



## *East meets west*

A contemporary design that follows a very different approach



**RE-BUILDING A HOUSE** brings many benefits, including the opportunity to plan a kitchen to meet every requirement. Presented with a large blank canvas, the owners requested that Darren James design a kitchen that “made a statement about who they are”. For this young family of four this meant creating a simplistic, relaxing and functional kitchen environment that paid respect to their Japanese heritage and echoed their love for contemporary Japanese design.

“At the heart of Japanese design are the principles of minimalism, simplicity, space and order. Beauty lies in how simple and functional each design element is and how harmonious the overall effect,” explains James. “Incorporating these principles into the kitchen design required an exercise in control and attention to detail.”

The Japanese concept of “ma”, a conscious feeling of space, plays an important role in this design, ensuring freedom of movement and imparting a sense of calm in the room. The choice of an open-plan galley-style kitchen ensures the space is not overloaded.



**ABOVE** The butler's pantry ensures the space is kept clutter-free.



"Sensitive towards the need for non-physical boundaries and with the desire to create a modern twist on the traditional tatami wall, a small drop-down ceiling encasing LED strip lighting subtly and seamlessly defines the space," he says.

At the rear of the kitchen, a butler's pantry focused purely on function ensures the space is kept clutter-free. It houses the refrigerator, stores food and bulky everyday appliances while also acting as an out-of-the-way prep zone when entertaining. Sliding shoji doors constructed with timber veneer and rice paper glass are typical of traditional Japanese style and provide the perfect divider between the two rooms.

Clean lined cabinetry consists of flush lines, recessed handles and thin benchtops. A calming, Zen-like feel is accomplished through the use of natural materials and subdued colours. The soothing neutral palette of brown, cream and grey minimises the feeling of clutter, which is also essential to eastern design and its philosophy of simplicity.

"This design demonstrates the successful combination of minimalist principles seen in traditional Japanese design with the contemporary Australian lifestyle of a typical modern Australian family," explains James. "The result is simple, clean lines paired with warm, earthy tones, rich wood finishes married to organic elements, and cabinetry artfully arranged to create a balanced, harmonious and functional kitchen highly sought after by the client."



### fact file

The kitchen was designed by Darren James and built by **INTERIORS BY DARREN JAMES** Brisbane Qld **PHONE** (07) 3801 2566  
**WEBSITE** www.interiorsbydarrenjames.com.au  
**DOORS** 18mm MR White Satin flat panel in two-pack gloss Donkey Grey and Evener Evenmink **PANELS** To match doors **INTERNAL HARDWARE** Blum **HANDLES** eMotion flush pull soft-close **BENCHTOP** Island bench: 12mm Staron Solid Surface Sanded Chestnut; Feature: 80mm Stone Italiana Jaipur Thyme undulated finish; Cooktop and scullery: 12mm brushed stainless steel **SPLASHBACK** 6mm Miramax Silver **FLOOR** Bamboo