

THE SOCIAL KITCHEN

A team of experts brought together by Fisher & Paykel tackles a weighty topic over lunch: what are the defining elements of a good kitchen?

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There is no better place to talk about kitchen design than in the kitchen itself. We recently discussed kitchen design with a handful of experts over lunch at Auckland's Ponsonby Central Market: architect Evelyn McNamara, Sky City executive chef Paul Jobin, Taste magazine editor Emily Simpson, and Fisher & Paykel chief refrigeration designer Mark Haydon.

We all agreed that kitchens have changed immeasurably: what was usually an unseen annex at the back of a house is now the focal point of every home. Nowadays we invite guests into our kitchens, serve wine at kitchen islands, and allow people to see us cooking (as long as we feel everything is under control). Kitchens are often part of an open-plan space, which means checking on something in the oven doesn't require leaving the room.

Just as important, entertaining is no longer the responsibility of one person – in many households, someone might be handling the food while someone else pours the drinks. This means kitchens need to be flexible spaces in which a number of people can comfortably work at the same time. The old approach of creating a central 'working triangle' of fridge, sink and oven is now questioned: if more than one person is working in a space, isn't it sometimes better that these different functions are dispersed so people aren't constantly bumping into one another?

Fisher & Paykel's intensive research in this area has led to its "distributed appliances" approach, which has

At Ponsonby Central Market, our table of kitchen design experts discussed the ways kitchen design has changed, and how Fisher & Paykel's "distributed appliances" approach is transforming kitchens into truly social spaces.



created exciting new possibilities in kitchen design. Cooking on Fisher & Paykel's Gas on Glass can be carried out in one kitchen area, a load of pre-dinner dishes can be loaded into a DishDrawer in another, while fresh, crisp salad vegetables are pulled from a CoolDrawer to be chopped elsewhere. A well-designed kitchen with distributed appliances is a friction-free space where friends or family members can work independently and simultaneously. Even fears of a kitchen being messy can be eliminated, as one person can clean the cooking dishes while meal preparation continues in a different zone – all without interrupting a conversation.

All this talk of openness led to a discussion about the popularity of sculleries. These areas are all very well if used as storage spaces or temporary stashes for dirty dishes. But something is seriously wrong when people with a smart new kitchen end up spending most of their time in small, often windowless rooms out the back – it's like a strange reversion to the Victorian era. We agreed that if your friends are going to object to a little mess on your kitchen island, they're probably not worth inviting over.

Fisher & Paykel's deep understanding of the way New Zealanders use their kitchens and the mechanics of multi-functional kitchen design means dynamic, collaborative spaces are now entirely within reach. It's a vision of kitchens that are not precious and uptight, but relaxed, entirely flexible and therefore truly social. 🍷



At our kitchen design discussion over lunch at Ponsonby Central Market (top, clockwise from left): Fisher & Paykel's Mark Haydon, architect Evelyn McNamara, HOME editor Jeremy Hansen, Taste editor Emily Simpson, Taste reader Cathy Fall, and Sky City executive chef Paul Jobin. The menu, created by Paul, featured rack of lamb with kumara gratin and cauliflower couscous with nigella seed focaccia on the side. Dessert was a fantastic Turkish delight cheesecake.