

# DREAM Kitchens & Baths

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Fall/Winter 2012  
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# Center Stage

In today's fast-paced world, it can be challenging for parents and teenagers to take time to eat dinner together on a regular basis. But for this tight-knit Italian family, life happens in the kitchen. "Family is so important to us," homeowner Kelly Schuert says. "We wanted a kitchen where people could gather, and we got it."

The 10-foot-long island serves as a gathering spot, food-prep zone, and serving place for casual buffet-style meals in this Detroit kitchen. A coffered ceiling and classic subway tile add historic charm.





Created by architect Alexander Bogaerts and interior designer Lucy Keena Earl, this kitchen gets its magnetic powers from a multipurpose 10-foot-long island topped with granite. "We talked at great length with Matt and Kelly Schuert to find out how they cook," Earl says. "It was important to have a big enough space where everyone could participate, with plenty of storage for cooking supplies."

As a result, the island's yards of elbowroom encourage family and friends to gather around its perimeter to chop, stir, peel, shred, whisk, knead, taste, review, and offer advice. When food prep is done, the island easily transforms into a serving buffet.

If there's a formal party planned, the kitchen has that covered as well. Two

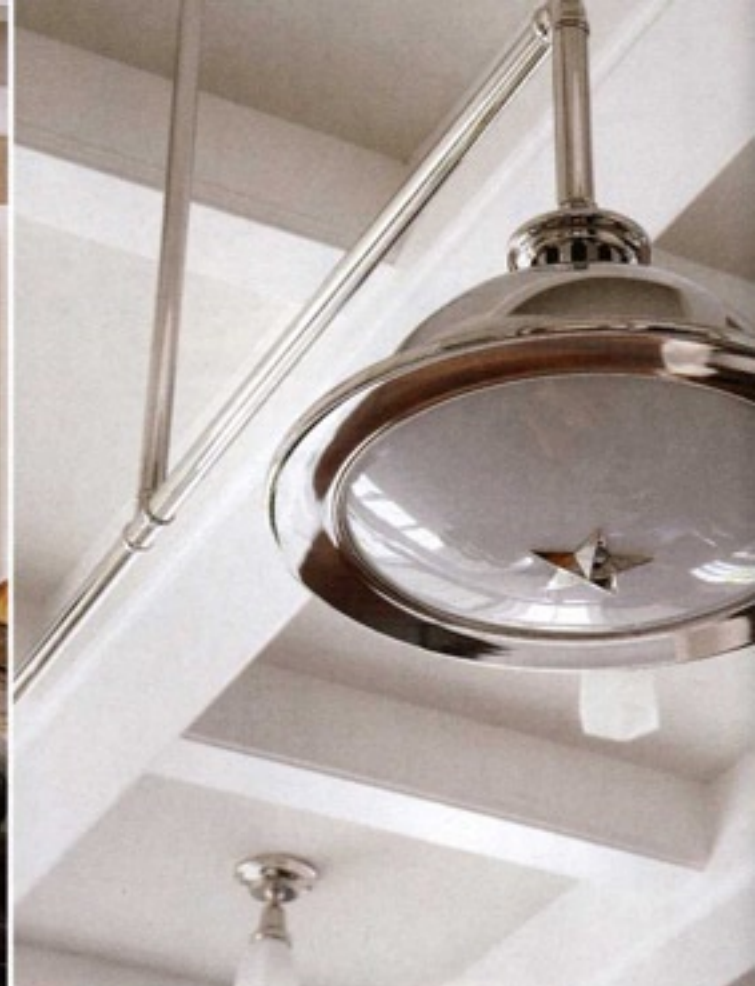
stations—one an angled section of cabinetry near the island and the other a nearby butler's pantry—provide bonus prep space for extra cooks and bartenders when the Schuerts hold fund-raisers or holiday open houses. In addition to work space, the angled bank of cabinets holds a pair of refrigerator drawers so family and guests can grab a drink without getting in the cook's way. The butler's pantry, meanwhile, incorporates a wealth of convenient features: a sink, a dishwasher, and a built-in coffeemaker.

This hardworking room is as stylish as it is functional, with traditional detailing and a sophisticated color scheme. As with the rest of the house, the kitchen draws its inspiration from a nearby century-old school known for its English-style architecture and

**ABOVE LEFT:** While working at the island, homeowner Kelly Schuert can chat with her kids in the adjoining family room or enjoy views of the yard through the kitchen's large windows.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Both the sink and window ledge are crafted from the same granite as the countertops. The faucet on the left provides hot and cold filtered water.

**OPPOSITE:** A shapely custom-designed hood creates an elegant focal point on the range wall. Massive corbels connect the hood to the granite countertop beneath.



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Two full-size refrigerators and four freezer drawers are organized according to meal times. The right side holds breakfast ingredients; the left side stores fixings for lunch and dinner.

The white-painted coffered ceiling adds to the kitchen's light and airy look. Polished-nickel light fixtures add shimmer.

A breakfast pantry (left of the range) holds a toaster and microwave oven.





historic landmark status. "We didn't want the house to scream 'new,'" Kelly says. "We wanted everything to look like it had been a part of our property for 100 years."

With that vision in mind, Earl chose an elegantly simple color palette of white and gray. Custom cabinets with classic inset doors and drawers show off a creamy-white painted finish glazed with gray. Subway tiles with a metallic charcoal glaze line the walls all the way to the ceiling, a historical look reminiscent of European kitchens. The satiny tiles also pay homage to the iridescent finish found on handcrafted Arts and Crafts tile from Detroit's Pewabic Pottery, a product found in the historic school as well as throughout the house. Granite countertops pull all the materials together with smatterings

of gray and black on ivory. Dark oak flooring grounds the cooking zone while providing a warm counterpoint to the kitchen's dramatic white-painted coffered ceiling.

A simple color scheme, yes, but the kitchen still sparkles with the eye-catching shimmer of metal and glass. Traditional, polished-nickel light fixtures gleam against the coffered ceiling. Shiny stainless-steel pulls accessorize the white cabinets. And multiple muntin windows, another nod to the home's old-English inspiration, admit sparkling natural light. "I especially love the kitchen when the sun is shining through the window over the sink in the morning," Kelly says. "No matter what we are all doing, this is where everyone comes together."

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**ABOVE LEFT:** A built-in coffeemaker lends convenience to the butler's pantry located just around the corner from the refrigerators.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** With its sink, dishwasher, and extra counter space, the butler's pantry offers a secluded spot for staging party refreshments.