

My kitchen

The kitchen is the heart of the home. It's where the family gets together for the important things in life – food, conversation and celebration. Three women from around the world invite us into their kitchens. Penny Rogers reports.

Italy

Housewife Santina Corvaglia, 61, lives in an old two bedroom farmhouse in south-east Italy with her husband, Carlo, 56, who's a mechanic. They have a 31-year-old daughter, Francesca.



- 1 Q How much is your house worth?
A About £50,000.
- 2 Q What is your kitchen like?
A It's not very big. It's my little corner of the house. It's where I belong, and where I'm happiest.
- 3 Q How big is it?
A 12 sq m
- 4 Q What's your favourite thing?
A My cupboard full of different Italian herbs.



- 5 Q How much time do you spend in the kitchen?
A About four hours every day. And the same in the garden.
- 6 Q How many meals do you cook a day?
A Three. For the three of us, and whoever comes by – friends, relatives. My family is the most important thing to me. I want grandchildren!
- 7 Q What's in your fridge and cupboards?
A Vegetables, water, wine, eggs, cheese, ham, sausages, lemonade, butter, pasta, tinned tomatoes, beans, honey and home-made jam.
- 8 Q What would make your life easier in the kitchen?
A Nothing. I have all I need.
- 9 Q Who helps you?
A My daughter helps sometimes. My husband wouldn't dream of it, and I wouldn't want him to.
- 10 Q How often do you sit down and eat together as a family?
A Twice a day.
- 11 Q How much do you spend on groceries every week?
A I grow my own vegetables, and we have chickens and rabbits, so I only spend about £30 a week. But there is a drought this year.
- 12 Q What can you see from your kitchen windows?
A My garden, my orchard and my olive trees.



California, US

Elizabeth Anne Hogan, 45, is a lifestyle coach living in a 30-roomed house on the beach in California. It has ten bathrooms, seven bedrooms, an astronomy dome, a tennis court, a swimming pool and a bomb shelter. Her husband, Mike, 47, is a businessman. They have two children, Hailey, 14, and Hanna, nine.



- 1 Q How much is your house worth?
A About £6 million.
- 2 Q What is your kitchen like?
A There are two. The beach kitchen is simple. The house kitchen is futuristic. I don't know how everything works, so it's all a bit 'alien' to me.
- 3 Q How big is it?
A 45 sq m
- 4 Q What's your favourite thing?
A The three ovens, but they take up too much space. The lift that brings the groceries from the five-car garage is handy.
- 5 Q How much time do you spend in the kitchen?
A About seven to eight hours a day. But not cooking. It's the room we live in.
- 6 Q How many meals do you cook a day?
A Two to three, if you count cereal and bagels. But only one, if you mean actually doing things with real food.



- 7 Q What's in your fridge and cupboards?
A Fruit, vegetables, champagne, milk, yoghurt, pâté, cheeses, crisps and cereal. Lots of take-away food. And dog food.
- 8 Q What would make your life easier in the kitchen?
A A chef. We do everything for the kids ourselves. No nannies, housekeepers or cooks for them.
- 9 Q Who helps you?
A My husband and kids take food out of take-away containers and put it on plates. Does that count as helping?
- 10 Q How often do you sit down and eat together as a family?
A Every morning and evening.
- 11 Q How much do you spend on groceries every week?
A £300. Everything is low-fat and organic, pre-packed and prepared. It's all delivered.
- 12 Q What can you see from your kitchen windows?
A A panoramic, 180-degree view of the Pacific Ocean.



India

Lakshamma, 50, is a housewife living in a three-roomed mud hut near Bangalore. Her husband, Adaviyappa, 55, works on a cattle farm. They have two sons, Gangaraju, 30 and Ravi, 25, who both live at home.



- 1 Q How much is your house worth?
A To rebuild it would cost about £1,250.
- 2 Q What is your kitchen like?
A It's small, dark and crumbling. I dislike just about everything about it. It's so old.
- 3 Q How big is it?
A 5 sq m
- 4 Q What's your favourite thing?
A The stone where I grind my spices.
- 5 Q How much time do you spend in the kitchen?
A Six to seven hours a day – sometimes more. I'm always cooking or washing.
- 6 Q How many meals do you cook a day?
A Two or three.
- 7 Q What's in your fridge and cupboards?
A We don't have a fridge. On shelves I have lentils, rice, spices such as chillies, turmeric powder, some vegetables, and salt.
- 8 Q What would make your life easier in the kitchen?
A Running water. A daughter-in-law would be good as well! But God has given me life and I am grateful.



- 9 Q Who helps you?
A My eldest son helps when he has time. My younger son isn't well and needs constant care. My husband doesn't help.
- 10 Q How often do you sit down and eat together as a family?
A Men eat before women in our community. We don't eat together.
- 11 Q How much do you spend on groceries every week?
A £4. Sometimes less. It depends how much money we have.
- 12 Q What can you see from your kitchen windows?
A I have no windows in my kitchen.