



black as a skillet or slate that sizzles?

Going for total drama with a black kitchen is a popular idea, but it can be difficult to obtain.

It's pretty intimidating for most people to commit to such an intense colour as full-on obsidian for the hub of their home. And, depending on the direction your windows face, our harsh natural light can often work against the effect. We take a look at two kitchens that went for a similar look but relied on charcoal grey to bring the drama.

Noteworthy in near-black

With abundant sunlight streaming into the space and most of its storage tucked away in a scullery, the idea of going 'full monty' with a dramatic black kitchen in their new home never phased Matt and Elyse Keane.

Matt, the foreman for his family company, Keane Building, which built his new home in Amberley, Christchurch, says he and Elyse scrolled through Pinterest to find what they liked and came across a home in Norway.

"The home is small – just 130m² – so Elyse needed to fit in the scullery to keep stored items tucked away. She really wanted a black kitchen and so did I," says Matt. But, they were concerned about the impact such a bold decision might have on potential buyers if they went to sell the house.


"Then we thought, why not paint the living room wall Resene Black White and the back wall of the kitchen in Resene Baltic Sea? That way, if we sell, the new owners can paint it any colour they like."

The resulting overall scheme stuns with feature walls painted grey black in Resene Baltic Sea. The rest of the cabinetry, beneath two low, honed concrete benches, combines Resene Black White drawers in birch ply sealed with Resene Polythane, which Matt >

Above: Resene Baltic Sea walls define this distinctive kitchen. The doorway to the scullery and the side walls are painted in Resene Black White.

Below: Working with the strong light rather than against it, Resene Baltic Sea brings the same powerful intensity of the popular dark kitchen look without looking washed out.

 Resene Black White

 Resene Baltic Sea





top tip
 Always check your colour choices with a Resene testpot before you commit. Paint an A2 size card, leaving an unpainted border, and move the colour around the room at different times of the day and night to see how it looks.

Above: Metua and Merv brought some serious drama into their kitchen with Resene Half Fuscous Grey cabinetry, which looks especially striking in contrast to the Resene Double Alabaster walls.

See the Resene Whites & Neutrals collection, available in palettes or as a fandeck, for a range of neutrals from black and near-blacks through to off-whites.



Resene Half Fuscous Grey

found easy to create. "I'm not a joiner, but I was able to make them with help from a joiner. He cut the parts and I installed them," he says.

Thanks to its simple layout, the birch ply was an inexpensive material option for a cool detail while also breaking up the Resene Black White cabinetry. The polygonal ceiling, which is also made of birch ply, took time to get right – especially when it came to fitting the lighting into the interesting form – but the end result is striking and well-worth the effort.

A dark exterior inspires drama inside

Emboldened by the decision to use a strong colour on the exterior of their 1950s home, Metua and Merv Parr found it easier than most to take the plunge into an even more dramatic scheme when renovating their kitchen.

Debra Delorenzo (www.debradelorenzo.com), who did some design work for the couple a year earlier, says they'd decided on a white-grey look, but after their bold new exterior colour turned out so well, "they liked the idea of using some deep colour inside as well.

"Metua was happy to have a bold colour and she was up for a black kitchen, but Merv was a bit reticent so we compromised with dark grey and, in the end, they were both thrilled with it."

With Resene Double Alabaster walls anchoring the space, their kitchen cabinetry in deep Resene Half Fuscous Grey makes an impressive statement.

Previously, a half-wall divided the kitchen from the rest of the living space, and the U-shape was tight. Since the family is very much into socialising together casually, Debra's spatial plan removed the wall and inserted a wall of cabinetry along the back. Moving the doors along on the side made additional space for a large display shelving unit with extra storage.

"We gained a whole lot of space and it works so much better. Basically we opened up the room to make a big living, dining, kitchen and family room. The clients are not uber-modern. They like a slightly industrial traditional look."

Debra says the big pendant lights add presence to create a visual division between the kitchen and living. "Dark grey grout around the splashback tiles is an easy way of linking the colour back and the different styles of handles make it look smart, especially against the rimu timber floors, which warm the dark colours." **H**

words Vicki Holder

Left: New built-in cabinetry in Resene Half Fuscous Grey provides ample storage space while also allowing the wall between the kitchen and living areas to be opened up. The walls surrounding it are painted in Resene Double Alabaster.

Resene Double Alabaster

Resene Black White