



Mixed Message

variety of materials and finishes creates a unified design

Matthew Marin

The owners of this new, 6,000-sq.-ft. home in the quiet suburb of Franklin Lakes, NJ, had just one request for their kitchen—that it offer a clean, clutter-free work environment. The Whang family was looking for a kitchen with “a unique look and feel,” said Anthony Albert Passanante, CKD, CBD, of Wyckoff, NJ. “They wanted a ‘wow’ factor.”

To achieve a one-of-a-kind appearance, as well as optimal functionality, Passanante decided against an L-shaped layout for the 800-sq.-ft. kitchen but instead placed cabinets on all walls and centered the island, allowing the clients to prepare meals, cook and clean dishes with minimal movement and maximum ease. “With this kitchen, I wanted to design the space a little differently,” Passanante noted. “The concept was to treat each wall as its own separate bank of cabinets.”

Although its layout may be straightforward, the kitchen boasts a richness, thanks in part to an attention to detail and a mix of light and dark cabinets that creates interest and balance. Above the main sink, twin wall cabinets in dark mahogany flank a window and complement base units on either side of the 48-in. stove. Together, the dark wood contrasts the white maple cabinetry that lines the perimeter of the kitchen and forms the island. The use of the darker wood “brings out the beauty of the room,” said Passanante. “Your eyes are drawn to the mahogany cabinets on the wall first.”

Adding another dimension to the kitchen, doors on the mahogany wall units are equipped with glass inserts and their interiors are painted white to match the cabinets below. According to Passanante, the



clients requested that their glassware and dinnerware collection be visible, and compared to solid wood doors, “the glass inserts bring another texture to the room,” he said. “They helped to brighten up the space.”

To impart warmth to the kitchen, the design employs three different countertop materials. The island and the run of cabinetry containing the main sink are topped with honed soapstone, while natural maple serves as the breakfast bar and mosaic tiles are used near the cooking surface. “I like to incorporate different materials to give the room more personality,” Passanante said.

For a sense of unity in the kitchen, which was the regional winner for the Sub-Zero/Wolf “Best of the Best” kitchen design contest for 2006/2007, the designer positioned the appliances to blend in with the cabinetry and countertops. The range hood, for example, was designed to flow seamlessly into the ceiling, and its bottom edge is adorned with the same mosaics that form the countertops on both

sides of the stove. To the right and left of the farmhouse sink, dual dishwashers are integrated into the surrounding cabinetry with custom panel doors. On the opposite wall, a built-in refrigerator is situated between a walk-in pantry and a cabinet pantry, while a storage compartment above accommodates large trays.

The heart of the kitchen is the island, which was tailored to the wife’s cooking needs, as well as her comfort. Its work surface was lowered to 30 in. to accommodate her height, while the maple countertop at the end is 36 in. high, an ideal height for a breakfast bar. In addition to a generous work area, the unit includes a variety of compartments to ensure ample storage and keep the kitchen clutter-free, while beadboard paneling on the sides imparts a timeless, traditional flair. Also contained in the island, a warming drawer is placed near the sink so it is not visible upon entering the kitchen. “When you walk into the kitchen, the first thing you see is the island, and it doesn’t look too busy with the drawers,” said Passanante.

SOURCES

Designer: Anthony Albert Passanante, CKD, CBD, Wyckoff, NJ **Manufacturers:** Refrigerator: Sub-Zero; Main sink: Herbeau; Island sink: Franke; Faucets: Rohl; Range: Wolf; Warming Drawer: Dacor; Dishwashers: Miele; Cabinetry: Craft-Maid; Tile: Oceanside Glasstile; Hood: Craft-Maid **Photography:** © Peter Rymwid

Lighting and architectural ceiling details, both strategically located, further organize the kitchen, enhancing its sense of cohesion. An octagonal ceiling element helps set the kitchen apart from the adjoining family room, which is also furnished with cabinets and a flat-screen TV, while recessed downlights accent the hood and surrounding cabinetry. Three glass pendants highlight the island for drama and punch, and along the perimeter, undercabinet lighting adds shimmer to the pearlescent backsplash. And because the clients also requested continuity underfoot, Passanante chose wide-plank oak floors with a walnut stain to complement the flooring used throughout the rest of the home.

"The kitchen works with the rest of the house," said Passanante. "Overall, the Whangs loved it." ■

The kitchen brings together light colors with dark accents. The mahogany wall-hung cabinets (right) contrast the white maple cabinets. The mosaic tiles along the rim of the hood tie together the surfaces flanking the range. For the wife's comfort, the height of the island (below) was lowered to 30 in., while the breakfast bar remains at the standard counter height.



products



1 The 48-in. dual-fuel range from **Wolf** offers a wide variety of top configurations with six standard dual-stacked, sealed surface burners and an infrared griddle. The electronic oven features a dual convection system with 10 cooking modes, delivering even temperatures and airflow throughout. **Circle No. 231**

2 Designed to be strong, durable and maintenance-free, **Herbeau's** fireclay farmhouse sinks offer a resistance to stains and scratches that is similar to that of cast iron or stainless steel. Made from clay mixed with water to a honey-like consistency, the sinks are coated with a thick layer of glaze, resulting in a smooth, lustrous finish. **Circle No. 232**

3 **Dacor's** warming drawers integrate new technology that enables precise control of time, temperature, speed and humidity. A concealed electronic touchpad provides control of the gentle heat ranging from 100 degrees to 200 degrees Fahrenheit, for up to four hours. The drawers are available in 36-, 30-, 27- and 24-in. widths. **Circle No. 233**

4 Similar to the Incognito series featured in this kitchen, **Miele's** Optima Series dishwashers come with semi-integrated and fully integrated door styles. Available with custom panels, as well as in white, black and stainless-steel finishes, they feature a specialty wash program for delicate dishware and crystal glassware. **Circle No. 234**

5 Offered with a flush inset installation option, **Sub-Zero's** 642 refrigerator, now the BI-42S, can integrate seamlessly with any surrounding cabinetry and features air purification and water filtration systems. Inside, the door shelves are adjustable in 1-in. increments, and crisper and deli drawers form a special low-temperature zone. **Circle No. 235**

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