



# Just Beachy

Sandy tones set the mood in a room with a giant peek at Chesapeake Bay

EATING AND COOKING WITH A VIEW OF Chesapeake Bay is a wondrous experience, which is why these homeowners positioned their kitchen where they did. In a house on a rolling acre overlooking the bay, they put the heart of the home where they could watch the water. Kitchen designer Mark T. White, of Kitchen Encounters in Annapolis, Maryland, picked up on the essence of this predetermined space by accenting the colors of sand. His real accomplishment, though, was ferreting out exactly what the family needed to make this kitchen a place where they could cook, eat, entertain and just have a great time.

Light cabinets with beaded panels team up with additional breezy colors to create a beach-home feel in the main kitchen area. That seaside essence becomes inescapable in the octagonal breakfast room, where water views rush in through six windows.

**NKBA** The Finest Professionals in the Kitchen & Bath Industry  
National Kitchen & Bath Association®

**DESIGNER**  
Mark T. White, CKD  
Kitchen Encounters  
Annapolis, Maryland



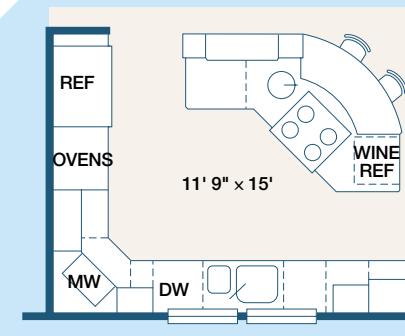
Signing on after the four-bedroom house had already been designed, White played catch-up through in-depth interviews. (Architect Scarlett Breeding, of Alt/Breeding Architects in Annapolis, had already cultivated a relationship with the homeowners up to that point.) “Mark did a detailed survey,” recalls Pat, one of the homeowners. “He asked a lot of questions to find out how we like to live in our kitchen, how we cook and even whether the principal cook—that would be me—was right- or left-handed.” Digesting his survey results, White conceived four different kitchen plans. His clients had no trouble deciding which one suited them best.

“This is a house without halls,” Pat says, pointing out that the kitchen is visible from both the adjacent dining room and six-windowed breakfast room. “We had to make sure what we did in the kitchen complemented both of those areas,” says White. His plan was based on an L-shaped arrangement of appliances and counters, to which he added a huge island with a curved breakfast bar on one side and a work surface arranged in a lazy Z pattern on the other.

“My clients didn’t want anything fussy or ornate,” White says. So he helped them choose semicustom cabinets with

LEFT: The island seating area is directly opposite the cooktop to encourage interaction with the cook. In the background, stacked cabinets and heavy white molding carry the eye all the way to the high ceiling. At the far right (toward the bottom of this photo), a glass-front cabinet wedged between two columns formally separates the kitchen from the dining room.

## Floor Plan



FLOOR PLAN: STEVEN STANKIEWICZ

Although the space leads out to a deck and pool, smartly arranged work and storage areas keep traffic manageable. The island acts as centerpiece and primary traffic governor.

Thirsty pool users need not splash into the kitchen for refreshments, thanks to the undercounter beverage cooler at the end of the island. Note, too, the curve in the eating counter, which offers some relief from all the straight lines in the rest of the design. This kitchen also addresses the issue of whether an oven and a refrigerator can be installed next to each other. The answer is yes.

recessed-panel doors in the Shaker-style and pewter-finish pulls. “We used maple with a light-colored stain that was softened further by a white glaze,” he says. “As the house was to be built beside the bay, the owners wanted to establish a beachlike feeling. For the doors on lower cabinets, we used beadboard as the center panels; it complements the beadboard we applied to both sides of the island’s raised section, where the stools pull up. Because there would be so many upper cabinets and we didn’t want a look that was too busy, we avoided putting beadboard there. Instead, we used plain, flat-center panels plus a few glass-fronted doors to break up the mass.” White optimized the space by arranging cabinetry all the way up to the wide crown molding just below the ceiling. That molding matched woodwork that appears in most other rooms. The owners concede that the top row of cabinets is hard to reach. “We store things there that we don’t use often,” Pat says, invoking a smart-storage dictum.

The red-oak floor that borders the kitchen also flows into the breakfast room. Within the kitchen proper, limestone floor tile extends the pale palette set by the cabinets. Punctuating the space like floor-to-ceiling sculptures are a pair of columns that the owners insist are only decorative. The designer used them to bracket a raised cabinet with glass doors that faces the dining room. “It’s convenient to keep glassware and crystal there,”

## Eating Options

Despite the seductive nature of the octagonal breakfast room, designer Mark T. White knew his clients wanted space within their compact kitchen for quick meals and snacks. That’s why he created a raised bar on one side of the island and made it big enough to accommodate two stools.

“Our guests tend to hang out there,” says wife Pat, “and my husband likes to be in the kitchen to socialize while I’m cooking.” The designer created an island well equipped for multitasking. There is a vegetable sink, a beverage center and a cooktop with downdraft ventilation—all either cut into or placed below the granite countertops. Stool diners and kibitzers look into the kitchen; the cook enjoys the water view.



LEFT: This sink, stationed right next to the cooktop, is an ideal spot to fill pots with water for pasta or stock or to serve as a traditional prep sink for washing vegetables like lettuce, for example. BELOW LEFT: The dishwasher is fully integrated—meaning it's all but invisible when closed—thanks to the cabinet panel and the fact that the controls are on top of the door. BELOW: To break up the mass of wood cabinets, some of the doors have faux-mullion glass panels. Air bubbles in the glass add texture and amp up visual interest.



Pat says. "And the back side of the cabinet steps down to the island countertop, giving me more work space."

The kitchen also functions as the entertaining hub of the house. In addition to windows overlooking the bay, French doors lead out to a deck and pool. The room gets more than its share of traffic, but its efficient arrangement of work and storage areas is uncompromised. "By the time our house plan was finalized, we realized we had lost closet space because of the open floor plan," Pat says. "We were aware we needed to squeeze as much storage as we could into the kitchen. Overall, the space looks and feels bigger than it is. For us, it's awesome." ■

This corner of countertop serves as a hub for microwave cooking, television viewing and storage for appliances and other items.