





Texture: today's leading theme

Materials and finishes now reflect the role of kitchens as an integral part of the living space

Good food nourishes all the senses: first the eyes, and the nose as the meal is laid before us; then perhaps the ear if the wine sparkles and we hear appreciative comment; the fingers as we pick up the stemmed glass or the napkin, and the knife and fork as we deliver the food to the palate.

Because all the senses are at play, it follows that the qualities of the environments in which we prepare and serve our food contribute much to its

enjoyment. The designers of the kitchens we feature in this section understand this, and have sought to enhance the experience of food preparation and eating with skilful use of colour and, in particular, texture.

The kitchen shown here belongs to Melbourne interior designer Louise McLaren and her husband Stuart, who commissioned architect Jean-Henri Morin to renovate their 1930s home. Together they have created a kitchen that is functional, yet celebrates all the

Left: Owner Louise McLaren wanted her new kitchen and family room to be treated as one space. Architect Jean-Henri Morin designed the dining table – and the recess in the ceiling above. There is a concealed bar fridge at the lower left side of the bar.

Above: This is a kitchen with rich textures, designed to make food preparation and eating as pleasant as possible. The cool sleek surfaces of the stainless steel are complemented by the jarrah benchtops, and mosaic tile window surrounds.



senses involved in cooking. It is a richly textured, yet balanced composition of jarrah and stainless steel, terracotta, parquetry, mosaic tiles and laminate.

Louise McLaren wanted her new kitchen to be a part of the family entertaining area, so the cook could entertain while preparing the food.

"I wasn't interested in a formal dining area. We've been there and done that – and for us a formal dining room doesn't get used well enough."

She also wanted adaptability – a kitchen/dining room that could be transformed for formal or casual dining as the occasion required.

And with two teenage daugh-

ters, the McLarens wanted lots of bench space, storage, light and colour.

Big layout changes were made. Where the kitchen now stands there was once a small dining room and office; where the family room is, there was a garage, laundry and kitchen.

Different ceiling levels in the new kitchen and the family room have been overcome by framing the breakfast bar with side nib walls and an overhead bulkhead.

Morin also had to contend with kitchen windows which were slightly out of alignment with the bench layout. Rather than shift the openings in the brick wall he inserted a stainless steel tray in the original opening, with

a new smaller window correctly aligned in a second inset tray.

Around the edges of these windows Morin has placed a frame of green and yellow mosaic tiles. This softens the earthy red of the jarrah and laminate – a colour that psychologists know stimulates the appetite.

There is a pleasing contrast between the warm tones of jarrah and the functionality of the stainless steel.

There is also an emphasis on making the structure eye-catching, rather than using paintings or ornament. For example: the rich floor pattern of the kitchen is reversed when one crosses the threshold into the entrance foyer.



Facing page, top left and above: Louise McLaren wanted lots of bench space so all members of the family could cook at once. The big benches provide ample storage underneath. The absence of overhead cupboards makes the space feel larger.

Facing page, top right: The space beneath the stairs was used to fit a pantry, crockery storage, a microwave, a shelf for cook books and a wine rack. The pantry doors are treated as an extension of the wall, with no protruding handles. The curved yellow bulkhead softens the end of the room.

Facing page, lower left: The entry to the kitchen. Note the reversal of the floor pattern.

Facing page, lower right: The designers have worked hard to make the best use of the corners. The curved racks show the designer's intention of making functional elements eye-catching. The round lid conceals a rubbish chute. The opposite corner houses a bar fridge, reached from the family room.

Owner/Interior design: Louise McLaren
Architect: Jean-Henri Morin (SMS Architects) Melbourne, Australia
Cabinetry: G Wright, J Bradford
Main construction material: 18mm HDF
Exterior finish of doors: 1.2mm laminate
Benchtops: Laminated jarrah
Floor-coverings: Jarrah parquetry, terracotta, glass mosaic
Wall-coverings: Dulux Chalk, glass mosaics in stainless steel trays
Bench-to-wall tiles: Satin stainless steel splashbacks by Veitch Industries
Sink: Radiant Clipper 64 - 01, SS 1538mm
Taps: Zuchetti CP 2335 chrome sink mixer
Microwave: National Dimension 3
Hobs: Ilve IV39PC 5 plate 90cm gas hob
Wall oven: Ilve 948 SMPX
Ventilation: Blanco RHFL 90
Refrigerator: Fisher and Paykel N510
Dishwasher: Asea 1252
Rubbish chute: Radiant stainless steel lid
Lighting: Inlite Olympia cast aluminium

Photography by Tim Griffith

