

GEORGIAN INFLUENCES

Kitchens in paler shades, with Georgian architectural features or design devices that let in as much natural light and air as possible, are perennially popular

Typical Georgian kitchens would have been a simple basement room used exclusively by servants. The kitchen as we understand it, as a place to cook, eat and socialise, simply did not exist. So a Georgian-inspired kitchen is one that borrows elements of design from other areas of the house, such as the drawing room or dining room, where the owners of the house, as opposed to the employees, would have spent time.

Since the Georgian period lasted over a century, from 1714 to 1830, during which time fashions obviously changed, there is no single, definite Georgian style. Nevertheless, it does have certain indisputable characteristics: elegance and symmetry; solidity and grand proportions; and a sense of light and space.

A loose interpretation of Georgian style that takes its cue from these characteristics, but also caters for the demands of modern life, will produce a practical, classic, timeless kitchen, to enhance any house and please the eye for years to come.



PAINT FINISHES & COLOURS

A quintessential Georgian-style kitchen has painted woodwork with cabinets and walls decorated in a single colour with a matt finish. While early Georgian schemes use strong, dark colour, later ones favour lighter colours, including sky-blue, beige and stone. "In that case cabinets should be painted in complementary neutrals as we have done in this kitchen," says Richard Moore, design director at Martin Moore. For shades inspired by actual Georgian kitchens, including the Chocolate Kitchen at Hampton Court, historical paint consultant Patrick Baty recommends SC244, SC292 and SC303 from his Traditional Collection at Paper & Paints. For a range of colours more broadly inspired by the Georgian palette consider the Georgian Paint Colours by Little Greene.

English Kitchen from £35,000, Martin Moore



MANTELS & CORBELS

A mantel positioned over a stove, furnished with corbels influenced by classical architecture, is an excellent way of giving a kitchen the feeling of formality that is a signature of Georgian design.

As this kitchen is in a Georgian property with characteristically high ceilings, designer Christopher Peters has chosen a large mantel that utilises the room's generous proportions. "As well as giving the room a strong focal point and a sense of grandeur, it also serves a practical purpose as a repository for the extractor fan," he explains.

Bespoke kitchen finished in Lichen by Farrow & Ball, from £25,000, Christopher Peters



FIELDIED DOORS

The Pilaster kitchen by Smallbone of Devizes is inspired by its namesake (a flat column attached to a wall, which is found in classical architecture), specifically a gently tapering example dating from 1793. It is natural, therefore, that it should also include cabinet doors with raised and fielded panels, which Steven de Munnich, design director at Smallbone of Devizes, points out "also have their origins in the Georgian period." There are many variations on the fielded and panelled door, but the refined, measured quality of this decorative device makes it an integral part of the Georgian-style kitchen.

Pilaster kitchen, from £40,000, Smallbone of Devizes

WORKTOPS

Marble was a material favoured by the Georgians so it is a natural choice for the worktops of a Georgian-inspired kitchen. As Tamsin Collier design director at Armored Kitchens says: "There's nothing quite like the beauty and elegance that marble brings to a kitchen. The subtle, understated colours of a Georgian kitchen are the perfect partner to the patterns and soft shades available in marble, and its clean, delicate appearance suits the simple, classic Georgian style."

Bespoke kitchen with Carrara marble worktop, from £20,000, Armored Kitchens



PROPORTION & SYMMETRY

"Early Georgian design was inspired by the classical Orders of Architecture and the perfect proportions of the Golden Rectangle. The Georgians brought grace, elegance and finesse from the public arena of European architecture to the domestic spaces of eighteenth century Britain. Whether in grand country houses or kitchen cupboards, the symmetry and proportions of the classical principles of design give a deeply satisfying sense of balance and harmony," explains creative director Katie Fontana of Plain English Design. This sense of balance and harmony, which Fontana so admires, is undoubtedly the most important feature to replicate in any Georgian-inspired kitchen.

Bespoke kitchen, from £40,000, Plain English Design





EMBELLISHMENTS

A kitchen inspired by Georgian design requires embellishments that provide a sense of richness and luxury, without being in any way florid or overstated. This freestanding cabinet by Charlie Kingham hits the correct note with its graceful, yet smart mouldings, which have been copied from original nineteenth-century profiles; delicate beading on both the glazed and solid doors; as well as fine glazing bars. As designer, Charlie Kingham explains, “the secret to a beautiful, Georgian-style kitchen is in the detail, and that includes those details that are less visible, such as the right hinges and perfect dovetail joints.”

Complete kitchens, made to individual design, from £18,000, Charlie Kingham



SINKS & TAPS

A butler or Belfast sink was an important feature of the Georgian kitchen, and its solid, unfussy shape still appeals. For this kitchen, designer Jasper Middleton has given it a twist. “We have chosen copper for the sink and handles for this kitchen, which is not only in fashion right now, but is also the material of choice for pots and pans in the Georgian kitchen. These items are both handmade in a style faithful to the Georgian originals,” he explains.

Complete bespoke kitchens from £20,000, Middleton Bespoke

HANDLES & KNOBS

“Georgian design was a key influence on the handles in this Nickleby kitchen which are hand-cast with a high-shine finish,” explains Peter Humphrey, design director at Humphrey Munson Kitchens. Cap handles of this sort have an authentic, period feel that is right for a Georgian-style kitchen. However, small oval and round handles painted black, or in antique or burnished brass also look very effective. ■

Nickleby kitchen, from £30,000, Humphrey Munson



FEATURE JENNIFER GOULDING