

ANNUAL KITCHEN ISSUE

NEW JERSEY'S HOME & DESIGN MAGAZINE

designNJ

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2015



\$4.95 US

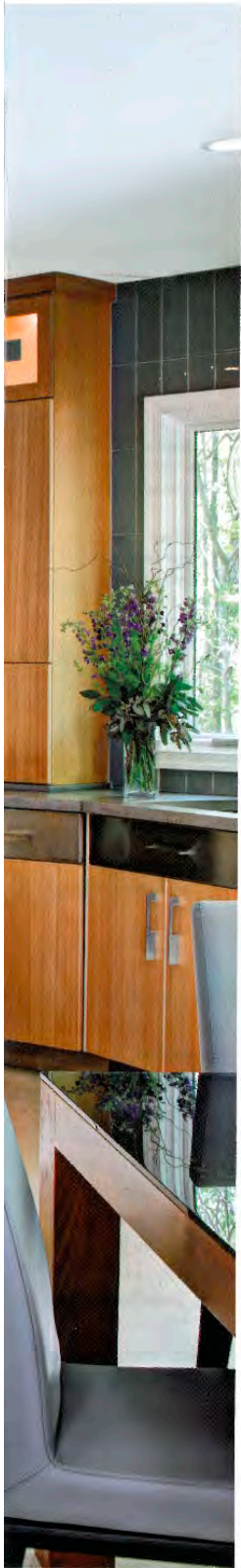


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Designer Anthony Passanante chose a mix of materials, including exotic wood cabinetry, concrete countertops, a glass tile backsplash and stainless steel appliances and accents, including refrigerator and pantry door surrounds. The ceiling feature of back-painted glass framed in stainless steel, defines the space and visually anchors the island.



WRITER ROBIN AMSTER

PHOTOGRAPHER WING WONG

DESIGNER ANTHONY PASSANANTE, CKD, CBD, ALLIED MEMBER ASID

Mix it Up

Varied materials combine for a harmonious — and unique — look in a renovated Bergen County kitchen

An unexpected mix of materials — from exotic woods to high-polished stainless steel, concrete to colored glass —

lives in harmony in the total renovation of a Montville kitchen.

The homeowners specified functional goals for the new kitchen — better flow and clutter-free spaces — when they hired Anthony Passanante, a certified kitchen and bathroom designer, allied member of the American Society of Interior Designers and owner of Anthony Albert Studios in Waldwick. But they also gave him free rein to exercise his creativity when it came to aesthetics. The result won the designer a gold award for large residential kitchens in the ASID New Jersey Chapter's 2014 Design Excellence Awards.

The former 1990s-era kitchen was a loser in terms of function and style. Passanante says it was “outdated and falling apart,” with poor-quality cabinetry, black appliances and a distinct lack of personality. He also had to deal with an angled wall that followed the exterior of the home.

Beyond that, it didn't function properly given the awkward placement of the sink,



The custom cabinetry follows an angled exterior wall of the home. The end of the island (left) features a concave stainless steel design below a wenge butcher-block top.

BEFORE: The former 1990s-era kitchen was outdated and falling apart, Passanante says. Not only did it lack personality, it was poorly designed with the cooktop at one side of the island and the refrigerator on the other.

cooktop and refrigerator. The cooktop was on one wall, the refrigerator was on another wall and the island was between them. “You had to walk around the island to get to the cooktop and then back around it to get to the refrigerator,” he says.

STARTING OVER

Passanante addressed the functional issues first. For this task, he had the luxury of starting from scratch because the former kitchen had been completely ripped out. He had a refrigerator, cabinetry and primary sink installed on a wall that angles slightly inward at the far end, and a new oven, cooktop, range hood and more cabinetry on a wall that is perpendicular to the refrigerator.

The new island serves both areas and includes a secondary sink and lots of workspace. He also removed a small double window and installed two larger ones near the primary sink.

With the functional challenges solved, Passanante turned his attention—and his imagination—to the aesthetics. He visualized a mix of materials to give the kitchen a distinctive look: “a chic contemporary design that’s not sterile in any way,” he says.

He paired clean-lined custom cabinetry made of natural anigre, an African hardwood, with concrete countertops and a backsplash of 4-by-8-inch glass



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tiles. The countertops and backsplash are blue gray. The flooring is Italian porcelain, and the appliances are high-polished stainless steel except for the wood-paneled refrigerator, which is framed, along with the pantry door, by beveled, brushed stainless steel surrounds.

He also placed a high-polished stainless steel concave accent piece at one end of the island to help support a butcher block of wenge, a tropical timber.

FINAL TOUCHES

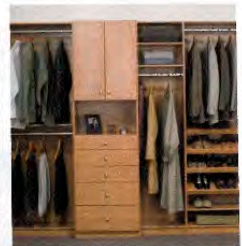
Above the island was a "vast and empty ceiling," Passanante says, so he designed a stainless-steel-and-glass feature to fill the space and visually anchor the island. The 3^{1/2}-by-8-foot glass is hand-painted blue gray on the backside, framed in stainless steel and suspended from the ceiling. Recessed lighting was installed in the glass for "a reflective quality; light bounces around the room," Passanante says.

He also installed frosted glass squares at the top of the upper cabinets. At the center of each is a small piece of glass that, like the ceiling feature, is painted blue gray on the back. "The frosted glass alone would have been too plain," he says. **DNJ**

Robin Amster, a regular contributor to Design NJ, is a Madison-based writer and editor.

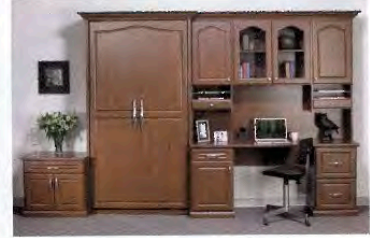
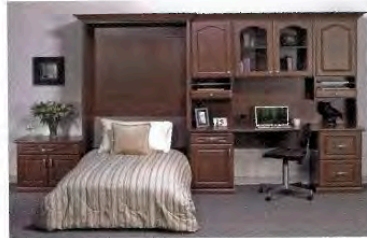
SOURCES design and custom cabinetry, Anthony Albert Studios in Waldwick; countertops, Trueform Concrete in Denville; backsplash and flooring, Mediterranean Tile & Marble in Fairfield; stainless steel accents, Craft Fabricators in Hackettstown; ceiling glass, Artique Glass Studio in Glen Rock; Sub-Zero refrigerator and refrigerator doors, Wolf cooktop and oven, dishwasher through Karl's Appliance in Fairfield.

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