



Sizzling Style

Find inspiration in classic details and modern flourishes to create a kitchen with delectably good looks.

KITCHENS PLAY A SUPERSTAR ROLE IN OUR HOMES, not just as the place where we make and serve our meals,

but quite often as a space to host guests, store essential items and get important work done. Designing a stylish space that meets these varied needs can be tricky with form and function not always easily meshed. These homeowners and designers managed to find that balance and create spaces that are undeniably beautiful and truly useful.



Rustic *Elegance*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMERALD COAST PHOTOGRAPHY

Made to serve as the hub of a large family's home, the design of this kitchen was inspired by the materials the team at Old Seagrove Homes selected, particularly cypress.

"I wanted this space to be modern in its simplicity but to also feel warm and comfortable," Cynthia Rice, interior designer for the project, says. "I knew I wanted to balance the polished quartzite slab backsplash with a warm, reclaimed cypress feature wall. Cypress is a trademark element of our homes, and I love striking a balance between the elegant and more rustic elements."

Lighting was another important consideration, particularly because of the use of a darker wood.

"When lighting a space, I like to use a variety of fixtures," Cynthia says. "Recessed lighting is perfect for a bright, well lit space. I chose large pendants to go over the island and nautical-inspired sconces above the kitchen sink for softer lighting and a warmer, more relaxed mood."

Guided by these choices, Cynthia and her husband Alex, the firm's general contractor, created a serenely stylish kitchen ready to host a steady stream of family and friends.

Personality *Plus*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAURA MOSS PHOTOGRAPHY

Building a home from scratch means you get to put your special touches on every element. In a kitchen that can impact everything from scale to materials as you build a space totally suited to you, such as was done in this kitchen designed by DeGraw & DeHaan Architects.

"[The homeowners wanted] to have a beautiful, bright kitchen that was not only beautiful but practical as the wife loves to cook and the homeowners do a lot of entertaining," says Jeff DeGraw, project architect.

A slightly lowered butcher-block counter was installed for the wife, who isn't very tall. In recognition of their heritage, the homeowners selected an Italian marble for the remaining countertops. Comfortable high-backed chairs were selected for the island, which serves as the homework spot for the kids in the family. These choices perfectly suit the family's needs and give a classic charm to the new space.

"The biggest challenge for us was creating a kitchen that had the character of an older home with the function and livability of a new home," Jeff says.





Chef's *Special* PHOTOGRAPHY BY CYNTHIA RICE

This sleekly elegant kitchen was designed to highlight the room's true purpose—cooking food. For the family kitchen of Cynthia and Alex Rice of Old Seagrove Homes, function was as important a consideration as style in its design.

“I consider storage to be a priority in a kitchen,” Cynthia says. “I love using deep drawers for their clean appearance, but also for the ease and practicality of storage. I think it’s important to keep a space interesting, so I like to mix the style and use of cabinets.”

Open shelves, deep drawers and abundant counters feature prominently in the kitchen. Not just practical, these features also contribute to the overall style of the room. The island, for instance, was created from quartzite and cypress to look like a piece of furniture; its built-in shelves showcase the family’s collection of cookbooks and platters.

“When designing with rustic elements, I think it’s important to keep your space fresh with unexpected and contrasting elements,” Cynthia says. “I’m always thinking about balancing the rough textures with something smooth and polished, the dark tones with something light, the quiet spaces with areas of pattern.”





Shock of Blue

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF FIFER CUSTOM HOMES

From an area rug to a collection of vintage dishes to an assortment of fresh bouquets, there are countless ways to bring pops of color into your kitchen. These homeowners, though, wanted to make a bigger statement and opted to paint both their island and one wall in their kitchen a powdery blue to give the mostly white space a little kick.

“The client thought the space looked a little monotone so we came up with the design plan to break it up,” says Sarah Fifer with Fifer Custom Homes.

The blue, inspired by the color of an old couch, was just one way the white was broken up in the design. Glass fronts on the cabinets show off the variety of dishes and glassware inside. Cambrian black counters feature in part of the kitchen along with complementary pulls for the drawers and cabinets. Dark wood chairs in the eating nook create contrast.



Get Together

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF FIFER CUSTOM HOMES

When you regularly host large gatherings and have a cavalcade of help in the kitchen, it's important everything is easy to find and easy to get to. This was the aim of the team at Foley & Cox when it set about designing a beautiful yet functional kitchen for a long-time client.

“We first divided up the space for the kitchen to function properly,” Michael Cox says. “The client does host large dinners, especially at the holidays, and we all focused on a beautiful kitchen when not in use but indestructible when it is.”

Stainless appliances were selected not just because of their understated good looks but because they pop against the white cabinetry (“There is nothing worse than trying to find the dishwasher,” Michael says). A mix of materials helps to break up the large kitchen into smaller, more functional spaces (“[W]e like to mix materials so it doesn't look like one huge space that was not well thought out,” Michael says).



Bicoastal *Inspiration*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACKSON DESIGN AND REMODELING

Our personal style is influenced by a number of factors,

including the place we grew up and the place where we now live. East Coast transplants to the California coast, the owners of this home wanted their kitchen to represent the best of both.

“They wanted their kitchen to embrace its natural surroundings near the beach while honoring the aesthetics of East Coast colonials,” says Tatiana Machado-Rosas, a designer with the firm of Jackson Design and Remodeling. “Strategic space planning was essential for this kitchen, which was moved to a part of the house that better captured the ocean views and designed with three entrances for ideal access and circulation. Meticulous molding throughout the room was custom designed and carefully crafted to create the effect of colonial detailing in a ranch-style home.”

The classic curves of the lathed island legs and gray-toned soapstone counters also call back to those East Coast sensibilities. The natural wonders of the California coast beckon from large windows over the sink and surrounding the eating area, as much a part of the design as the appliances and furnishings.

See Sources, page 128.

