

Projects: Kitchen

European Kitchen Design with a Modern Palette

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Source List

Designer: Stephen Gordon,
InSite Builders & Remodeling
Photographer: Stacy Zarin
Goldberg

Backsplash Tile: Casa
California

Cabinetry: Downsview
Kitchens

Dishwasher: Asko

Faucets: Grohe

Floors: Hallmark Floors

Hood: Vent-A-Hood

Main Sink: Kohler

Microwave Drawer: Sharp

Prep Sink: Mirabelle

Range: BlueStar

Refrigerator: KitchenAid

Wine Refrigerator: U-Line



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A single-family home in Washington, D.C., had a long way to go before it could become the sleek and contemporary space the homeowners wanted. With a galley-style layout and tight, dark corners, the kitchen needed to be fully opened – and redone with European-style elements – to better serve the clients’ needs while complementing the home’s more modern façade.

Intensive Layout Changes

According to designer Stephen Gordon, this kitchen remodel was part of a larger project involving the dining room, living room, bathrooms and more, which required a phased build-out approach with structure and plumbing rough-ins for a future second-floor addition.

“The challenge in renovating the kitchen first required us to design a stand-alone final solution in the first phase,” said Gordon, who is the president of Bethesda, Md.-based **InSite Builders & Remodeling**. “We had to be innovative in making additional structural changes to accommodate openness in the kitchen and throughout the first floor; working around structure and utilities that could not be disturbed, as the finished basement level was not part of the overall renovation.”

Both small and large walls were removed around the existing kitchen area, and ceilings and floors were stripped so that only the exterior framing remained. This opened up the kitchen, dining room and living areas and created space for a higher ceiling.

Using Chief Architect – as well as an HTC VR headset – Gordon planned to include ample counter space, a large island and seating options to allow the family to spread out and work effectively in the new open format. He also included custom details like a shared serving counter between the kitchen and outdoor stone patio, as well as a mudroom outside of the kitchen.

A Sleek and Contemporary Palette

These clients are European and felt drawn to a modern European-style palette. The white full-overlay cabinets complement the open aesthetic of the kitchen design without overwhelming it, and the dark gray island cabinets were chosen to blend with the stainless-steel appliances, light gray hardwood floor and glass tile backsplash. The black granite countertops ground the entire space and are a defining feature of the overall look.

“The materials selected by the homeowners were chosen specifically to be both functional and easy to maintain,” said the designer. “Stainless-steel appliances, an efficient exhaust hood, maintenance-free granite countertops, cabinets with minimal details and durable hardwood flooring are some of the features of this kitchen that are known to hold up well under years of heavy usage.”

To add a touch of color and drama to the otherwise minimalist space, the team chose a backsplash of iridescent painted-glass tiles in a custom-arranged random rectangular pattern. The vivid hues of bronze, silvery blue and black tiles were selected to coordinate with the granite countertops and stainless appliances.

“Knowing the homeowners wanted a ‘wow’ factor upon entering the new kitchen, these hand-picked glass tiles were used to create a show-stopping backsplash and main wall,” added Gordon.

Illuminating the newly opened space is an upgraded lighting system, which was carefully reviewed and thought through. This system enhances the abundance of natural sunlight in the space – created by the addition of oversized windows – while allowing for additional lights placed within the angled ceiling.

“The end result of this renovation is a welcoming, open and modern kitchen with great visual appeal that harmonizes beautifully with the modern façade of the home,” said Gordon.
