



# DESIGNER PROFILE

We talk to Michael Mooney of Mooney's Furniture.



Michael & Martin Mooney

## Tell me a little about your career to date.

I left school at 15 and went to work for a local cabinetmaker. Concentrating mainly on kitchens and wardrobes, I also gained some experience making furniture for hotels and bars. At this stage, kitchens were very basic, mostly laminated doors and worktops, until the mid '80s, when people started looking for solid oak doors. I managed the workshop until 1990 and then myself and my brother Martin opened Mooney's Furniture. We started off very small and slowly built it up to the brilliant (for want of a better word) showroom and workshop that it is today.

## Describe your own kitchen.

I've recently built a new house in the country so it was a great chance to get a new kitchen. It seems to be more difficult to design your own kitchen than for a client. My last kitchen was 15 years old; it was oak and as good as the day it was fitted. It is worth spending a few bob on a good kitchen as it will stand the test of time. For the new house, I went for a mix of Pippy oak and painted inframe with 30mm door. The island is shaped and has two levels with a seating area.

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### What was the most expensive aspect of the kitchen?

The most expensive part was probably the Cambria quartz worktop because we decided to go for a 50mm profile with upstands and windowsills. We're very happy with it – the quartz is extremely hygienic and easy to maintain.

### What is the most important thing to consider when choosing a new kitchen?

It's really important to know exactly what you're getting for your money, when investing in a new kitchen. (Don't just look at the bottom line figure) You need to know what the interior is made of, what type of hinges are being used, drawers, quality of door. Every kitchen we design is bespoke, built around the specific needs of the client. The fitting of the kitchen is very important. We have a check list that the fitter must go through before the kitchen is signed over to the customer. That way, you leave nothing to chance. We believe that you only get one chance to finish a kitchen perfectly and if it takes an

extra day then so be it. After all, the customer is going to be looking at it for the next 20 years.

### What are the most sought after appliances at the moment?

I would say the side by side fridge freezer, as people now tend to bulk buy and want more freezer space. The American fridge freezer is not as popular as it was, due to the fact that the freezer section is rather narrow to cater for a large family. The integrated Liebherr freezer now has a built-in ice maker which is really popular.

### Do you have any trend prediction for the years ahead?

During the Celtic Tiger years, kitchens seemed to be getting very minimalist with lots of colour. Now as things are tightening up a bit, I think people are going back to the timber kitchen and handpainted finishes, to achieve a timeless look. With the handpainted finish, you can always change the colour as an economical way of

updating somewhere down the line.

### What do you find most enjoyable about working with kitchens?

The best thing about working with kitchens is, you start off with lengths of timber and an empty room, have a couple of meetings with the client, design a kitchen totally around their needs, position of appliances etc. After going through the final plan with the customer, we get a great buzz from seeing the finish fitted product. A well designed, manufactured and fitted kitchen can transform people's houses, resulting in a happy customer therefore a happy business. We deal with every customer personally. If it's not myself talking to the client, it's Martin. Customers do appreciate personal service. The amount of letters we receive from happy clients is testament to this.

**Mooney's have recently updated their showroom. Viewing by appointment. Phone Mooney's Furniture, Navan 041 6854290.**





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