

little wonder

Once a dark and difficult space to use, this stylishly simple kitchen is now the picture of easy living – and surprisingly eco, too

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When Ian and Kirsten bought their home on Sydney's northern beaches, the dark, outdated kitchen was the only question mark. "It was liveable, but not functional," explains Kirsten. Determined to live an environmentally sustainable lifestyle, the couple wanted a great-looking, easy-to-use kitchen that didn't cost a fortune to achieve – or to enjoy. "We spent six months wondering how we could renovate our kitchen responsibly," says Ian. "We wanted to find a way to use fewer resources in our home, not just to spend less money." Druce Davey of Greener Kitchens and Bathrooms helped the couple achieve their goal; they decided to stick with the kitchen's original layout, remove part of a wall to bring in more natural light and replace the old, tired cabinetry, benchtop, splashback and appliances with truly eco-friendly alternatives.

Naturally bright

With the goal of making their kitchen a brighter, more useable area, Ian and Kirsten's first change was to remove a section of wall in order to coax in more natural light, thus saving money by reducing reliance on artificial lighting. "Before, we'd be in the kitchen on a sunny morning and still need the light on," says Kirsten. This simple modification also improved ventilation.

Waste not, want not

You'd never guess from the pristine white exterior that half of this kitchen is made from recycled materials. The cabinetry sits on a plinth constructed of a combination of old plastic legs and offcuts from the production process. "We wanted to minimise waste; it was a top priority," says Ian. Similarly, the Trend Recycled Collection benchtop in Cristallino White, from Granite Transformations, features a 5mm-thick veneer of engineered stone; the scratch- and stain-resistant benchtop is made from 72 per cent recycled glass.

Druce Davey of Greener Kitchens and Bathrooms, call 0430 096 216 or visit greenerkitchens.com.au.

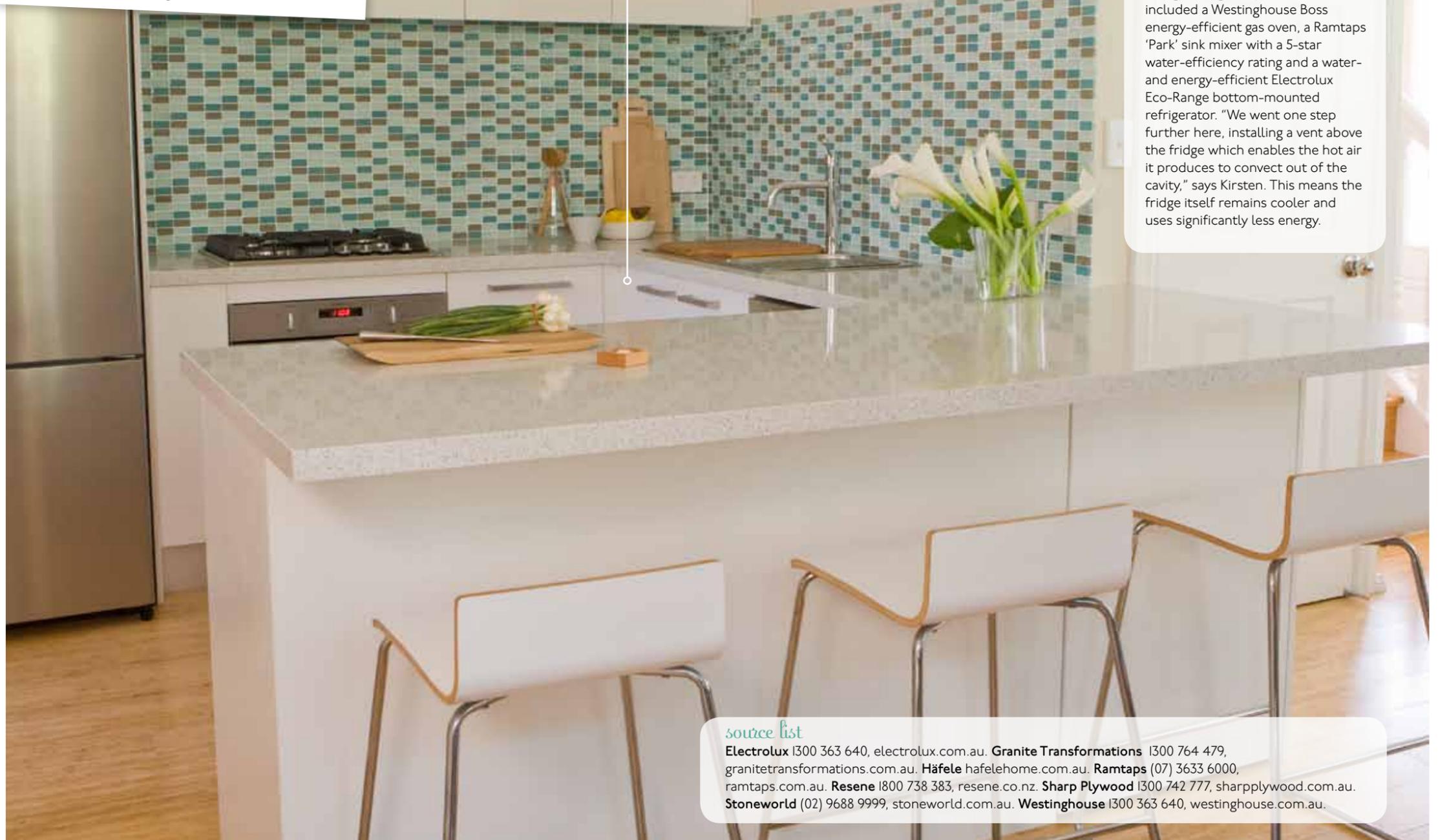
budget breakdown

Custom-designed cabinetry and carcass.....	\$9750
Appliances	\$4000
Splashback.....	\$870
Countertop	\$3000
Project management, wall removal, builder and trade fees	\$15,000

total..... \$32,620



before



Clever cabinetry

Kitchen designer Druce drew up bespoke cabinetry to make the best use of the small space, incorporating a Häfele corner cupboard with a sliding mechanism that makes accessing the back of the space a breeze. The cabinetry itself was constructed using material with top eco credentials, known as 'X-Board Plus', made from 50 per cent recycled office waste, from Sharp Plywood. Aesthetics were not forgotten, with wide benchtops providing ample space for stylish accessories, including collected ceramics from Planet Commonwealth and an littala vase from Top3 by Design.

Eco chic

To give the all-white kitchen depth and personality, Ian and Kirsten painted the walls in VOC-free Resene Zylone Sheen paint in Half Fossil, then tiled the splashback in Pacifica glass mosaics, available from Stoneworld. When it came to appliances, "We only wanted Australian-made ones with high energy ratings," says Kirsten. This included a Westinghouse Boss energy-efficient gas oven, a Ramtaps 'Park' sink mixer with a 5-star water-efficiency rating and a water- and energy-efficient Electrolux Eco-Range bottom-mounted refrigerator. "We went one step further here, installing a vent above the fridge which enables the hot air it produces to convect out of the cavity," says Kirsten. This means the fridge itself remains cooler and uses significantly less energy.

source list

Electrolux 1300 363 640, electrolux.com.au. Granite Transformations 1300 764 479, granitetransformations.com.au. Häfele hafelehome.com.au. Ramtaps (07) 3633 6000, ramtaps.com.au. Resene 1800 738 383, resene.co.nz. Sharp Plywood 1300 742 777, sharpplywood.com.au. Stoneworld (02) 9688 9999, stoneworld.com.au. Westinghouse 1300 363 640, westinghouse.com.au.