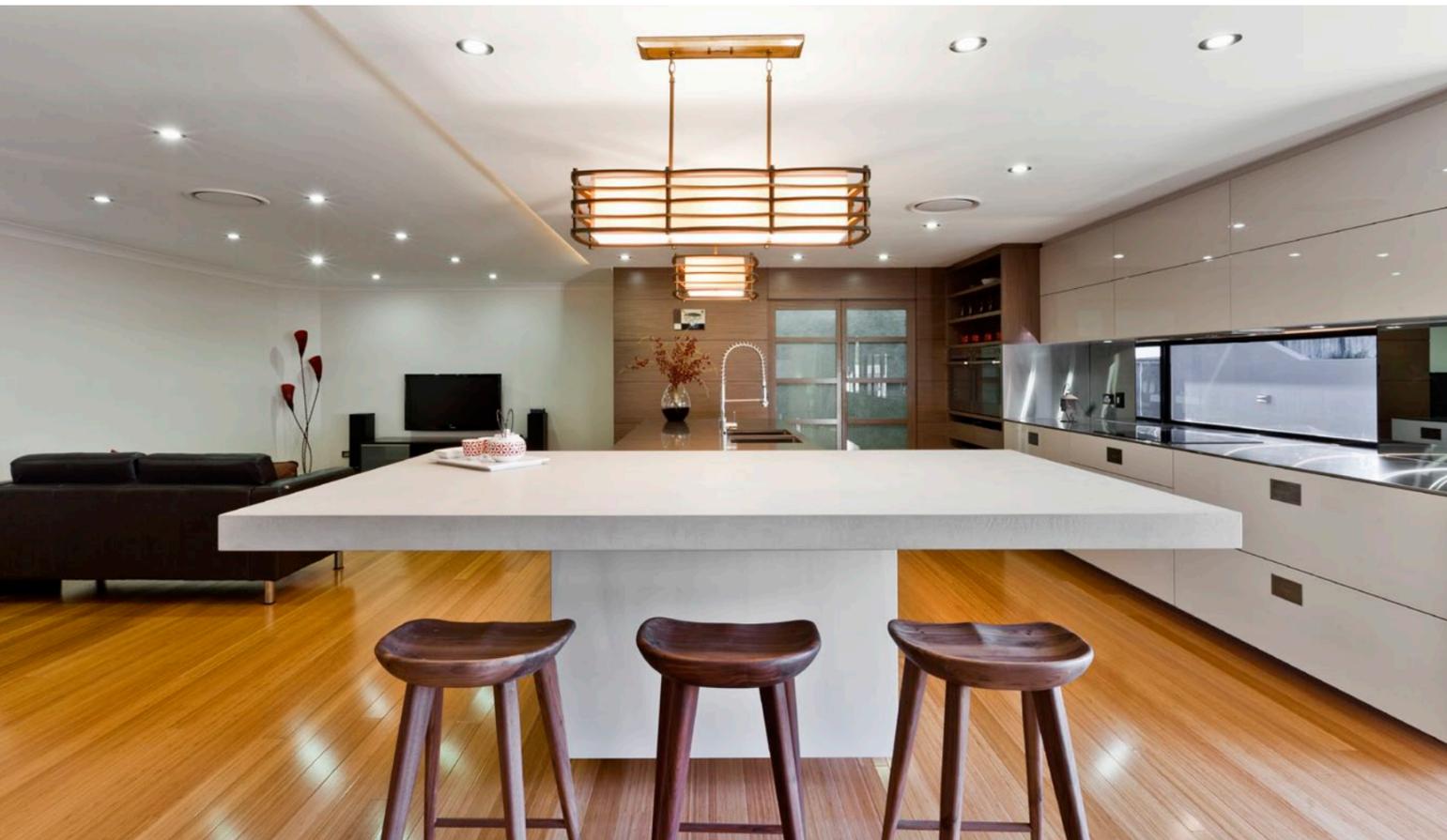




Eastern Influence

There are few elements of a home so dependant on functionality as the kitchen.





Renovating a house gives owners the opportunity to plan this crucial space to ensure it meets every requirement. In this home one finds a kitchen that makes a statement about its owners, who they are and how they function. Built to accommodate a family of four, this is a simple, relaxing and practical space that pays respectful homage to their Japanese heritage through modern Japanese-inspired interior design.

Central to Japanese interior design is simplicity, minimalism, space and order. The beauty in these designs arises from their uncomplicated functionality, with each design element fitting neatly into a specific place within the whole, creating a harmonious and understated environment. Basing a kitchen on these principles is an exercise in restraint, but the result is a sophisticated, relaxing and thoroughly exquisite space.

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

Set-in kicks and an 80mm cantilevered feature stone island bench allow the cabinetry objects their own section. Rather than appearing empty or unused, this void creates a “push-pull” effect between empty and occupied, creating visual interest with the tension.

Sensitive to the need for non-physical boundaries, and with a view towards creating a modern twist on the traditional tatami wall, a small drop-down ceiling with encased LED strip lighting subtly and seamlessly defines the space.

Simplicity and minimalism feature as both form and functional features of the kitchen. A butler’s pantry at the rear keeps the main kitchen free of clutter while providing storage space and an out-of-the-way preparation area for entertaining. Sliding shoji doors constructed with timber veneer and rice paper glass maintain the traditional Japanese style, as well as providing an ideal divider between the two rooms.

Flush joins, recessed handles and thin benchtops contribute to the clean, sleek contemporary appeal of the cabinetry. There is a certain Zen to the subdued colour palette and the range of natural materials. The bamboo flooring, which is typical in modern Japanese design, alongside the textured veneer and stone give the space an earthy, organic feel.

No individual item in the kitchen has been selected for decorative value. Two side-by-side Electrolux ovens offer the ability to entertain multiple guests, but offer the added advantage of balancing the veneer. The placement of the refrigerator, strategically in line with the centre of the room, ensures easy access and furthers the balance of the design, highlighting the functionality and minimalism of the aesthetic.

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