

# The Telegraph

## Make like Kate Middleton and have two kitchens

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Entertaining will never be dull if, like the Duchess of Cambridge, you have a choice of places to cook, says Caroline McGhie



*On a plate: the Duchess of Cambridge has installed a second kitchen at Kensington Palace Photo: David Rose*

The Duchess of Cambridge is at the head of a trend sweeping the top end of the property market.

Dubbed “Two-Kitchens Kate”, she has installed a private second kitchen into her new four-storey apartment in Kensington Palace. The main kitchen, which was designed by Lord Snowdon and is hence a little tired, has been replaced.

On top of this, she is overhauling the kitchen in the new Norfolk home. So in fact, she has three kitchens.

This is right on the button. Two kitchens are what home owners now want in the mansions of Hampstead, the funky apartments of Notting Hill and Kensington, and the newly minted millionaire homes of Surrey. If two isn't enough, then three is perfect – you often need one for the family, one for entertaining or for the nanny, and one outside for summer days when you want to imagine you are in Tuscany.

“At the top end of the market, it is unusual now to see a property without two kitchens,” says Lochie Rankin from luxury property search agent Lichfields. “Many expensive houses have a main kitchen and a catering kitchen used by staff, often in the basement, with huge industrial-style ovens and fridge freezers.” The upstairs family kitchen, with coffee machines and comfy sofas, will be the setting for the informal “kitchen suppers” made fashionable by Sam Cam and the Chipping Norton set. Who needs three courses when shepherd's pie will do?

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It is a far cry from the late Eighties, when Baroness Thatcher was photographed in No 10 pouring tea in her pokey kitchen with its aluminium sink. Designed to remind us that she was a wife and mother, it shows how many old London properties still had interiors conceived in the post-war hardship years. Almost all have since been swept away by booming prices, globalism and general affluenza.

“The trend for two kitchens has been getting an awful lot bigger,” says Rupert Sweeting, head of the country house department at Knight Frank. “More kitchens have arrived partly because people just don’t want dining rooms anymore.”

He believes that buyers from the Middle and Far East want smart kitchens but bring staff and wouldn’t dream of cooking for themselves. On the other hand, “British or European buyers want a large island kitchen in a luxurious living space so that he or she can cook in front of everyone and show off their culinary skills.”

Cooking as performance is a new way of entertaining. We think we can sip a glass of wine, chat to our friends and tend to the porchetta at the same time. We can all be Jamie Oliver now.

An extra kitchen also creates versatility, a chance to create a separate living space for the rebellious teenager or elderly parent. At Bridge Stream Barn near Bodmin, Cornwall, Paul and Judith Leach already had a farmhouse kitchen with beams, granite tops and a cream Aga spreading comforting warmth. But in an old coat and boot room, they made a sleek catering kitchen with an electric oven and seal-grey fitted cupboards.

“It has been very successful,” says Judith. “When people come round we can cook fast and hot in the other kitchen if we need to and hide washing up in there.” Because it is one of a suite of rooms including a shower and spare bedroom, it makes a separate flat for visitors. They hope it makes the house more saleable, as it is on the market at £750,000 through Savills (01872 243200; savills.co.uk).

Any house with a romantic spirit now often has an outdoor kitchen, too. It was Jamie (again) who got us all using or envying his wood-burning pizza oven. Stars such as Gwyneth Paltrow and Guy Ritchie apparently love them. “It is outside, sociable and a bit of a laugh,” said Jamie when he launched his outdoor cooking range at the Chelsea Flower Show, and the good weather this summer has blessed those who have taken the al fresco plunge.

For this isn’t just the preserve of the mansion-owning classes. Andrew and Rachel McKeeve have created a suntrap outdoor kitchen at their home, Rose Farm Cottage, on the village green at Trottiscliffe in Kent. It has wooden kitchen units with proper granite tops (which have the advantage of being waterproof), two hobs fed by gas cylinders, a fridge, plumbed sink with disposal unit and, to crown it all, they have the Jamie Oliver pizza oven. “You can roast a chicken or cook veg and potatoes in it too,” says Rachel.



Rachel McKeeve, above, has indoor and outdoor cooking spaces at her home in Kent (CHRISTOPHER PLEDGER)

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“We love entertaining. This summer I had 16 friends over for a girlie lunch, then all their blokes came in the evening. The pizza oven is great for kids because they can all put their own toppings on and slide them in on the big paddle that comes with it.” They are selling the house at £925,000 through Knight Frank (01732 744477; knightfrank.co.uk) to move to the Henley-on-Thames area. “But wherever we go my husband will build another outdoor kitchen,” she says. It is here to stay.

Link: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/interiorsandshopping/11236039/Make-like-Kate-Middleton-and-have-two-kitchens.html>