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Fresh face

This spacious, airy kitchen is full of New England cottage-style charm, with functionality built into every nook and corner

Above: A new bar and hutch were added to the dining room as part of this major kitchen renovation by designer Susan Templer. The two cabinets finish short of the ceiling and walls, and were designed with crown cornices to give them the look of furniture. The pale blue colour complements the white New England cottage-style kitchen behind. Italian pendant lights chosen by the owners add a contemporary touch to the old-world design.

It's a common problem for kitchen designers – what's the best way to improve presence and functionality when limited by the size of the space?

This project by designer Susan Templer resolved just such an issue in several ways. The new kitchen was created in a classic New England cottage style, ideally suited to the 1930s villa. A subway tile splashback, panelled cabinet

doors, butler's sinks and a custom hood designed by Templer all add to the look, requested by the owners – one of whom is American. The couple also wanted the design to offer plenty of storage and display space.

"However, the kitchen had to sit within the same footprint as the existing design, which was itself a refit," the designer says. "To gain a little more

space, we repurposed the laundry as a walk-in scullery. This light, spacious room continues the look of the main kitchen, except the cabinets here have simple flat doors."

Templer also added corner cabinets in the kitchen proper and maximised internal space within all the new cabinetry.

"To conform to a classic look, some cupboards and drawers have double doors





or drawer faces with roomy storage behind. I also specified space-efficient drawer dividers and corner storage units."

In addition, the designer added two cabinets outside the kitchen – a bar and a tall hutch, both facing the dining area.

"I gave these pieces the look of freestanding furniture, complete with crown cornices. This detailing works well in the slightly more formal space."

The original beam ceiling was retained as it suited both the house and the work space. The kitchen's pale blue and white colour scheme was also appropriate and catered to the tastes of the owners.

Although the floor looks like traditional wood, it features contemporary textured tiles. These are laid randomly, in three lengths, to resemble a wide-plank timber floor.

The Italian pendants over the dining table offer another modern accent.

"The kitchen also fulfils a special request," says Templer. "One of the owners is a surgeon and his love of detail is reflected in the design. He wanted all the straight lines to meet. For example, the decorative ledge that the scullery sink appears to rest on is exactly in line with the cabinetry."

Above: He wanted blue, she wanted white – together they achieved a two-tone colour scheme that ideally suits the traditional kitchen and dining area. While loosely following the original cabinetry layout, Templer added a small peninsula to house the oven and to provide a small breakfast nook, with bar stool seating on the far side. Grey grouting was chosen for the crisp white subway tiles to make them "pop", the designer says.



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These pages: Granite benchtops with a textural leathered finish flow right through the kitchen, scullery and dining area. Subtle detailing underscores the traditional sensibility. For example, both the butler's sinks are set on ledges, giving them a practical, no-nonsense feel. Storage is optimised with new corner cabinets and high-tech compartmentalised dividers.

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