

# Preface

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When writing the *Architect's Pocket Book* (first published in 1997), I realised that some subjects really could not be very well dealt with in only one or two pages. This was particularly so with kitchens, the design of which is a complex subject and which requires considerable detailed information.

So here is a pocket book about kitchen design which I hope will fill in the gaps. It is not a glossy manual, but rather a book of facts and figures which the designer needs to know. Architects know how to make things look stunning, but kitchens must also function well to be loved by their clients.

With the advent of television programmes and numberless books about gourmet cooking, more needs to be known about the room in which this is done.

Designers, be they architect, builder or homeowner do not necessarily have much cooking experience, so hopefully the planning procedures described will be of some help.

This book deals only with the design of *domestic* kitchens. Commercial kitchens are a specialist subject, catering for substantial numbers with a large workforce, so they bear little resemblance to a kitchen in the home.

The opening chapter is a brief summary of the long slow journey from open fireplace to modern cooker. It also shows the great social changes which have taken place in the last century which now enables one person, alone, to prepare, cook and clear away a family meal compared with the numerous servants needed in Victorian times.

The labour saving aspect of the modern kitchen has been made possible not only by the technological innovations of appliances

and gadgets, but also by supermarket provision of prepared meals and pre-washed vegetables.

In the last few decades, little real innovation has been made in appliances since the introduction of microwave cooking. However, the design and performance have considerably improved, some having many sophisticated features. Many now give greater attention to green issues such as fuel consumption and use of eco-friendly materials.

Greater standardisation of cabinets and appliances, at least in Europe, has led to a wider choice and the ability to 'mix and match' items from different manufacturers.

The kitchen today is truly the hub of the family home. It is a place where chores other than cooking take place, where children play or do homework, and where parents spend a great deal of time. It also is the room upon which most money is spent and so deserves special attention.

I hope you will find this book both interesting and useful and that the resulting designs will be admired both for their efficiency as well as their looks.

**Charlotte Baden-Powell**