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IT HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER TO CUSTOMIZE YOUR KITCHEN IN LOOK AND FUNCTION

BY CATRIONA BRANCA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JANE BEILES, TIM LENZ, KIM SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY, SEMIHANDMADE/BROOKE CHRISTEN,



GARA & CO. AND CJB DESIGNS



SPACES OF DISTINCTION



NESTING WITH GRACE



MOSS DESIGN



PHOTOGRAPHS (LEFT TO RIGHT)
TIM LENZ, KIM SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY,
SEMIHANDMADE/BROOKE CHRISTEN, JANE BEILES

GARA & CO. AND CJB DESIGNS

Warming up an open kitchen



WHEN THE OWNERS OF A NEW CUSTOM HOME

hired the collaborative duo of Gara Morse of Gara & Co. and Caryn Bortniker of CJB Designs, they requested a modern space that was warm and welcoming but with a cool modern vibe. “The intention for the kitchen was for it to be a focal point of the main room, a place to cook, entertain and gather with friends and family,” says the homeowner. “We wanted to maximize the view of Gray’s Creek, a beautiful tidal inlet. The spectacular sunsets can elevate a daily task like making dinner from the mundane to the sublime.”

Morse’s open-kitchen design meant eliminating upper cabinets. “However, as we still needed tons of storage, Caryn devised huge drawer spaces, oversized floor-to-ceiling pantries and a large ‘appliance garage’ to hide any evidence of kitchen-y stuff and to house all of the small appliances,” says Morse.

The unique shape of the space was a design challenge. “When laying out the main wall with the refrigeration and the stove, the space didn’t allow for a symmetrical solution,” says Morse. “So we made a bold statement of *not* doing it symmetrically—it looked far more interesting and the client loved it. We introduced asymmetry wherever we could: The three lights over the island are shifted to the right; the hardware has less length on the top than the bottom on the vertical doors; the drawers are made to the far left; and the fireplace shelves appear only on one side.”

Concludes the client: “My favorite part of the kitchen is its simplicity. It is elegant, not fussy and not tricked out or gadgety. The natural materials are the stars of the show.”



Balance Of Nature A trio of Gabriel Scott glass-and-bronze pendants (THIS PAGE) illuminate the island, which is topped with Vermont Danby marble through ABC Worldwide Stone. Counter stools are from Crate & Barrel. The custom box-shaped hood is crafted from variegated blackened stained metal. Walnut cabinetry sports blackened steel hardware. Unobstructed views (OPPOSITE PAGE) can be enjoyed from the island or the custom daybed beside the window; the sculpture on the countertop is through Bungalow. See Resources.

SPACES OF DISTINCTION

Perfecting a blue-and-white palette



Mirror Image (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM THIS PHOTO) John Richard glass-and-nickel pendants hang above a pair of marble-topped islands. The custom hood above the Lacanche range is through Focal Metals; the Glassos backsplash is through Merolle Brothers Tile & Marble. In the butler's pantry, the cabinets sport Armac Martin hardware; and the mosaic tile is through Artistic Tile. All cabinets were fabricated and installed by Deane; the builder was Hobbs, Inc. See Resources.

A LACANCHE RANGE AND THE CLIENT'S LOVE OF BLUE

inspired this kitchen designed by Denise Balassi of Spaces of Distinction. "The French Blue was just the right color without being too bold," notes Balassi. "Then, the butler's pantry and range hood were painted to match it." Countertops in Namibian Sky marble from Stonehenge Marble & Granite and ombre backsplash tile through Artistic Tile take cues from the blue-and-white palette. "The fabric selections, paint colors, and tile choices were all blended to match or complement the blues being used throughout the house," says Balassi.

Renovations increased the kitchen by 150 square feet and doubled the size of the butler's pantry. "The added space gave us the opportunity to fulfill the client's wishlist, which included two islands—one for prep work and the other for more casual dining—two refrigeration units, expanded storage, and a generously sized range imported from France." In addition to adding space to the kitchen, an adjacent enlarged mud room, pantry, and back hall feeding area with a dog-washing station were added.

"Although the kitchen is considered large, there is a certain coziness to the overall feel of the room," says Balassi. "Because each appliance work station is strategically positioned, there never seems to be a bottleneck in any one area even when the space is occupied with lots of people. The multiple dishwashers make it possible to have two washing stations; the double refrigerators assure there is always plenty of food on hand with plenty more stored in the full height freezer. And, needless to say, the wonderful Lacanche range turns out perfectly cooked meals."

PHOTOGRAPHS KIM SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY



NESTING WITH GRACE

Excelling at online customization



Digital Design (ACROSS SPREAD FROM OPPOSITE PAGE) A Serena & Lily chandelier is suspended over a West Elm dining table; rattan dining chairs are from Urban Outfitters. Serena & Lily pendant lights and bar stools add textural pops at an island topped with quartz from Hope Kitchen; Bedrosians Reine backsplash tile boasts a charcoal grout. Ikea cabinets with Semihandmade doors sport oil-rubbed bronze hardware through Rejuvenation. The Big Chill dishwasher and refrigerator are finished with brass hardware. See Resources.



FOR A BRIGHT AND AIRY KITCHEN REMODEL AT

her own home—a 1950s cape—Brooke Christen, founder of design blog Nesting With Grace, put her online skills to work. “I had seen Semihandmade on Instagram,” explains the designer. “They make solid-wood, customizable door and drawer fronts that you install onto Ikea kitchen boxes, and everything I’d seen looked so custom and gorgeous.”

After making a quick drawing of her space online with an Ikea kitchen planner, she received a bid from Semihandmade. “It was an easy choice to go with their Supermatte white Shaker cabinets, and I wanted to accent with a wood, so we chose the Cove finish for the island cabinets and around the fridge to break up all the white.”

Pattern and texture was introduced with Serena & Lily woven rattan pendants and bar stools, plus a tile backsplash with charcoal grout, while

metallic accents added just the right amount of bling. “The stove and fridge have some major showstopping brass accents,” says Christen. “I wanted those to be the star of the show and not distract with brass hardware on all the cabinets, so I chose black hardware for the island.”

To create a cohesive look with the rest of the home, the designer added shiplap to the entire first-floor ceiling, and she had the original 1950s red oak floors sanded down and stained with a whitewashed finish to match the new herringbone oak floor in the kitchen.

For this family that loves to cook together, the large island with its Calacatta white waterfall quartz top has become indispensable in their daily lives. “I love that we can use it to serve bigger meals or roll out homemade cinnamon rolls,” says Christen. “It also acts as a desk during the day and then a place for creating at night.”

MOSS DESIGN

Amping up farmhouse charm



MEGHAN DE MARIA OF MOSS DESIGN

started from scratch when designing this kitchen, part of a whole-home renovation and a 4,000-square-foot addition. “The kitchen was a complete gut and reconfiguration, although we kept some of the original hardware,” says De Maria. “It was important the focal point be the beautiful four-acre backyard that often has a dozen deer grazing or the occasional fox chasing wild turkeys.”

Trusses salvaged from the demolition of the Yale boathouse were sourced by Christopher Rosow of Three Beans Design/Build firm, and then added to the ceiling. “The home was built to reflect a traditional farmhouse—it was begging for rustic beams,” explains De Maria.

While perimeter countertops are made from a milky glass, the double waterfall island is crafted from a beautiful piece of Statuario marble through New England Stone. “I love the movement of this piece,” says the designer, “and that it carries your eye to the beautiful backyard.”

The addition of Serena & Lily cherry wallpaper to the breakfast nook adds a pop of color and is complemented by a contemporary Knoll Saarinen table and Victoria Ghost chairs. “It is a whimsical wallcovering and reminded me of the client’s own fun personality,” says De Maria. “The chair and table are contemporary and bring a real calmness to the wallpaper design—they work perfectly together and ultimately balance the design.”

The client is so happy with the result, it was impossible for her to choose just one favorite element. “If I had to pick one thing,” muses the homeowner, “I’d say the cherries! Or the waterfall or the beams. It is such a comfortable, inviting space.” ✨

Farmhouse Flair Ceiling beams (OPPOSITE PAGE) were salvaged from the demolished Yale boathouse. The client’s own blue stools provide seating at the island, which is topped with marble from New England Stone. The range is Wolf. A Vinci pinecone vase (RIGHT) through Abigails adds a pop of blue alongside a Kohler cast-iron farmhouse sink; the Perrin & Rowe faucet is through Waterware Showrooms. The globe pendant lights are from Arteriors. See Resources.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JANE BEILES