

# The appliance of science



## Eliza Miller from Arcadia Home Interiors looks at the latest kit for kitchens

**HAVING GROWN UP** in a home with an Aga, I have always loved its charm and simplicity – and still do. It makes perfect sense that it was originally designed in the 1920s by a Nobel Prize-winning physicist as a cooker for blind people (no complicated dials to read) and this no-nonsense oven defies the test of time and still epitomises classic style. But goodness me, how times have changed, and the kitchen – once a purely functional place to prepare food – has become something of an arena for culinary experimentation as well as the social hub of the home and the perfect place to socialise and entertain friends while eating delicious food (and drinking delicious wine!).

Since working for an interior design showroom that showcases incredible kitchens and bathrooms (among other things), I have become a little demoralised about the state of my kitchen at home. I bemoan the lack of a combi-steam oven for example, or the fact I don't have a retractable, integrated downdraft ventilation system to immediately eradicate the smell of fried bacon when my two teenage sons have embarked on a massive fry-up (our house is open plan, so that smell follows me around, and no amount of scented candles can out-whiff fried bacon!).

Gaggenau, the German manufacturer which has been creating precision appliances for over 300 years, has got this particular innovation down to a tee. Gaggenau's downdraft ventilation system would be perfect for my open plan kitchen – as it extends up from the worktop when needed and then retracts again when not in use, having efficiently cleaned the air. Another option is the Bora cooktop vapour extractor (both of these options negate the need for an extractor hood), a nifty compact unit built into your hob surface that completely recirculates steam, grease and smells. Seeing one of these in action is great fun; when we cook on this in the showroom we theatrically place my glasses directly above a frying plan full of sizzling vegetables and the glasses do not steam up and are not spotted with oil.

After all this cooking and frying, a cup of tea is clearly the order of the day, but in our busy lives, do we really have time to wait for the kettle to boil?! Many of my friends now have boiling water taps, rising from the surface like a phoenix from the ashes, ready at any given moment to spout forth 100C boiling water at the touch of a button – or chilled and filtered drinking water, or sparkling water – the options are endless. You guessed it, I now don't understand how I can live

in my house without one of these, so I'm going to do some research, but the Zip hydro tap and the Quooker fusion tap both look like good options.

Pancake Day (a few weeks ago) is always a highlight; there's something about the combination of batter, sugar and the nervous thrill of attempting to flip them (just high enough that it is deemed a proper flip, but not so high that they stick to the roof) that is so enjoyable. Always eager to try out different cooking methods, we decided to cook our pancakes on a Teppanyaki – the traditional Japanese style of cooking directly on a smooth, metal plate. This one is integrated next to an induction hob, with two cooking zones powered by 1,500 watts, so food can be prepared or kept warm on all or half of the surface. With temperatures up to 240C possible on a precisely controlled surface, even heat distribution ensures efficient cooking – and fab pancakes, even though I say so myself! It's really easy to clean too (ice cubes and lemon juice, no need for horrid, abrasive chemicals) – this definitely gives the wok a run for its money.

So if I chose to redesign my kitchen, what would my priorities be with regards to appliances? All of the above! But my current favourite is a steam oven – you can have one plumbed in with a permanent water connection and drainage providing endless cooking options, or one with a water reservoir that you simply refill when needed. I love to steam rice and vegetables at home, and salmon too, and this would really transform my life, not to mention make us all healthier, so I am convincing myself that a steam oven is a medical necessity! &



For more ideas and examples, see: [www.arcadiahomeinteriors.co.uk](http://www.arcadiahomeinteriors.co.uk)

