

MASTERFUL & MOODY

DARK HUES COMBINE WITH SLEEK CURVES TO MAKE A SCENE IN THIS RENOVATED CONTEMPORARY KITCHEN

Words KYLIE JACKES Photography ALEX REINDERS

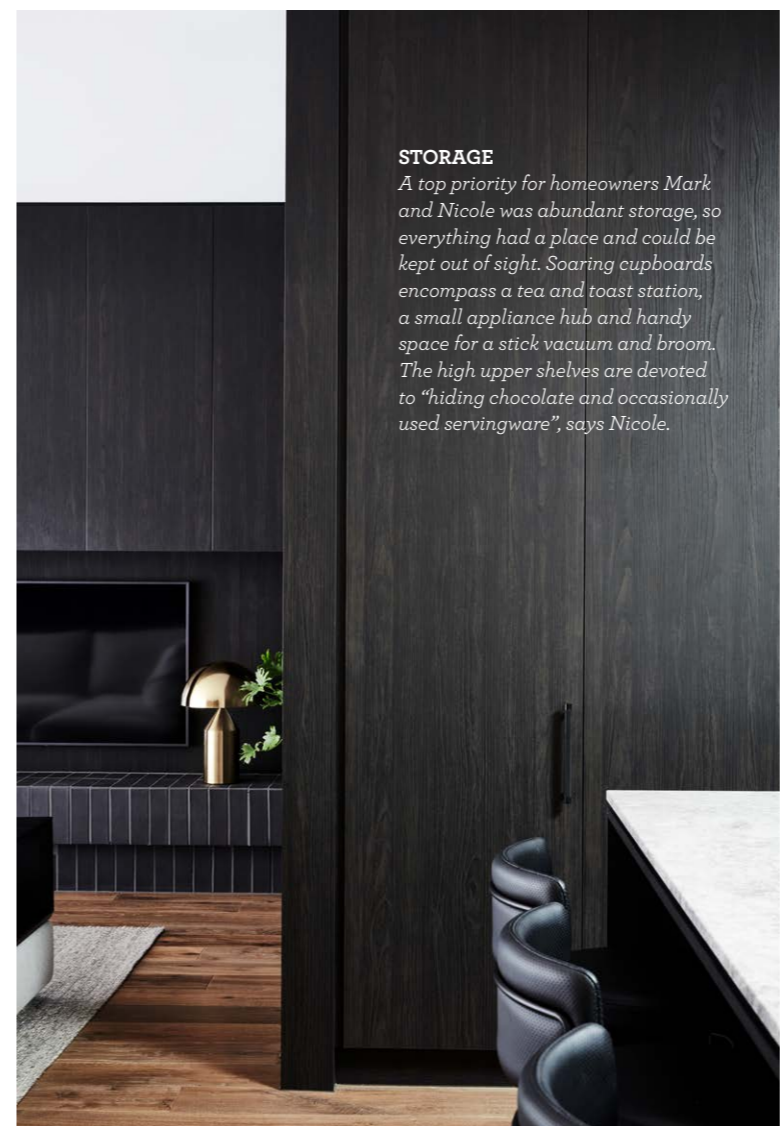
Elaborate dishes were not on the menu during the four months Nicole and Mark's kitchen was out of action during renovations. "For the first two months, we cooked in an electric frying pan on the front step, then for the last two months we moved in with friends until the project was finished," says Nicole. "It's a time we'll look back on fondly!" For the couple and their two teenage kids, the minor inconvenience was well worth the outcome – a stunning family-friendly kitchen with gentle curves woven into the design. When updating their 1930s home in Melbourne's Brighton, Nicole had a clear vision of what she wanted, and consulted the team at Austin Design Associates to bring it to life. "The kitchen and living area were poky and dated, so we wanted to open it up and create a space that was slick and sexy," she says. "I also wanted to go dark, and our interior designer Lauren O'Brien was on board straight away." Inspiration for the curved benchtop end was drawn from the home's original entrance and set the tone for a series of rounded accents that add softness to the bold scheme. "It worked out really well and, being our forever home, I can't imagine ever wanting anything different," says Nicole. "It now flows beautifully and there's a place for everything."

ROUNDED ACCENTS

Practicality and aesthetics inspired the curved island bench topped in 'Grey Aether' marble from G-LUX. "Because the kitchen is a thoroughfare from the hallway through to the living area, I thought a curved bench, rather than square edge, would enhance flow and look beautiful," says homeowner Nicole. "We've also found the curved end is conducive to conversation. We eat at the bench together and it's nice to sit around one end and chat." Beautiful features such as 'Diiva' swivel stools from Grazia & Co and Brodware gooseneck mixers echo the subtle curved theme and provide a delightful softness to the space. >



HIDDEN HELP
The renovation included an extension, with a section of the enlarged floor area used for a scullery. “We’re really messy, so that’s where we located the main washing-up sink, so it was hidden away and we can close the door to it whenever we want,” says Nicole of the space. It houses a Brodware ‘City Stik’ kitchen mixer and a Franke ‘Kubus’ double sink. The zone maximises overhead and underbench storage and also includes a Vintec 40-bottle dual-zone wine fridge (check out the Vintec range at Harvey Norman).



STORAGE
A top priority for homeowners Mark and Nicole was abundant storage, so everything had a place and could be kept out of sight. Soaring cupboards encompass a tea and toast station, a small appliance hub and handy space for a stick vacuum and broom. The high upper shelves are devoted to “hiding chocolate and occasionally used servingware”, says Nicole.

“THE DARK TIMBER-LOOK LAMINATE
CREATES DRAMA WHILE ALSO
ADDING TEXTURE AND WARMTH”

~ LAUREN, INTERIOR DESIGNER

ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

CABINETRY
Nicole wanted touch-open doors and drawers in a dark timber look that didn’t show fingerprints. She opted for Evenex ‘Black Caviar’ from Elton Group (above & right). “It looks great and cleans really easily,” she says of the textural wood fibre finish. Bold black punctuates the scheme with 2pac MDF V-groove lining boards in Dulux Taihape used either side of the rangehood (right), to add texture and emphasise the height of surrounding cabinetry.

LIGHT SOURCE
The space is infused with natural light, which streams in from a skylight above the island bench and glass door in the scullery. “Dark finishes might not be everyone’s cup of tea, but it doesn’t feel dark at all,” says Nicole. Task lighting includes concealed strip lighting under the rangehood (right). Lauren chose nickel pendants from Savage Design either side of the rangehood, while a pair of ‘Palma’ pendants from Koda (top right) adds to the curved contours. >





INSIDER TIP
Explore the dark side. “Don’t be afraid that dark cabinetry will give you a kitchen that feels dark and severe,” says interior designer Lauren O’Brien. “When combined with a lighter floor, wall and ceiling colour, you can strike a balance and achieve a result that has drama while still feeling open and full of natural light.”

“A DARK KITCHEN WAS QUITE A BOLD CHOICE BUT I LOVE IT” ~ NICOLE, HOMEOWNER

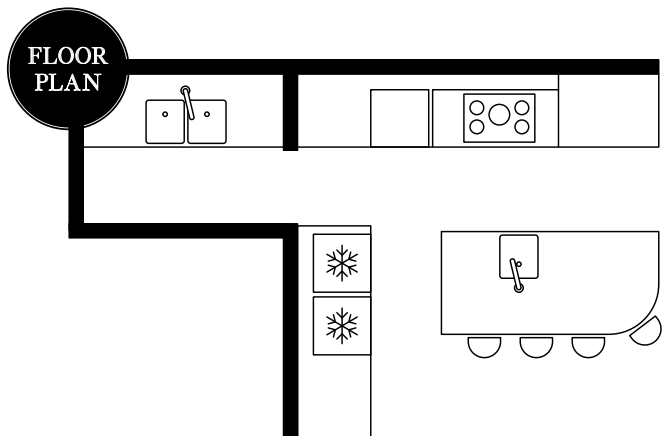


HARDWARE

While most cabinetry in this kitchen is touch-open, floor-to-ceiling cupboards and integrated appliance fronts were teamed with rounded black chrome pulls from Lo & Co Interiors (left). “I just love them,” says an enthusiastic Nicole. “They’re like little pieces of art that you can reach out and grab.”

SURFACES

The pared-back palette (above) is sophisticated and timeless. A swathe of ‘Grey Aether’ marble from G-LUX adds incredible impact across benchtops and splashbacks, alongside cabinetry in Evenex ‘Black Caviar’. The look flows seamlessly through to the scullery, which can be screened off when desired.



SOURCE BOOK
ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN:
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