



megan morton

100 inspiring ideas
for creating beautiful rooms

home ♥ love

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Y The hidden kitchen

The popularity of the disappearing kitchen comes as no surprise, given the way we live now and the space constraints most of us are up against. It's a way of sharing space with an adjoining lounge or dining room that allows the cook to be part of the conversation, and can also turn the kitchen into a beautiful backdrop for living. Architect Hannah Tribe, of Sydney's Tribe Studio, sees the trend as a way of reinforcing the overall style of your home. 'The kitchen needs to morph from super-efficient work area to clean living space,' she says. 'Who wants to be reminded of dirty saucepans when they sit down to dinner?'

But if you're considering a hidden kitchen, you should bear in mind the following:

- A kitchen like this relies on perfection – Choose contractors with a record for precise work: near enough is not good enough in these spaces.
- It's easy for open surfaces to get cluttered – This is not a kitchen style that handles knick-knacks: think grand gestures rather than smaller elements.
- Materials are very important given the expanses you're dealing with – Make your decision knowing that a white benchtop will look like an awful lot of white and a long sheet of stainless steel will seem almost preternaturally large. One way to try before you buy is to wrap paper or cardboard the colour of the material you'd like around the unit or area in question.
- Neutrals and whites are your best bet for the open-plan life – Any other option goes against the whole principle of seamless open-plan.
- Don't let the contractor talk you into bull-nosing (rounding off the corners) any surface – It can make them seem very dated.
- If your budget is tight, spend as much as you can on your main tap and stove top – They set the tone for the type of space you create.
- Resist the urge to overuse metallic finishes – A slice, as in this photo, is perfect.
- Think about your overhead cabinet height – You can keep them just shy of the ceiling (the more beautiful option but it creates a dust trap) or you can take them to full height (and accept a bulkier look).
- Design and dress the kitchen with regard to when you'll use it most – Ask yourself if it will look great at breakfast as well as at dinner.

Benchtops are getting higher and higher. I'm tall so mine are 90 centimetres, which is perhaps too high but suits me perfectly. A catering friend who is not tall has his at 1.1 metres! He insists they're fabulous to work from.

