

Variety is the spice of life—and the kitchen

At *Fine Homebuilding*, we see some incredibly well-designed kitchens that are the perfect blend of form, function, and materials. With so many design, material, and appliance options available, we asked the designers of these four projects to share how they developed their design ideas, blended materials for a unique but cohesive space, and made sure their clients were happy with the results. All replied that honesty, trust, and restraint were key to the projects featured here. They stressed the importance of having their clients be honest about likes, dislikes, and ideas about how they want their kitchen to function. They also said that when it comes to most clients' wish lists of appliances and materials, clients need to trust the designer's talent and expertise.

When these designers and their clients were choosing which materials to splurge on, the decisions were clear: Those elements used on a daily basis are worth the additional expense. Countertops, appliances, and lighting were all at the top of the list, as the projects here illustrate.



"Don't be afraid to tell your designer if you really don't like something he's proposed. We want you to love your new kitchen."

— Jon Colliander, architect, TreHus

DETAILS

Perimeter cabinets: custom cabinets with White Dove enamel finish
Hutch: mahogany, custom
Island: mahogany, custom-built by the homeowner
Countertops: Black Opalescence polished granite
Backsplash: Waterworks 3-in. by 6-in. subway tile
Flooring: oak hardwood
Refrigerator: KitchenAid 36-in. counter-depth French door
Range: KitchenAid 30-in. gas slide-in
Hood: Vent-A-Hood 300-cfm liner with halogen lights
Dishwasher: KitchenAid 24-in. integrated wood front
Microwave: GE countertop style
Sink: Rohl 30-in. by 18-in. white single-bowl apron style
Faucet: Rohl Country two-hole single lever in polished nickel

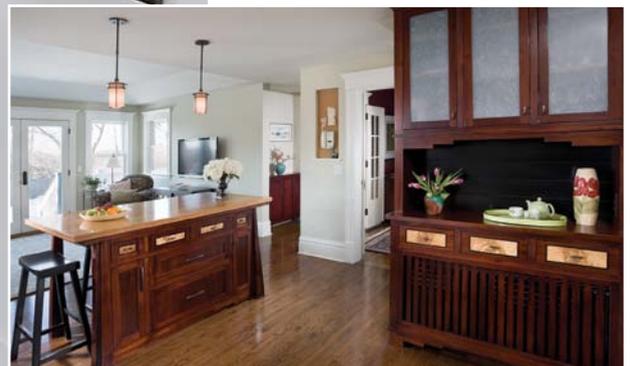
Design: TreHus, Minneapolis; trehus.biz

Cabinet construction: Eull Woodworks, St. Michael, Minn.; eullwoodworks.com

Kitchen-island design and construction: Hal Galvin, Minneapolis

Photographer: Andrea Rugg; andrearugg.com

Western influence. The custom cabinets and millwork in this Victorian home's kitchen were designed to complement the old-world craftsmanship of the house. The homeowners' Asian-influenced taste is incorporated into other design elements, such as the pagoda-style cabinet pulls, the island's bamboo butcher-block top, and the hutch's rice-paper panels.



An island of his own. Homeowner Hal Galvin designed and built the kitchen island. TreHus then worked the Asian-influenced theme into the matching mahogany hutch with olive-ash drawer fronts.

Light and bright. The lighting design in this kitchen uses a pair of dramatic pendant fixtures over the island for ambient and task lighting and a U-shaped suspended track-lighting system around the perimeter. The track lighting provides both task lighting for the countertops as well as accent lighting directed up at the ceiling, which provides ambient light and highlights the warm wood.

"Restraint was a significant force in shaping this kitchen. There is an almost visceral pleasure to a space that is calm, clean, and unified."

— Christian Brown, architect



DETAILS

Cabinets: Adelphi semicustom,

frameless, Shaker style, full-coverage paint on solid wood

Countertops: Carrara marble

Flooring: Pine with translucent white stain/whitewash

Ceiling: tongue-and-groove pine

Walls: plaster, painted Benjamin Moore OC26 Silver Satin

Pendant lighting: Artemide Dome

Rail lighting: Tech Lighting low-voltage dual-circuit rail system on dimmers; Mo-Pivot rail heads with frosted-glass cone

Range: Jenn-Air Pro-Style slide-in gas range

Dishwasher: Bosch

Refrigerator: Fisher & Paykel

Sink: Kohler K-3183

Faucet: Brizo Trevi Cross with side spray and soap dispenser

Stools: Pottery Barn Tibetan barstools

Door and drawer pulls: custom black-leather straps by Tony's Basement Leathers

Windows: Bonneville Windows & Doors, solid-pine and cedar casement and double-hung, low-e argon SDL with bronze spacer bars

Architect: Christian Brown, Brown + Davis Design, Jericho, Vt.; brownanddavis.com

Lighting design: Tim Mathiesen, Brilliant! Lighting & Design, Brattleboro, Vt.; brilliant-ldi.com

Kitchen contractor: Mathes Hulme Builders, Guilford, Vt.; matheshulmebuilders.com

Photographs: courtesy of Tim Mathiesen

Warm wood meets modern materials. To enhance the open feel of this Vermont timber-frame home's kitchen, upper cabinets were eliminated and a large window installed along the south wall. Storage is concentrated in two tall cabinets, one next to the refrigerator and another that serves as a divider between the kitchen and the entry hall. The color palette, along with stainless-steel appliances, creates a pleasing contrast to the warmth of the wood.

“When choosing the materials for this project, we sought those that were light, durable, and timeless, and would withstand a lifetime of activity.”

— TerraCotta Properties



Time for entertaining. The 12-ft.-long island welcomes family and guests alike to join in meal preparation. With its iron frame made by a local ironsmith, the elevated counter at the end adds visual interest and functions as a baking area. The dark iron color is repeated on the antique pantry cabinet, which was refurbished and built into the kitchen.

Peaceful and serene. The owners of this kitchen wanted a feeling of quietness that would be comforting at the end of a busy day. The designers carefully chose cabinets, countertops, fixtures, and colors to complement each other as well as the adjacent family room.





DETAILS

Cabinets: Shaker-style doors designed by TerraCotta, built by Greenwalt and Sons
Countertops: Polished Crema Delicato with eased edge
Backsplash: Venatino Marble in 1-in. by 2-in. herringbone
Flooring: 5/8-in. by 3 5/8-in. prefinished bamboo flooring
Refrigerator: Samsung counter depth, 30 in. wide, stainless steel with French doors
Range: Viking 36-in.-wide six-burner gas
Range hood: Viking
Wall ovens: Two Electrolux 30-in. single convection
Refrigerator drawers: GE Monogram 24-in. Fresh Food Double Drawers (custom-panel ready)
Dishwasher: Asko 24-in.
Pendant lighting: Clemson Classic Pendant from Restoration Hardware
Sink basin: Undermount single bowl, 9 in. deep
Faucet: Danze Polished Chrome
Pot filler: Aquadis Polished Chrome

Design: TerraCotta Properties, Decatur, Ga., Ili Nilsson and Luly Melarti, owners; terracottaproperties.com

Contractor/on-site construction team: Maurie Hullender, Structor Inc., Atlanta

Cabinet construction: Greenwalt and Sons Custom Cabinetry & Woodworks, Hiram, Ga.; greenwaltandsons.com

Photographs: Jeff Herr, jeffherrphoto.com; courtesy of TerraCotta Properties

"All materials were selected to return the original charm to this home but also meet today's style of living."

— Brit Amundson, marketing manager, TreHus



Historic restoration. Built in 1900, this classic Greek-revival home is on a small lot in a historic district. A 10-ft. addition allowed for a kitchen expansion, a new gathering space, and a small, historically accurate mudroom that leads into a private backyard-patio area.

Attention to detail. Using photographs of the house from the 1900s, the homeowner and designers were able to re-create many of the details found in the home's original design. This included keeping the house's original kitchen windows, which extend below base-cabinet height. Custom cypress countertops below two of the windowsills provide additional work and storage surfaces.



DETAILS

Cabinets: custom
Island and base-cabinet countertops: Carrara marble
Hutch top and underwindow counters: cypress
Backsplash: Waterworks 3-in. by 6-in. subway tile in Dove
Cabinet hardware: Colonial Bronze Co., satin black finish
Flooring: 5-in.-wide yellow pine with custom stain
Refrigerator: Sub-Zero 700TCI with integrated panels
Range: Viking 24-in. open-burner range
Microwave: GE countertop, stainless
Dishwasher: Bosch Integra 500 series, fully integrated with custom flat panel
Sink: Rohl Shaws Original fireclay apron sink in white
Faucet: Franke Mano House in polished nickel
Wall cladding: sealed tongue-and-groove alder

Design: TreHus, Minneapolis; trehus.biz

Cabinet construction: Eull Woodworks, St. Michael, Minn.; eullwoodworks.com

Photographs: Susan Gilmore; susangilmorephoto.com