

# kitchens by design

Dream, research, plan. Just as you'd assemble the ingredients before try-

ing an ambitious new recipe, take time to consider exactly what you want and need to cook up a new kitchen. The more time you give yourself to clip from magazines, go on-line, visit showrooms and find a like-minded designer, the closer your kitchen will be to that marvellous feast of your imagination.

The four kitchens shown here can be categorized in different ways: two modern, two traditional; two galeries, two expansive gathering places. What links them, aside from their beauty and efficiency, is all the thought and collaboration that brought them into reality. That, and the proud enthusiasm of their owners.

## room for all

When Jennifer and Lawrence Barbati put a pool in the backyard of their Langley, B.C., house, they decided to change the orientation of the main floor. The whole back of the house was opened up to create a light-filled great room, with a spacious family room on one side and an informal eating area on the other. Designer Paula Arsens rose ably to the challenge of creating an inviting kitchen in the centre.

Black-stained green maple cabinets were installed under the bay window where the breakfast area used to be. Baltic Brown granite counters pick up the wheat tone of the walls and the dark green of the cabinets. The island was designed to allow space for a walkway as well as two stools, where the couple's daughters like to perch. And because every-

one, not just the cook, goes to the fridge, Arsens put it on the wall by the walkway. Other features include a warming drawer below the wall oven, ideal for keeping hors d'oeuvres and main dishes warm when feeding large groups.

For all its pulled-together style, the kitchen has a casual, welcoming air – whether someone is relaxing on a stool or washing veggies at the sink, there's a view of the sparkling pool. "We're not formal," says Jennifer. "When we entertain, we want everyone to feel comfy."

"We were going for the great room effect," says Jennifer Barbati. There's now an easy, sociable flow in this part of the house, and the pool is visible from every area of the room. The Barbatis had used deep colours elsewhere in the house, so they felt confident about the earthy dark green cabinets. A wall oven, warming drawer, microwave and fridge are all on the walkway wall, so guests, family members and kids can help themselves to snacks – and fetch casseroles from the oven – without crossing paths with the cook. The Barbatis' young daughters often hop onto the stools at the island to keep the cook company. An angled pullout door on the island stores dry spices conveniently close to the cooktop, which is vented by a pop-up hood. The angle also eases the passage around the island. "As silly as it may sound, one of my favourite features of the kitchen is the pullout cabinet for recycling and garbage," says Jennifer. The cabinet's location, near (but not under) the sink, means the bins are always handy and never in the way. The kitchen's generous storage includes floor-to-ceiling pantry cabinets and a special cabinet for baking sheets and pans.





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