open doorway to the right of the fridge. Shelves separating it from the fridge (not seen) provide further storage space.

The advantage of Shane's design is that the pantry is open and easily accessed, but screened out of sight from the living area. The fridge can also be accessed from the pantry without walking all the way into the kitchen.

The red benchtop primarily serves as the food-preparation area. It can be a collective experience with several people rolling up their sleeves and helping out, or the client can do it while talking to friends seated at the bench.

For details of the Kleenmaid oven and fridge chosen by the client for her kitchen, see Appliance List.



**ARCHITECT'S TIP** DON'T LOOK PAST LAMINATES FOR AN ATTRACTIVE AND COST-EFFECTIVE FINISH FOR YOUR KITCHEN BENCHTOP OR JOINERY. THE KEY IS TO CHOOSE INTERESTING COMBINATIONS THAT HELP TAKE THE KITCHEN AREA OUT OF THE EVERYDAY. YOU CAN EITHER TEAM TWO NEUTRALS FOR A SUBTLE BUT SOPHISTICATED RESULT OR, AS WITH THIS KITCHEN DESIGNED BY BOURNE + BLUE ARCHITECTURE, PACK A PUNCH WITH RICH SHADES

#### GET THE LOOK BELOW, FROM TOP LEFT

General Electric PSG29IBS Side by Side stainless-steel refrigerator, \$8799, from Kleenmaid (as before). | MAX laminate kitchen benchtop in 67FH Red, POA (according to sheet size), from Multiform Australasia nationally (02) 9608 8711; [www.maxontop.com.au](http://www.maxontop.com.au). | Kitchen joinery in Formica Chocolate Pear laminate, POA, from The Laminex Group nationally 13 21 36; [www.formica.com.au](http://www.formica.com.au). | Hansa Mix kitchen mixer (with retractable dual spray), POA, from Candana Designs, Woollahra NSW (02) 9389 8631.

**WHEELY STORAGE** A convenient and spacious floor-level storage solution, this clever slide-in, slide-out pot drawer is a much-loved, indispensable relic from the client's former kitchen.

Originally a storage component she ordered many years ago – and has gained much use from – she asked Shane to include it in the kitchen fit-out.

"This is an extremely practical piece and doesn't look out of place in its new surroundings at all," he says.

Although the pot drawer was bought previously and incorporated into the renovation, most architects and designers will develop a similar pull-out feature as part of a new project. ❖

