

## GET THE LOOK



SousVide SVS-09L  
Supreme Demi Water  
Oven, £249.99, John Lewis

illy electric milk frother,  
£41.99, Currys



Cooks  
Collection  
5.2-litre oval  
cast-iron  
casserole  
dish £45,  
Sainsbury's



This island unit (main photograph)  
has a neat multi-plug socket that  
rises up – ideal for gadgets like  
Eric's trusty hand whisk and milk  
frother (above)



Eric's collection of Le Creuset dishes  
are perfect for individual soufflés  
and chocolate puddings



His wine fridge has been hijacked  
by chocolate and his Lindt bunny –  
he says it's the perfect temperature  
for storing chocolate at about 6C



## ERIC'S TIPS

- Invest in an oven thermometer. It doesn't matter how expensive your oven is, you always need to check the temperature. It will make all the difference to your results.
- Always try to take your ingredients out of the fridge an hour before, so everything is at the same temperature. If they're too cold, it will take too long to incorporate, and if you add cold eggs to butter, it might curdle.
- Use the best ingredients you can get. I really like Nielsen-Massey vanilla paste with the seeds and a vanilla base – it's thick so doesn't change the texture of most recipes.
- Go for unrefined sugar, which is less processed and has more of a treacly taste.



## MY KITCHEN

## Eric Lanlard

Master  
pâtissier  
Eric Lanlard  
shows  
Holly  
Brooke-  
Smith  
around his  
sleek west  
London  
kitchen

Photographs  
GEOFF WILKINSON

Born in Brittany, Eric Lanlard trained as a chocolatier in Luxembourg before moving to the UK in 1989 to set up his own business. He has since made wedding cakes for Madonna, Liz Hurley and Claudia Schiffer. He runs Cake Boy, a cake boutique and cookery school in south-west London, and lives nearby with his partner, Paul. He has written five books, including *Tart It Up!* and *Chocolat*.

**When did you move in?**

It was three years ago. We weren't looking to move. I just saw the house in a magazine one Saturday when we were having breakfast at Cake Boy. It was the first time it had been advertised and there were only a couple of photos of this kitchen space. We came and had a look around and thought 'we want it!'

**It's very stylish! Do you find it practical?**

The first time I came here, I thought 'this is a typical designer place' with no sockets or anything useful. At the time I could see a metal disc on the counter surface, but I was too embarrassed to ask the estate agent what it was – I thought maybe it was something to put the rubbish in.

It was when I came back a second time that I looked in the cupboard and realised it was a whole bank of plug sockets that rises up out of the counter. So I was very happy.

**Do you have lots of countertop gadgets?**

I'm getting a bit addicted to my sous vide machine. It's my new thing that I really love using. I'm not into silly gadgets – I just like having quality equipment. However, I did buy a

waffle maker last year and it's sat in the cupboard ever since – I don't like it when that happens. I like good-quality cookware and bakeware, and that's it.

**What do you cook on?**

The oven is great, it's a Gaggenau and it's nice – very wide. If I do a tiered cake I can do it all at the same time. It really holds the temperature very well and heats up very quickly, so you don't have to preheat it for hours. It's a great thing. I can't get used to the electric hobs though – everything overboils. I trained with gas, and in all my previous places we had gas as well.

**Where have you cooked previously?**

When I cooked for the French Navy I was on a big ship, but we had a tiny little kitchen. I was working on the

navy's flagship, as the captain's private pastry chef. It was the chef and me in a tiny kitchen.

Of course, the chef had to take most of the kitchen, because that's how chefs behave! I just had one marble slab and a sink – we'd do everything like the washing-up and making cakes. There was no air conditioning or anything – at the end of the day, it was still a battleship.

**That sounds challenging!**

It was definitely an experience. We were entertaining a lot as we went around the world. One Easter it was 40C in the Caribbean. I had to lock myself in the freezer to make chocolate eggs. I jammed the door with a big spoon so that the light would stay on, then I made the eggs and we pulled them out at the last second to make sure they didn't melt.