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KITCHENS

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Modernly Marvelous

Writer Kathy K. Martin
Photographer Terry Sweeney

You won't find many knick-knacks or fussy elements in this Collierville kitchen. Clean design elements, soothing and sophisticated colors, clutter-free cabinets and functional spaces make this kitchen both accessible and comfortable. And it all happens with a concise plan and thoughtful design.



Sam and Michelle Mitchell began building their home in the Spring Creek Ranch neighborhood in 2008 after many years of saving and planning every detail to make the home exactly what they wanted. They enlisted well-know architect Doug Enoch and builder bubba Harrell of Harrell Home Builders to create their vision, and then met with interior designer Ami Austin. "I met with them before they even started building the house,



and they were very clear on their vision for symmetry and design, down to a precise lighting plan," explains Austin, who designed the entire interior with a primary emphasis on the open living area that features the living room, kitchen, breakfast room and bar area, as well as the nearby outdoor kitchen. "Instead of contemporary, I see the design as a clean look with no fuss. Just a more permanent look," says Austin of the overall plan.

One of the key starting points to the design began with the floor-to-ceiling fireplace in the living room. Austin says it was the inspiration for the kitchen, making a grand statement with its artistic glass tiles that look more like layers of glass sticks. One of the main points that the homeowners made early on was that they didn't want busy-looking backsplashes in the kitchen, says Austin. They compromised by opting for a simple stainless steel that complements the living room's fireplace. Similar glass was also used in the bar area.

Use of color in the entire space remains understated and cohesive to its open feeling. The paint on all of the walls is a platinum color, which isn't too white or too grey, says Austin. "The color looks very clean, and if you notice, most of the upholstery and tile colors fall within different shades of brown, cream, platinum and a soft shade of blue. It pops out our accent colors of espresso and black and looks beautiful with the stainless steel."

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The kitchen cabinetry in a matte espresso color was custom constructed to accommodate the couple's specific needs for storage space. The cabinetry's design easily flows around Biking and Sub-Zero appliances and spice racks with many pullout drawers and hidden looks, taking advantage of every available inch of space. Austin says that the custom dark brown stain color was mixed by hand about 15 times to provide the ideal look.

Frosted glass on many of the cabinet fronts provides a faint view of what is stored inside while adding to the clean design. The same sleek look transfers to the nearby bar area, which features extra sinks, pullout refrigerator drawers, a wine cooler, an ice machine and storage space that makes entertaining easier.

A Delicatus white granite with silver tones fabricated by the Collierville-based company granite & Marble was selected for the kitchen countertops and the island. The base of the island was constructed to feature storage drawers and a microwave oven while also providing a pull-up seating location.

Lighting, says Austin, was carefully and artfully selected using a tiered approach. Recessed lighting and task lighting under the cabinets provide the necessary elements for food preparation and cooking, while three pendant lights in stainless steel drop down like teardrops above the island. With an ore rectangular, brick-patterned theme in the kitchen and its backsplashes, the cone-shape of the lights added dimension and interest says Austin.

The kitchen flows seamlessly into the comfortable living room with its cream-colored swivel chairs and earthy colors. A mirrored table and a pewter leather ottoman project an interesting vibe to the earthy room where the couple and their two young children can relax. French



doors off of the living room lead to the outdoor kitchen, which includes a gas grill and ample storage space for food and cold beverages. This covered area sits adjacent to a covered outdoor sitting area with a fireplace and TV that overlooks the backyard and swimming pool.

The Mitchell family appreciates the accessibility and comfortable sophistication of their kitchen and its nearby living spaces. "For a busy family with small children, the home looks quite sophisticated but lends a very family-friendly and comfortable atmosphere," says Austin. The evolution of the Mitchell home is proof that modern design can still be warm, livable and marvelous.

