

# GOLDEN STATE

Skillfully reworked to maximise functionality, this compact flat benefits from splashes of colour that enrich the pale backdrops throughout

Report and Styling: Alice Moro Photography: David Giles





**Opening page (p77):** The bespoke oak breakfast bar creates a useful, elegant division between the two rooms. The end wall cupboard door on the left was designed on an angle for a softer, more fluid approach to the living room.

**Opposite page:** The breakfast bar is made from solid strips of oak, resulting in a rich, graphic statement.

**Right:** The light blue glass splashback is illuminated by a strip of LED lights beneath the wall cupboards.

**Bottom right:** The flecks in the white composite Caesarstone create a textural element in contrast to the glass splashback.



**E**dgy Spitalfields provided all the right ingredients for Californian native Caroline West when she set out to buy a flat in 2010. She loved the area's lively atmosphere and the convenience of its position in the heart of East London, and when she came across a two-bedroom flat for sale here she wasn't at all deterred by its squalid state. On the contrary, she could see the property offered enormous potential and its ruinous condition simply meant she could redesign it to her taste.

The kitchen and living room, which were divided by a wall with a glazed door, were both uncomfortably small, as Caroline recalls. "The kitchen layout was very badly planned as there wasn't much work space and it was dark like a coffin with very little natural light. I knew that

losing the dividing wall would bring light into the kitchen area and create a more fluid feel so I approached several kitchen companies about what they could do. However, each time I was disappointed by their lack of imagination; they couldn't see beyond replacing what was already there, but I wanted to totally change the layout and have tons of storage."

However, she then chanced upon Amberth's showroom, so went in to make some enquiries. "The designer there came up with a significantly better layout for the space, which involved integrating a fridge-freezer, single oven and storage on the back wall, whereas previously it had been taken up by just a cooker, hob and worktop," explains Caroline. "It was such a cramped kitchen before, but now ▶



“Piotr Wojciechowski from Amberth persuaded me to have a more practical tiled floor with underfloor heating in the kitchen.”



**Right:** A small wine storage unit is neatly concealed but easily accessible beneath the breakfast bar.

**Opposite page:** The wave design between the white ceramic floor tiles and the dark oak parquet flooring create a fluid visual statement.

I have so much storage space, it's wonderful. I even have a cupboard for all my books.”

In terms of aesthetics, Caroline knew she liked white, but didn't want an all white kitchen as she felt it would be a bit bland. She also liked the dark brown wood look but didn't want a traditional kitchen. Thus, she opted for a rich brown laminate on the base units and back wall cabinets, while the wall cupboards provide contrast in white. The oak bar, moreover, introduces additional counter top space, yet also forms a minimal barrier between the kitchen and living area.

When it came to choosing the flooring Caroline had a clear vision of what she wanted. “I saw a similar parquet floor in a nearby hairdresser's and really liked the dark colour,” she recalls. “I wanted to

have parquet flooring throughout the entire kitchen-living area but Piotr Wojciechowski from Amberth persuaded me to have a more practical tiled floor with underfloor heating in the kitchen.”

The compact bathroom across the hall has also undergone a complete overhaul where, again, Caroline was keen to rework the space to make it more functional and modern. It boasts a wonderfully eclectic mix of styles and colours, which evolved from a dramatic black-and-white washbasin. “I saw it in the window of a shop called Eccentricities and just immediately fell in love with it,” explains Caroline. “So I took a photo to show designer Iwona Budnik at Amberth and asked her to create a bathroom using this basin as the starting point. We talked about turning the room into a wetroom but several ▶







**Opposite page:** A striking blue semi-circular cabinet stands out against the black tiled floor. The floor tiles continue up the side of the bath to create an illusion of space.

**Above right:** The black-and-white basin was the starting point for the bathroom scheme. Blue-and-white encaustic tiles and marble introduce an exotic and luxurious element.

friends advised me that you have to have a bath in England!"

"The brief for this room was basically to take inspiration from Art Deco design but translate it into modern-age functionality," explains Iwona. "I sketched some ideas and created mood boards, which helped us focus on certain finishes." White brick-shaped tiles were chosen for the walls to keep the room feeling light, while the black-and-white floor tiles continue up the side of the bath to create the illusion of space.

"Lighting also played an important part of the design and because there was good height I suggested pendant lights above the basin," says Iwona. "The traditional marble worktop, retro taps

and hand-painted feature tiles provide a nod to the past, while the ultra-modern Parapan material for the cabinet takes this bathroom into the 21st century. I loved the fact that Caroline was happy to take risks and listen to advice – she was a designer's dream client!"

"I actually thought I was quite difficult with the bathroom, wanting to mix too many styles and colours. Iwona had to rein me in a bit," Caroline admits. "I just didn't want that hotel bathroom look, which can be quite soulless. My bathroom now appears much more spacious and I have both colour and vital storage. I love looking at the yellow tiles in the morning," she adds. A memory of Californian sunshine perhaps? [KBB](#)



**Above:** The rich yellow and green hand-painted Spanish tiles chosen for the recess create a warm focus in the predominantly blue, white and black colour scheme.

**Right:** A small heated towel rail is sufficient to heat the room and ensure towels are warm and dry. The shower system incorporates a supplementary hand-held shower.



## SourceBook

### DESIGN

**Kitchen** Piotr Wojciechowski and Inga Kopala, Amberth (020 7354 8958 or [www.amberth.eu](http://www.amberth.eu))

**Bathroom** Iwona Budnik, Amberth, as before

### KITCHEN

**Cabinetry** Laminate Dark Legno and Bianco Rosato lacquered finishes with recessed handles, Amberth, as before

**Splashback** Glass in pale blue, JAT Glass Ltd (020 8961 7109 or [www.jatglass.co.uk](http://www.jatglass.co.uk))

**Worktops** White Caesarstone, In-Stone (020 7476 7198 or [www.in-stone.net](http://www.in-stone.net))

**Breakfast bar** Custom made in oiled solid oak, Amberth, as before

**Sink and waste separation** Blancostatura K550-U bowl and Blancoselect Ecomat 60/3, Blanco (0844 912 0100 or [www.blanco.co.uk](http://www.blanco.co.uk))

**Tap** Carron Elen, Carron Phoenix (01324 638321 or [www.carron.com](http://www.carron.com))

**Appliances** Induction hob, extractor and oven, all Neff (0844 892 9033 or [www.neff.co.uk](http://www.neff.co.uk)); Microwave, Bosch (0844 892 9023 or [www.bosch-home.co.uk](http://www.bosch-home.co.uk)); Dishwasher, Mertz

(0845 456 5115 or [www.mertzuk.com](http://www.mertzuk.com)); Integrated washer dryer, Hoover (0844 499 5599 or [www.hoover.co.uk](http://www.hoover.co.uk)); Wine storage unit, Gorenje

(020 8247 3980 or [www.gorenje.co.uk](http://www.gorenje.co.uk))

**Flooring** Walnut parquet flooring, Jordan Andrews Ltd (020 8341 9222 or [www.jordanandrews.com](http://www.jordanandrews.com))

**Ceramic tiles** Thossos Matt, Tower Ceramics (020 7485 7192 or [www.towerceramics.co.uk](http://www.towerceramics.co.uk))

**Lighting** Recessed halogen lighting, Intalite (020 8542 1471 or [www.slvbyintalite.co.uk](http://www.slvbyintalite.co.uk))

### BATHROOM

**Cabinetry** Royal blue Parapan (RAL 5013-5380), Amberth, as before

**Worktop** White Carrara marble, In-Stone, as before

**Bath** Saniform Plus 1600 x 70 mm 362-1, Kaldewei (0800 840 9770 or [www.kaldewei.com](http://www.kaldewei.com))

**WC** Highgrove, Sanitan (01782 717175 or [www.bcsanitan.co.uk](http://www.bcsanitan.co.uk))

**Bath screen** Glass, Aqualux (0870 241 6131 or [www.aqualux.co.uk](http://www.aqualux.co.uk))

### Shower system and bath filler

The Albion Bath Company (01255 831605 or [www.albionbathco.com](http://www.albionbathco.com))

**Towel rail** Monarch LS8, Empress Towel Rails (023 8022 5639 or [www.empresstowelrails.co.uk](http://www.empresstowelrails.co.uk))

**Basin mixer** St James Collection, Marflow (0121 358 1555 or [www.marflow.co.uk](http://www.marflow.co.uk))

**Wall tiles** White bevelled tiles, Tower Ceramics, as before

**Floor tiles** Ceramic tiles, Tower Ceramics, as before

**Feature tiles** Blue encaustic Moroccan tiles, Dar Interiors (020 7731 6388 or [www.darinteriors.com](http://www.darinteriors.com)); Andalusia Tarifa tiles and yellow Metropolitan tiles, both Fired Earth (0845 366 0400 or [www.firedearth.com](http://www.firedearth.com))

**Washbasin and toilet roll holder**


Eccentricities (020 7359 5633)

**Pendant lights and mirror** Reola, John Lewis (0845 604 9049 or [www.johnlewis.com](http://www.johnlewis.com))

### COST

A similar kitchen would cost around £14,000 and a similar bathroom around £6000





Art Deco styling influences the unusual choice of ceiling pendants for additional lighting in the bathroom. The eclectic mix of colours and tile styles add warmth and character to the room.