



Homes +
November, 2017
Page: 78
Section: General News
Region: National, AU
Circulation: 40235
Type: Magazines Lifestyle
Size: 2,512.00 sq.cms.



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THE ENTERTAINERS

The kitchen is the heart of the home and the centre of the party.
Here's how to design a space that's **made for food, friends and fun.**



WHETHER YOU'RE CHANNELLING Nigella Lawson or serving a few steaks and sausages off the barbeque, the kitchen is where it all starts and ends. Therefore, it needs to be carefully designed for ease and efficiency. Not sure how to go about improving your kitchen? We've highlighted eight key factors that will make yours a standout.



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1 IN THE ZONE

First up, have a think about what kinds of events you want to host, as they will determine how your kitchen should be laid out. For parties, an open-plan kitchen is ideal, as it allows guests and hosts to mingle, but if you prefer to work alone, a separate prep space may be needed. Next, establish the basic work zones: prep, cook and clean. Make sure each area has enough space and storage for everyone working there, as well as the right appliances. A triangular configuration that keeps sink, fridge and cooktop within easy reach works best. Position the fridge where guests can grab a drink without getting in the way.

2 ISLAND PARADISE

An island bench is the perfect focal point for kitchens designed with entertaining in mind. This popular kitchen feature makes it easier to talk to guests while preparing or serving drinks and food, and also provides extra cooking, serving, storage and seating space. Some hosts like to position their cooktop within an island, and induction cooktops are ideal for this as they are easy to install and aren't hot to touch. An alternative is to install one or two sinks within the island so hosts can clean up and chat to guests at the same time. ➤

STYLE & DECORATE

3

DESIGN TRICKS

If you don't have the space or budget for a butler's pantry, raising the backs of your kitchen benches can hide dirty dishes from view, with host on the inside and guests on the outside. You can also add a slim counter to use as a snack bar or drinks station. A conveniently positioned unit for small appliances will also free up much-needed bench space.



1



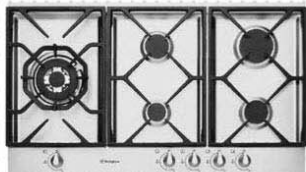
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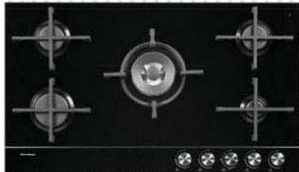
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4



5



6



1. Whirlpool 90cm **induction cooktop** in Black Ceran, \$1699, from The Good Guys. 2. Quiet Air 90cm T-Bar **rangehood**, \$1999, from Glem Gas. 3. NeoChef 39L **convection oven**, \$709, from LG. 4. Westinghouse WHG956SA 90cm 5-burner gas **cooktop** in Stainless Steel, \$748, from Harvey Norman. 5. Fisher & Paykel 90cm 5-burner natural gas on glass **cooktop** in Black, \$1179, from Harvey Norman. 6. AEG 14cm **warming drawer**, \$999, from Harvey Norman.



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4 SMART SPACE

Being smart with your appliances is key to creating a successful kitchen for entertaining. Consider installing a commercial-style fridge-freezer with plenty of compartments for all the extras you need when cooking for large groups. Or perhaps there's room for an extra fridge and/or freezer somewhere else in the house? Warming drawers are a must for serious entertainers, not only for keeping food warm but also heating up plates. A second dishwasher can also be useful for big gatherings, even if it's just a single drawer or half-size configuration. Similarly, a standard stove just won't cut it when you're cooking for large crowds. Think about installing a double oven and cooktop so you can serve food at the same time and while it's still hot.

5 TAKE A SEAT

Flimsy outdoor chairs just don't make the grade if you're going for an ultra-slick party that lasts well into the night. Cushioned seats are a must, whether they are bar stools around the island bench or outdoor sofas and chairs on a terrace or deck. For large groups, it's worth hiring sturdy chairs so everyone can sit comfortably.



1. Samsung Family Hub 671L French-door Flex **fridge**, \$5299, from Harvey Norman. **2.** Fisher & Paykel Active Smart 614L French-door **fridge** in Stainless Steel, \$2795, from Harvey Norman. **3.** 668L side-by-side **fridge** with non-plumbed ice and water dispenser, \$2399, from L.G.



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6 DRINK UP

One of the golden rules of entertaining is to make sure everyone has a drink, alcoholic or not. Guests don't mind waiting for food as long as they have a glass in their hand. To avoid thirsty guests invading the kitchen, it's a good idea to set up a separate drinks station or trolley so the traffic can be diverted. Think about installing a temperature-controlled wine cooler for serious wine drinkers and an extra fridge for beer. Throw in an icemaker for cocktails and your parties will be legendary!



A multi-temperature drinks drawer stores and chills wine perfectly.

7 TECH-SAVVY UPGRADES

Wifi-controlled appliances are essential items for tech-savvy cooks. Some electric ovens have wifi connectivity that allows the user to adjust the temperature from their smartphone, while some microwaves are equipped with sensor-based cooking that removes the need for fussing with power levels and food weights. New on the market are smart dishwashers that are energy-efficient with self-operating doors and ultra-low noise levels so they can be switched on while your guests are still savouring their wine. Other timesaving devices for busy entertainers include slow cookers and coffee makers that are controlled via smartphones, sensor-operated rubbish bins that open with a wave of the hand, and electric spiralisers for making veggie noodles.

8 EASY CLEANING

Make cleaning up after a large gathering easier with an extra dishwasher and/or a large sink big enough for platters and roasting dishes. If you entertain regularly, choose low-maintenance, easy-clean work surfaces and appliances so tidying up isn't such a chore. H+

TEXT CAROL BUCKNELL PHOTOGRAPHY ANGELITA BONETTI, MARIE HOMER, TESS KELLY, DEREK SWALWELL / BAUER SYNDICATION.COM.AU



HANDS-FREE HELP

Now you can have your very own voice-activated personal assistant to answer questions, play music, make unit conversions for cooking and more! Google Home, \$198, from Officeworks.



1. Everdure 60cm 73L 8-function built-in side-opening **electric oven**, \$749, from Bunnings. **2.** Fisher & Paykel 60cm double 7-function **oven**, \$1929, from Harvey Norman. **3.** Euromaid 600mm multifunction double **oven**, \$1497, from Harvey Norman.



1. Bosch Series 2 ActiveWater 60cm **dishwasher**, \$644, from Harvey Norman. **2.** Smeg 14-place freestanding **dishwasher** in Black, \$999, from Harvey Norman. **3.** AEG 60cm ProClean extra tall tub XXL freestanding **dishwasher** in White, \$1199, from Harvey Norman.