



RESONATING WITH NATURE A recessed shower head installed directly into the ceiling (above) provides an elegant finish. Some, like this design, offer dual flow options such as a rainfall water mode for a soothing, relaxing sensation or icicle mode for a stimulating jet. A free-standing bath (right) is both inviting and luxurious. If it is possible to site a bath under a window, this can enhance relaxation by providing a view and natural light.



activities as well as altering focal points. This is where light zoning comes to the fore with the deployment of a mix of fixtures; these may include directional LED downlights for general lighting, under cabinet task lights to spotlight work areas and pendant lights over a table or work island.

WATCHING OUT FOR WATER

Water statistics show just how precious this life-giving liquid is. 97% of the earth's supply is salt water whilst 3% is fresh and, of this, 2% is stored in ice caps, glaciers and mountain ranges, leaving only 1% available for the world's supply needs. Those who have instant access to water can become disconnected from the scarcity of this extraordinary resource; a study by Water UK showed that 78% of people think their household consumption is between less than 20 litres to 59 litres a day whereas, in fact, the average daily water usage per person in the country is currently around 140 litres.

Small actions in reducing water consumption in the kitchen do help, such as fully loading dishwashers before use and not doing too much rinsing by hand. Water waste from taps can be reduced by the installation of a low flow aerator (these inexpensive little gizmos can reduce the rate of flow from around eleven litres per minute down to four to six) and by using a boiling water dispenser. A water filter or filtered water attachment to the tap is also worth considering in order to reduce water contaminants and avoid the use of plastic water bottles.

What we pour into drains at home matters. Most know that household waste such as cooking oils and coffee grinds should not be disposed of down the plug hole. There is also the impact of bleach and other harsh synthetic chemicals in cleaning materials and toiletries. Even some washing up liquids are actually labelled as harmful to aquatic life. There are no borders when it comes to water so, in making mindful choices, we really are all in this together.

Uplighters can gently illuminate the space between cabinet tops and the ceiling for soft ambient lighting, alongside attractive wall lights that are a feature in their own right. Additionally, few people think to introduce table lamps into a kitchen but a pair of lights on a side console or a single lamp on an underutilised corner of worktop (well away from water) can help create an inviting mood.

Kitchens that feature dark, non-reflective surfaces need different lighting from those that combine pale cabinetry and worktops. For example, wood tends to absorb light whilst high gloss laminates reflect it. So, it is advisable to do the electrical plan once the layout and materials have been decided upon. All lighting is best installed on separate circuits, with dimmers or a control pad, so that the light levels can be easily adjusted from full power on a gloomy day to a tranquil glow to accompany an evening meal.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS The most sustainable kitchen is the one you already have so, before ripping out, take time to review whether it could be refined or reconfigured. Whilst it may be attractive to start the project with a blank page, it is worth assessing whether items can be upcycled, repurposed, donated or taken to a recycling plant to avoid unnecessary use of skips. If refitting is the only option, you might consider using reclaimed materials in imaginative ways or purchasing from a preloved kitchen resale company. Incorporating free-standing pieces such as an antique dresser or vintage table and chairs adds

ON DISPLAY Dressers can be a delightful addition to kitchens, offering an engaging three-dimensional focus to storage. Sometimes, a clutter-free look with closed units is needed but, as this smart kitchen demonstrates, visible shelving injects depth, texture and character into a space. And it is possible to revitalise the whole room by simply changing the china, decorative items, books and plants on the shelves through the seasons.



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