

Tree influences kitchen design

The design of a new kitchen in one of the first homes built on Compass Point three years ago was determined by a protected pohutukawa tree on the property's boundary.

When Suzanne and Steve Johnston bought the cliff top section at Half Moon Bay, they asked architect Paul Leuschke for a design comprising clean, simple lines. But the precious pohutukawa was part of the equation and had to be considered in all the initial design stages, with any building clear of the tree's drip line and the roots protected at all times.

Given these constraints, the house plan was long and narrow and the kitchen footprint set in place with the back wall measuring just over 7m. Suzanne has a flair for interior design and Steve, a former builder, a strong sense of the big picture. Between them they

had a few ideas, which they discussed with Ernie Downes from Creative Kitchens.

The Creative Kitchen designers had to keep in mind the entire family, including the three girls' love of cooking, and with a generous 1030mm allowed between the back bench and the island, there's plenty of space for several chefs to work simultaneously.

The kitchen's stunning focal point is the 4m x 1500mm aqua-painted splash back. Sue abhors clutter and if space had allowed she would have had a butler's kitchen. Instead, she worked closely with Ernie to ensure the splash back would incorporate storage as well as being a prominent feature of the kitchen's overall impact.

An ethereal backdrop, the splash back cleverly conceals storage on either side of the Ilve double oven where crystal

glassware, a mini home office and a good number of small appliances are out of sight but within easy reach behind the smooth glass sliders. The oven is another success with six gas rings plus a teppanyaki plate offering plenty of cooking options for several pairs of hands.

All bench tops are in Stonex; the cabinetry - mostly drawers - is in dark oak with long, brushed aluminium handles. The latest storage solutions and soft-close technology have been used throughout.

The couple are delighted with the appliances too. And they should be. Their own company, Buyrite Appliances Trade Base, supplied them!

With its waterfall construction, the island is nearly 3.5m long and holds a double sink, dishwasher plus another popular addition - the sculptural Blanco tap, which apparently attracts a lot of attention at parties.

Suzanne's convinced clever storage allows the space to function as beautifully as it looks. Even large, heavy appliances such as crock pots are stored in drawers that easily hold up to 50kg. The large pantry holds all the ingredients cooks' desire and another cupboard to the left of the double refrigerator holds further essentials. Drawers below store two dinner sets.

As well as being pivotal to the kitchen's finished look, Ernie designed cabinetry for the master bathroom, laundry, office and sewing room plus built-in desks for the girls' bedrooms.

Three years on, the Johnston's are still delighted. "Using quality workmanship, Ernie and the team gave us the simple, functional and beautiful design we were looking for."



**Creative Kitchens,
Unit C, 30 Kerwyn Ave, East Tamaki.
Ph 274 1484. Fax 274 1438.
Web: www.creativekitchens.co.nz
Showroom hours: Weekdays 9am-4pm;
Saturday 9am-noon.**

