

# 7 Fabulous Kitchens

By **Detroit Home Editorial** - February 2, 2016





## CAPPUCINO WITH CREAM, ANYONE?

*We're all astir over this inviting Birmingham family-style kitchen*

**BACKSTORY:** Brass, leather, and espresso-colored wood mingle with creamy cabinetry (awash in Sherwin-Williams' color of the year — *Alabaster!*) in this kitchen and nearby mudroom. Add light quartz countertops and you get a look that's reminiscent of a perfectly brewed cup of coffee with a splash of fresh cream. The barista of this family gathering spot? Jane Synnestvedt, of Birmingham-based Jane Synnestvedt Interior Design. With school-



age twin girls and an energetic Labrador, the homeowners say their kitchen is now a very popular place. "I travel a lot," says homeowner Liz Siver (a sales director for Microsoft), "so my husband (Jeff) does a lot of the cooking. It's our dream kitchen."

**CUSTOM CABINETRY:** The cabinets were built by Derek Weiss of Home Dimensions Custom Cabinetry in Holly, and are coated with

Sherwin-Williams' Alabaster and Farrow & Ball's Charleston Gray. "It's the perfect color for this space," Synnestvedt says.

**DREAM ISLAND:** Designed by Synnestvedt, the island features an espresso stair quartz (the same as the countertops throughout, from PMP in Troy). "We use it for family of four and have dinner around (the island), which makes for great conversations," Siver says. "In our former home, we had to sit in a row; in this (kitchen), we can

**STORAGE GALORE:** The island has a beverage refrigerator, which is "super helpful," Siver says. "And it has drawers that pull out; we keep baskets of snacks in them, they're accessible for the kids."

**WALLPAPER:** Thibaut's Coastal Sisal in silver, from the Texture Resource 4 Collection.

**BRASS WITH CLASS:** "Brass is back, but I've always loved it," says designer Synnestvedt. The island's pendant lights, from Visual Comfort's E.F. Chapman, have a burnished brass accent, while the island's hardware, by Newport Brass from Russell Hardware, Bloomfield Hills, also is in brass. "That's a little different than what you typically see," the designer says. To complete the look, the island features a Colonial bronze finish in satin brass, also from Russell Hardware. "The island's hand-gnarled, close to the same finish as the faucet."

**SENSATIONAL SINK:** Note the Rohl Allia fireclay sink, "which has a more contemporary farmhouse-style design," the designer says.

**TILE STYLE:** Synnestvedt opted for a gloss tile in the warm Café Cappuccino line Tile, Michigan Design Center, Troy.

**HOMEOWNER'S VERDICT:** "Everyone who sees it falls in love with it," Siver says. "It's an excellent job." [janesylnestvedt.com](http://janesylnestvedt.com)

— Megan Swoyer



**IN HER OWN KITCHEN IN HER BIRMINGHAM HOME, DESIGNER LOVES HER:** small, steam convection oven so versatile," Jane Synnestvedt, left, says. "It's healthy for the steam for vegetables. There's also a great convection microwave all in one."





## CLEAN LINES

*A couple and their designer removed walls and added modern colors and decorative fashion this exquisite kitchen*

**BACKSTORY:** When a couple of 40-something homeowners decided to build a new-construction, one-level home in Plymouth (crafted by Robertson Homes), the timing was perfect for creating a kitchen that suited them perfectly. They called on Barbi Krass of Colorworks Studio (based in the Michigan Design Center, Troy) to design not only the kitchen, but their entire home. “They wanted clean and classic,” Krass recalls. “They even made modifications on the new construction and opted to take out every wall they could.” Two islands (one with counter seating and one



adjacent to the staircase, for housing beverage centers), as well as custom cabinet glass fixtures over the island and dining table, make the space nifty and neat.

**WALK THIS WAY:** The flooring is solid walnut with a clear stain, so the natural wood is prominent.

**SPLASHY BACKSPLASH:** A mix of grays, taupes, creams, and whites make up the tile and glass backsplash. The tile is from Virginia Tile, Michigan Design Center.

**CLASSY CABINETRY:** An espresso stain makes the rift-grain oak cabinetry beautiful. The designer chose linear, ribbed glass for the upper cabinets. “Our client wanted a decorative and classic lines — something that didn’t show the contents of the cabinet clearly.

**PENDANT PANACHE:** Over the island, an LED clear-glass, cylinder-shaped light fixture with a glass from LBL Lighting reigns supreme.

**COUNTER STOOLS:** The homeowner found these at Design Within Reach.

**SINK TIMES TWO:** The kitchen has two sinks; the main sink is a stainless steel farmhouse style, while the other is a stainless steel prep sink in the island.

**WINDOW TREATMENT:** Krass selected a Lurex linen material for the window fabric.

**DINING IN STYLE:** Oval-backed chairs from Andreu World, in a dark walnut finish woven fabric from HBF that's accented with a touch of Lurex, complement a table dark espresso wood with a wire-brushed finish and a stainless base.

**BLAST-OFF LIGHTNING:** A Sputnik-style chandelier (Cyan) hangs over the dining features slumped glass and stainless steel.

**TOP TOPS:** The countertops boast a white quartz material, while the island has a dark wood top to ground the white cabinetry. The island's quartz covers the top and both ends, and the floor.

**EASY-MAKE OVEN:** A drawer-style Wolf microwave makes it easy to handle fast-warming needs; it loads from the top.

**UPPER-CABINET COUTURE:** "We split them and ran them horizontally, and the Krass says. [colorworksstudio.com](http://colorworksstudio.com)



IN HER OWN KITCHEN IN HER WEST BLOOMFIELD INTERIOR DESIGNER LOVES HER: fireplace. "When house, I raised the opening height to 24 inches off the the perfect height to enjoy the fire while sitting at the designer Barbi Krass.







## SERVING UP SLEEK

*It was time for an update for this Bloomfield Hills kitchen. The results? Gorgeous!*

**BACKSTORY:** After living in their Bloomfield Hills home for 18 years, the owners of this house decided they wanted to do a total renovation, and they hired Jennifer Asmar of Troy-based Asmar Interiors to guide them. The improvements include this sleek and chic kitchen, with its open, clean look.

**GRAY MATTERS:** The entire home has a gray-and-white color scheme. In the kitchen, a free-standing banquette from Hickory Chair is upholstered with durable Pindler outdoor fabrics (solid gray Kona for the seat; a gray-and-white print called Majorca for the back). Two counter stools from Kravet, upholstered in gray vinyl and trimmed with polished nickel nailheads, cozy up to the island. The lady of the house requested that all the countertops and backsplashes be made out of white- and gray-streaked Calacatta marble. "She really wanted to use it, even though it requires more maintenance than some other materials," Asmar says.

**LET THERE BE LIGHT:** A fabulous elongated polished nickel lantern from Visual Comfort hangs over the breakfast table, while two great-looking chrome and crystal teardrop fixtures from Crystorama hang over the center island.

**IN THE HOOD:** Designed by Asmar and crafted by Modern-Aire, the body of the hood is



hood is made out of brushed stainless steel, while its top and bottom bands are polished stainless steel.

**RAISING THE BAR:** A stained walnut bar cabinet with pocket doors, designed to look like a piece of furniture and crafted by John Morgan of Perspectives Cabinetry in Farmington Hills, adds a nice touch of warmth to the room. When it's party time, it can be easily reached from the dining hall or living room. (Morgan also provided all of the other cabinetry.)

**DESIGNER'S VERDICT:** "The range hood, the Calacatta marble, and the lighting frosting on the cake in an already beautiful kitchen," Asmar says. [asmarinteriors.com](http://asmarinteriors.com)  
— Judith Harris Solomon



**IN HER OWN KITCHEN IN HER ROCHESTER HILLS HOME:** "The Chemex coffee maker is my favorite," says designer Jennifer Asmar. "I make the best-tasting coffee with it every morning."





## LOOKING UP

### *A Royal Oak loft kitchen sizzles with style*

**BACKSTORY:** Dr. Ellen Blau fell in love with loft life when living in Ann Arbor. So when she moved back to Royal Oak, she set her sights on finding a loft. "Royal Oak was pretty much the only city in the area that offered lofts," says Blau, a Royal Oak-based psychotherapist. After finding just the right second-floor, 1,400-square-foot home, she called on the creative folks at KSI Kitchen & Bath in Birmingham (one of five locations in metro Detroit) to help her update the space. KSI's Nicole Pilon says Blau was fun to work with because she was drawn to eclectic choices. "She wanted to do something unique with modern pieces and possibilities, giving me an opportunity to create a design I've never done before," says Pilon, who worked with Blau on the kitchen.

**COLOR STORY:** Blau wanted pops of color and complementary textures. "I painted a back wall in a Sherwin-Williams orange— I love bright colors," says the homeowner. She opted for Dura custom laminate cabinetry in Fresh Papaya and Dura Supreme's Ultra and Cinder textured foil. "The Papaya worked out well because the concrete floor and terracotta undertone that goes well with it," Pilon explains. To complement the orange and Pilon chose a removable wallcovering by Casart Decor of bright birds and trees.

**COUNTER COUTURE:** The island's Cambria quartz top is in Devon, which is the most popular according to industry experts. "It gives a concrete look, which is more contemporary," Pilon says.

**STORAGE SMARTS:** "There's not much storage space in the loft, so it was important to maximize it in the kitchen," Pilon says. For starters, the island has an open area on the end for some items, and there are drawers and cupboards along its sides. Lift cabinets are also handy for storage.

**TIME TO EAT:** Blau entertains a lot, so she wanted space at the island for prepping. The island can easily seat seven. "The overhang allows for comfortable seating," Pilon says. She found the stools at Crate & Barrel.



**SPLASHY DETAILS:** The sink is by Blanco, in Truffle (close to the countertop color), and the faucet is by Grohe (Blue Pure, which features purified water).

**BIGGEST CHALLENGE:** "Bringing up the items to the second floor on the elevator was a challenge," Pilon recalls.

**FLOATING ISLAND:** "A hidden platform underneath and metal feet make the island a floating piece of furniture," Pilon says.

**LIGHTEN UP:** Blau worked with Great Lakes Lighting in Auburn Hills to find the perfect lighting for above the island. [ksikitchens.com](http://ksikitchens.com)

— Megan Swoyer



**IN HER OWN KITCHEN IN HER HARRISON TOWNSHIP HOME,** interior designer loves her mini fridge. "I added a mini fridge to the house all the additional drinks we need to store," says Pilon. "I have four children and a 36-inch standard fridge didn't have the space for pop, juice, or water bottles — but now my drinks are cold, so it's perfect!"



## CRYSTAL CLEAR

*This kitchen sparkles as brightly as the vast collection of glass that's showcased in its cabinetry*

**BACKSTORY:** One of the main reasons Shelley and Dennis Fiore moved from Commerce Township to this large Bloomfield Hills home, built in 1973, was to be closer to their baby grandson. They soon





decided to remove the wall between the kitchen and family room to create one large space. "I envisioned this as the heart of the house," Shelley says, "a gathering space." Then, she says, the dominoes began to tumble and it turned into a major renovation. She called on Troy-based interior designer Linda Shears, ASID, of Linda Shears Designs, who had worked with the couple on their previous homes. "Shelley likes custom, traditional, detail, and touches of bling," Shears says, "and she



knows what she wants when she sees it." Working with general contractor Ilene Birmingham-based Itec Enterprises LLC and other tradesfolk, the team turned out shining star of the home.

**CLASSY CABINETRY:** John Morgan, of Perspectives Cabinetry in Royal Oak, over cabinetry components. The kitchen and butler's pantry are in a frosty white color with a pewter glaze.

**COUNTERTOP COUTURE:** The counters are a charcoal quartz from Ciot.

**CHIC SHADE:** The room is dressed in an inviting, soft gray. "It goes well with the burgundy in the adjoining family room," Shears says. Wall paint color: Sherwin W Gray. Trim: S-W's Dover White.

**FLOOR BY BEAUTY:** "We wanted cherry in the flooring, to complement mahogany the new floor went down raw and was then stained."

**DE-LIGHT-FUL DETAILS:** The three Schonbek chandeliers are from Pine Tree Light Furniture, Lake Orion. Shelley says they're her favorite part of the kitchen. "Linda long and hard for these. They are so special!" The backsplash tile from Virginia Tile Hampton bone, flat. A Ferguson faucet in brushed nickel complements the overall

[shears.com](http://shears.com)

— Megan Swoyer

**IN HER OWN KITCHEN IN HER TROY HOME, THE**





**DESIGNER LOVES HER:** red walls. “I have a lot of v and the little bit of exposed walls and soffits was just the color red,” Linda Shears, left, says. “It warms the



## A TASTE FOR TIMELESS

*A blue island, white-wood cabinetry, and cottage touches make this kitchen sing the*

**BACKSTORY:** “The homeowners requested that my wife, Donna, and I, along with designer Amanda Sinistaj, of Ellwood Interiors, and Bryan Leith, of LUXE Homes [ create a family-oriented, timeless, classic home in Bloomfield Hills that was comf light, and bright in the daytime and warm and cozy at night,” says architect John of Birmingham’s VanBrouck and Associates. “This kitchen is a prime example of th

**BLUE NOTE:** The base of the kitchen’s center island is awash in a custom color u: Moore’s *Santorini Blue* with a charcoal glaze. “Blue is one of the homeowners’ fav Sinistaj says. “It makes an appearance throughout the home.”

**ISLAND PARADISE:** The kitchen has two islands because the homeowners want the amount of cabinetry. The marble-topped center island (Piel Serpentine marble painted blue base, contains a white fireclay farm sink and a dishwasher. A second separates the kitchen from the adjoining family room. The second island has a bu oven as well as two refrigerator drawers, “so the kids can serve themselves witho the parents’ toes while they’re busy cooking,” Sinistaj says.

**DOORS TO ADORE:** The white wooden cabinets by Woodmode have Shaker-style complete with beautiful charcoal-glazed patinas. To further the home’s Eastern se style vernacular, the doors are topped with transom beveled-glass inserts.

**WINDOWS 15:** The windows just beyond the kitchen are framed in solid bronze Renaissance. “They provide a modern industrial look that juxtaposes well with th traditional detailing,” John VanBrouck says.

**HOOD WINKS:** A nicely detailed, custom-made white wooden hood sits pretty at and was designed specifically to conceal the mechanical venting within it. [vanbro.luxehomesdesignbuild.com](http://vanbro.luxehomesdesignbuild.com), [ellwoodinteriors.com](http://ellwoodinteriors.com)

— *Judith Harris Solomon*



**IN HER OWN KITCHEN IN HER BERKLEY HOME, THE DESIGNER LOVES HER:** NutriBullet. “I move fast and the go,” designer Amanda Sinistaj, left, says. “The NutriBullet is easy to clean, tucks away, and gives me breakfast smoothies in seconds.”







## HINTS OF HANDSOME

*Like a fine, modern men's suit, this Northville condo kitchen is sophisticated, with an*

**BACKSTORY:** With two college-age sons, Kim and Jim Houston thought it was high time to do a little downsizing, so they moved into a Northville condominium and changed up their tastes a bit. "They wanted to go a little bolder," says Rima Belau, their Plymouth-based interior designer. Belau, owner of Rima Designs, and her assistant, Lauren Hawley, worked with the couple not only on their kitchen, but also their living room, sunroom,



dining room, and other spaces. While the condo was pretty much generic and neutral in color and feel when the couple moved there, it now hums with style. "Kim had a classy-traditional style before she met us; we modernized that classic style but kept traditional lines and shapes, punching it all up with color choices and bold blacks," Belau says. These days, when the boys come home from college, Kim loves to whip up their favorites: Greek chicken, Mexican pizza, and pasta fagioli.



**JUMPING-OFF POINT:** The team started with Kim's granite selection — Sienna Granite Transformations in Farmington Hills. "It's light, but has specks of burgundy gold," Belau explains.

**KEEPER:** Kim's friend, Debbie Donnelly of Debbie Donnelly Design in Northville, says the Houstons keep the kitchen cabinets and change the hardware. "It was brand-new in good condition," Belau says. "We gave it new hardware but wanted to detract attention from the cabinetry, so we (focused) our efforts on everything else," she adds.

**IN THE DETAILS:** Donnelly also suggested adding a light rail and crown molding to the standard breakfast bar, creating a large flat surface.

**TILE STYLE:** Hawley presented three tile choices for the backsplash, and Kim knew which she preferred — the Chocolate Blend from the Tranquil Series, from Ciot in Farmington Hills.

**DARK, SCHMARK:** "People think dark walls or wallpaper will make a room feel smaller, but it's an illusion," Belau says. "It really pushes it back farther." The dark wallpaper Belau and the Houstons selected (MDC Wallcoverings, Veil Spider) is on the main wall and helps detract from the cabinetry. "The wallpaper," Belau says, "is a focal point." Adds Kim, "It's so spectacular — impactful and classic!"

**PIECE DE RESISTANCE:** The chandelier (Uttermost, Ambre). "The room has high ceilings, so the lighting is a showpiece. It brought in a lot of the amber from the wood tones and the granite," Belau says.

**PLEASE BE SEATED:** The chairs are from Ikea, Canton (Henriksdal design).

**WINDOW WOW:** A window box (made by Plymouth Tailoring and Alterations) brings in the golds used on complementary fabric in the nearby living room. "We used furniture-grade fabric on the edges so it feels very finished," Belau says. (Unique Fine Fabrics, Somersby pattern, Straw.)

**HOMEOWNER'S VERDICT:** "This shows that by taking your time and buying what you want, things really do come together in a beautiful, unique way — in a style that's all yours." — [rimadesigns.net](http://rimadesigns.net)

— Megan Swoyer



**IN HER OWN KITCHEN IN HER PLYMOUTH HOME**  
**INTERIOR DESIGNER LOVES HER:** Calphalon 5-qu  
“It was a birthday gift from my godmother, who taught  
everything about cooking from gardening to serving,”  
designer Rima Belau, above, says.

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