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Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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HOBBI
AWARDS

THE
KITCHEN
ISSUE

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

THREE KITCHENS ARE THOUGHTFULLY
DESIGNED WITH THE
HOMEOWNERS' LIFESTYLES IN MIND

BY MARY FITZGERALD | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARYELLEN HENDRICKS, NANCY HILL AND TIM LENZ

THE EMPTY NESTER



THE FAMILY AFFAIR



PHOTOGRAPHS (LEFT TO RIGHT)
BY MARYELLEN HENDRICKS,
NANCY HILL, TIM LENZ

THE ENTERTAINER



AS SEEN IN
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THE EMPTY NESTER

Downsizing from a circa 1700 farmhouse to a custom-built home at the beach, homeowners Andrea and David Cross knew they were ready for a change. Andrea, a residential designer and owner of Axel Interiors in Norwalk, conceived the kitchen's minimalist design with the help of architect Jim Denno of Jim Denno Design. Her self-directive—create an efficient, elegant kitchen while maximizing the home's amazing water views. At only 150 square feet, the kitchen had to function for the couple's everyday use, with the ability to accommodate family and friends when entertaining. The kitchen opens to the dining and living areas, so Cross opted for a clean design that wouldn't compete with the family's beloved antiques, artwork and sweeping views of Long Island Sound. She engaged Henrybuilt, a New York City-based company specializing in tailored design, European-

styling and craftsmanship, to fabricate the custom cabinetry. Plank-matched natural walnut lower cabinets and appliance fronts speak to the fine furnishings in the adjoining areas, while upper cabinet fronts in a durable opaque resin (by Wüd Furniture) lend a contrasting note. Minimal hardware and built-in Gaggenau appliances integrate seamlessly into the bespoke cabinetry. Anchoring the space, a bar-height waterfall console by Wüd is crafted from a single black walnut slab with inlaid bands of bronze encased in an epoxy resin. Laminated leather stools comfortably accommodate seating for four or more at the island. The perimeter of the kitchen was purposely kept quiet with creamy enameled Pyrolave lavastone work surfaces (a must-have for David, who loved the material in their previous home) and a textural porcelain Mutina tile backsplash, designed by architect Patricia Urquiola.

Simply Bespoke
Henrybuilt cabinetry (above) in a warm walnut wood complements the home's antique furnishings. Streamlined Gaggenau appliances and understated hardware are in line with the designer/homeowner's minimalist aesthetic. A Wüd waterfall console island (right), lit by a pair of Link pendants by Avram Rusu Studio, provides the perfect spot for the couple to sit with a cup of coffee and take in the water views. See *Resources*.





Family Matters (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM TOP LEFT) A honed Vermont granite island, sporting a Perrin & Rowe faucet, is illuminated by Circa Lighting pendants. Custom cabinetry is by Zauber Woodworks. A mosaic tile from Karen Berkemeyer Home lines the backsplash behind the Wolf stove. A dog station features cabinetry by WL Restoration with pullout feeding drawers for pups Pippa and Trixie. The designated food pantry, equipped with a handy chalkboard for messages, and a breakfast room are welcome additions to this family kitchen. See Resources.



THE FAMILY AFFAIR

THE FAMILY OF FOUR AND TWO DOGS that inhabited this kitchen found their previous layout lacking on all levels. The '80s design was cramped and dark, with a tiny island and limited counters. In addition, a poorly placed staircase and powder room chopped up the tight space. High on the family's wish list was efficient storage, ample work surfaces, room to bake with their two young daughters and a mudroom. The homeowners enlisted the help of architectural designer Judy Larson of Judith Larson Associates to enlarge the footprint and create a more functional kitchen. Designers Stephanie Sigg, of CD Interiors, and Madeline Hane, from Larson's office, helped the homeowners select furnishings and fabrics. Larson bumped up the square footage, relocated the stairs and powder room, and swapped out the tiny island with a formidable replacement in honed granite. The kitchen now boasts plenty of counter space with multiple locations for the family to gather. Laid out in two basic zones, the new layout provides an area for food prep and cooking and another for clean up. Larson addressed everything on the wish list, including the coveted mudroom, a breakfast room, a wine bar, a pantry and the family's "command central" for charging devices. There's even a designated feeding station for the dogs, Pippa and Trixie. The result is a larger, brighter, workable kitchen that the whole family now enjoys.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NANCY HILL



Party Time (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM THIS PAGE) A closeted bar area was exposed to the kitchen with open shelving and a dramatic aged-washed metal countertop and integral sink from Focal Metals. A Brizo faucet and sink by the Galley dress up the marble island with custom Urban Electric light fixtures overhead. The grown-up eating area is actually kid friendly with easy to clean Lucite chairs from Design Within Reach and bench seating from Crate & Barrel. A chandelier from Capital Lighting and vintage artwork from the Ross Art Group add the finishing touches. See *Resources*.



THE ENTERTAINER

THIS KITCHEN IS PARTY CENTRAL for a family that loves to cook and entertain. Knowing they would eventually renovate, the homeowners lived with the builder's spec kitchen for two years before calling in Tyler Constanda of TC Designs. The wife, who had worked in the restaurant business, is a serious cook and wanted a kitchen that could work equally well for intimate nightly dinners with the family or hosting large parties. Constanda enlisted the help of kitchen designer Christine Donner to develop a layout for personal cooking and entertaining. A closed-off wet bar was transformed into a party-ready cocktail serving station. Donner helped the homeowners select professional-style appliances, including refrigerator from Sub-Zero, Miele wall ovens and dishwashers, and a Lacanche range. The large Royal Danby marble-topped island is conducive to conversation while the chef is at work. "The owners love the marble," says Constanda. "As a designer, I always tell my clients, if you need perfection, marble is not your jam. However, these owners decided they would love it even more when it was all worn, with the aged patina of a bar top at a French bistro. It was a perfect match." It took some convincing to get the couple to agree to the gray cabinets, but because they had worked with Constanda before on a previous home, they trusted her instincts and said yes to the Craft-Maid custom cabinets painted in Farrow & Ball's Worsted hue. Donner suggested the walnut island to warm things up. Together, the designers accomplished a brilliant kitchen that works for this entertaining family, day or night.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM LENZ

