

# great american kitchens

The Fine Art of Kitchen Design

VOLUME III



**51**  
Award-Winning  
Rooms









PHOTOGRAPHY: © TED VANWOOD; STYLING: BARBARA DIXON

*cool ideas!*

- fold-up cabinet doors
- hammered-steel backsplash
- cantilevered glass eating bar

# true blue

■ “An urban oasis,” was the mandate that homeowners Rob and Maureen Rose gave designer Friedemann Weinhardt, of Design First Kitchen Interiors in Ottawa, when they needed help planning the kitchen of their new townhouse. Rob, a software executive, and Maureen, a landscape designer, had found that over the years their design style—reinforced by trips to New York City, where they had seen innovative interior design in restaurants—had progressed from country charm to urban sophistication.

This shift in sensibility prompted the couple’s move from their large Victorian home. The original plan of the townhouse called for a small eat-in kitchen, which didn’t suit the family’s culinary needs. Both Rob and Maureen cook, and one of their two teenage daughters aspires to be a chef.

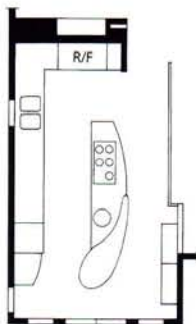
The priority, Rob explains, was “a good-sized kitchen that was extremely functional” and would accommodate family and guests while the couple prepped a meal. They also required good storage, in addition to a display area and a place for a computer. To make room



**Left:** Maple cabinets and bold color temper the coolness of stainless steel, glass, and honed granite. The curved ceiling soffit alludes to the curve of the island. **Above:** The 65-inch-tall oven tower steps down in height from the neighboring wall cabinet; the small desk eases the transition to a window.



**The couple loves to cook and one of their daughters is an aspiring chef.**



for everything, Rob says, they were willing to do without a table in the kitchen. Weinhardt picked up on the Roses' vision for a clean-lined, contemporary and, above all, efficient space.

Fitting the couple's dream kitchen into the house's open plan proved challenging. The main level contains 728 square feet, of which the kitchen would occupy 290. Moreover, a railing open to the foyer below and tall windows meant that only two walls were free for cabinetry and the couple's long list of equipment needs. To integrate living, dining, and kitchen areas—and guided by the Rose's love of contemporary design—Weinhardt conceived of the three spaces as one, using a combination of sweeping curves and unified materials.

Having only two walls to work with, Weinhardt settled on a basic L-shaped kitchen plan, enlivened by a gracefully curved island. Placement of the Sub-Zero Model 680 refrigerator/freezer determined the kitchen's work triangle. The island houses the prep sink and the cooktop. The designer was able to squeeze in an amoeba-shaped glass eating bar, ideal for snacks or breakfast. Another unusual feature is the 65-inch-tall tower located on one leg of the "L" that houses the oven, a plate warmer, and a cappuccino machine.

Maple cabinets with slab-style doors and finished with a Chianti-color stain integrate well with the stainless-steel appliances, pulls, and other trim. Adjoining the oven tower, hinged glass and wood cabinets lift up for easy access and keep the wall unit from seeming oppressive in volume.

"In contemporary design," Weinhardt explains, "less detail is better." The Roses endorsed that idea. "We didn't want anything busy for the cabinets," says Rob. "I mentioned hammered stainless steel and Friedemann came up with the idea of using it on the backsplash. He also suggested the honed-granite countertop." The combination of wood, stone, steel, and glass was then carried over into the dining area and living room.

Lighting was paramount to the design. Weinhardt installed task and mood lighting, delineating the various work zones. The design of the ceiling soffit mimics the curved center island. A pendant light is situated over the curved, glass eating bar, which cantilevers over one end of the island. Rob chose the final bold feature—the cobalt-blue walls.

Maureen sums up her pleasure with the new kitchen in a few words. "We knew what we wanted and Friedemann knew how to make it come alive."—*Barbara Dixon*



**Right:** The Sub-Zero Model 680 refrigerator/freezer blends into the wall of maple cabinetry. A hint of cobalt blue occasionally peeks through a hammered-stainless-steel backsplash. Counters are made of honed granite, the floor of oak strip. **Far left:** The lower halves of the lift-up cabinets are fitted with frosted glass; the doors stay put until lowered. **Left:** A pull-out pantry beside the refrigerator stores staples.



