

Interiors
The designer's room

Victoria Wormsley's elegant kitchen balances traditional elements with modern touches

FRENCH-BROOKS INTERIORS is a design studio in South Kensington and Hampshire. At its helm is Victoria Wormsley who, having spent 15 years designing interiors for developments in central London, is comfortable working in a range of idioms, from pared-back Minimalism to traditional and eclectic. Adhering to the mantra that interior design needs to speak to the architecture of a house, Victoria set out to create a kitchen that would set off the scale of the space that was formerly the dining room. 'I didn't want a predictable country-house style. I was aiming for a more impressive, more formal space, which incorporated some contemporary elements.'

The focal point is the chandelier above the dining table. Made by Cox London, it features oak leaves made of steel and brass (020-3328 9506; coxlondon.com). 'It's imposing, yet very much of the countryside, especially as there are lots of oaks locally. We all love it. It's like living with a piece of oak tree growing in the house.'

The table, which seats 10, was made to order in Wiltshire to echo a medieval-refectory table, with a pedestal base in a stained oak. The chairs are in a style known as *os de mouton* ('lamb bone', which relates to the shape of the stretches on their bases) and covered in a Belgian linen by Stereo with antique brass nailing (01892 750003; www.stereointeriors.co.uk).

The compact cooking area was designed by Martin Moore in a classic style (0845 180 0015; www.martinmoore.com). For this, Victoria chose muted colours, including Stony Ground by Farrow & Ball, for the cabinetry (01202 876141; www.farrow-ball.com) and Plumbago Blue by Fired Earth on the island (01295 812088; www.firedearth.com). The storage is closed, underpinning the space, which is used by both the family and for more formal entertaining: 'I didn't want lots of cheery mugs and colourful cookery books on show.'

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