

Russian for Fish makes a natural connection in Stoke Newington

A garden-embracing ground-floor extension for one couple (and their cat)



Walford Road by Russian for Fish. Photography by Pete Landers.

Walford Road in Stoke Newington is a row of classic Victorian terraced houses, three storeys high and packed in tight. They're beautiful heritage buildings but, with space and light often at a premium, not always the ideal location to raise a modern family.

In 2016, East London architectural practice **Russian For Fish** was contacted by a couple who had just bought a mid-terrace property on **Walford Road** in the hope of starting their family. The house had been untouched for many decades, and needed significant refurbishment throughout. The owners were

RUSSIAN FOR FISH

PRESS RELEASE, 20 July 2017

confident they could handle the lighter aspects of the work, but when it came to creating an open-plan kitchen/dining room extension that opened into the courtyard garden, they needed a specialist.

Reconfiguring or extending buildings like these can be a challenge; height restrictions are commonly enforced and rear access is rarely available, so all building materials have to fit through the front door – making substantial projects like this the architectural equivalent of keyhole surgery.

With a track record of innovative residential extensions that optimise space and are sensitive to the existing architectural aesthetic, **Russian For Fish** was well placed to respond creatively to the practical constraints of the project.



Walford Road by Russian for Fish. Photography by Pete Landers.

Working to a budget of £85,000, the practice's architects **Pereen d'Avoine** and **Nilesh Shah** developed a series of designs and models that accommodated the clients' functional requirements and met their creative vision for the space. As well-travelled lovers of the outdoors, it was important to the owners that the new room carried a strong connection to the garden. The kitchen had to accommodate a cook of above average height (one of the clients was 6' 4") with raised work surfaces; and the family cat also had several requirements – including its own kitchen recess and a sunlit window seat.

RUSSIAN FOR FISH

PRESS RELEASE, 20 July 2017

An existing rear lean-to had to be demolished to allow **Russian For Fish** to build out into the side return and take advantage of the full area of the plot. The installation of steel box frames and beams allowed the ground-floor outrigger walls to be removed without affecting the first floor. A pitched skylight spanning the length of the outrigger was set against an exposed brick wall, creating a naturally floodlit dining area. A bench running along the wall, fitted with low cupboards, created both seating and storage, while a large, projecting picture window lined in oiled prime oak at the head of the dining area maximised the garden view and provided both an extra seat and a much-needed chill-out space for the cat.



Walford Road by Russian for Fish. Photography by Pete Landers.

The kitchen fixtures and cabinets were sourced off-the-shelf, but fitted with bespoke doors and drawer fronts. A peppermint green colour was chosen for these as a complementary contrast to the surrounding material tones of the space: the oiled oak of the worktop, the natural grey of the concrete floor tiles, the exposed brick wall, the grey and white hexagonal splashback tiles, and the stainless steel handles and appliances. Vibrant colour accents have been introduced by the client's existing furniture, utensils and prints, and, of course, the seasonal changes of the flora in the garden – now reached by a floor-to-ceiling bi-folding glass door.

RUSSIAN FOR FISH

PRESS RELEASE, 20 July 2017

After a year of design and construction work, the project was complete, and the owners – and their new baby – are now enjoying their garden oasis in the urban jungle of Stoke Newington.



Walford Road by Russian for Fish. Photography by Pete Landers.

'Working with Russian For Fish was great: they really understood the design feel that we wanted to achieve and they added so many lovely details. The final space is even better than we had hoped it would be. We now spend most of our time in the kitchen extension, and everyone who sees it comments on how lucky we are to have such a lovely space in our home.'

– Clementine Rodgers, Walford Road client

For more images or information about **Russian for Fish's Walford Road** project and practice, please contact Jodi Moss at jodi@zetteler.co.uk or on +44 (0)7910 705147.

RUSSIAN FOR FISH

PRESS RELEASE, 20 July 2017

About Walford Road

Architect Russian For Fish

Contractor MJ Construction

Engineer MDA Structures

Suppliers Concreate, Mandarin Stone, IKEA



About Russian for Fish

Russian for Fish is an award-winning London-based architectural and design practice founded by RIBA-chartered architect Pereen d'Avoine in 2006. Now run by Pereen and co-director Nilesh Shah, the company works on extension and new-build projects for both residential and commercial clients, and is especially adept at transforming compact spaces. Their work is characterised by simplified material palettes, contemporary and minimalist detailing, and a cohesive, sympathetic approach to surroundings.

The Russian word for fish is pronounced 'RIBA'.

russianforfish.com
