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Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens | Spring 2020







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This is not just a show kitchen...this kitchen gets used day in and day out. -Natalia Dragunova, Notion LLC





# DIRECTORY



#### **APPLIANCE BRANDS**

Bertazzoni BlueStar Cove DCS

Electrolux

Fisher & Paykel

GF JennAir KitchenAid

ΙG

Sharp Signature Kitchen Suite

Sub-Zero Thermador Wolf XO

#### **PLUMBING BRANDS**

Blanco DXV Galley Grohe Rohl ZIP HydroTap

#### **OTHER**

Kichler Strasser Sealv

TEMPUR-Pedic

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# Editor's NOTE



Our videographer just recently orchestrated a 60-second piece titled "How Do We Do It?" The video, narrated by one of Don's Appliances' owners and frequent PR talent, Matthew Hillebrand, chronicles the ways in which Don's Appliances, a local, family-owned

independent appliance retailer has been able to not only stay afloat amid a retail apocalypse, but thrive alongside national retailers. Leveraging purchasing power through membership in a national buying group, managing technician positions in-house and keeping customer service paramount are cited as the how we do it pillars.



Our products would lack vibrancy without the landscape of carefully crafted kitchen design to highlight them.



Another pillar not mentioned in the video but one that I'm reminded of as I'm constructing the amalgamation of kitchens, ads and editorial that has developed into Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens™ (PFK), are the tried and true relationships that are cultivated within our trade partner and customer communities. What a pleasure it is to capture the stories made possible by homeowners' visions colliding with years of experience from the respected architects and designers of our region; completed with bold appliance and plumbing selections from brands we love like Sub-Zero, JennAir, Thermador, GE, Sharp, Brizo, DXV, The Galley and many others. Our products would lack vibrancy without the landscape of carefully crafted kitchen design to highlight them.

It's because of these pillars that we continue to grow our business and publication. The amount of kitchen submissions we received was staggering for this spring '20 edition. So much so, we called in a panel of experts to select the kitchens (refer to "Meet Our Judges," page 12). That's not the only first we've experienced in our PFK Spring '20 edition—it's the first edition we're highlighting Kichler lighting (page 39, now available at WATERSOURCE by Don's Appliances) and our first edition sold on the shelves of retailers. (Coming soon to a Barnes & Noble, Target and Giant Eagle near you!)

It's our honor to pass along as much value as we can to you, Dear Customer, whether it's low prices from our buying group membership, the expertise of an in-house service, delivery and installation technicians, excellent customer service, bar-none, or—the narrative and aweinspiring images bound between these two covers.

Happy reading,

Steph Churchel





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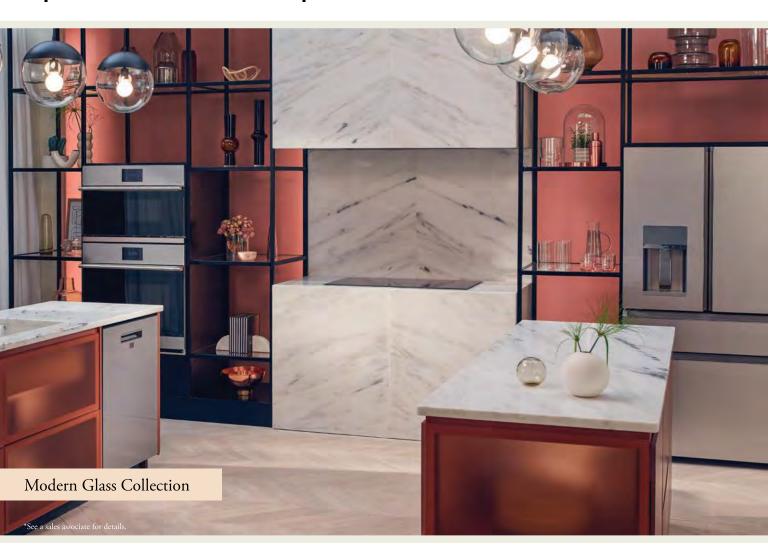




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Jerry Morosco, AIA

Owner/Architect, Gerald Lee Morosco Architects, P.C. glm-architects.com glm@glm-architects.com

Since 1989, Gerald Lee Morosco Architects has been nationally recognized for the craft and beauty of their award-winning custom residential designs, which feature bespoke architecture, interiors, and landscape design, from conception to completion.

#### Melissa Alesi

Director of Marketing & Membership, Builders Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh pghhomebuilders.com Melissa@pghhomebuilders.com

Melissa loves seeing newly-constructed and renovated projects through her role at the Builders and Apartment Associations' Excellence Awards and other residential housing industry projects.

#### Tina Krashna

President, Ceramiche Tile ceramichetile.com tina@ceramichetile.com

Tina has spent 40 years immersed in the design field in Pittsburgh. After studying interior design, she accepted an apprenticeship in kitchen and bath design which eventually led her to the last three decades in the tile industry.

#### **Nancy Sakino Spears**

Owner/Designer, Savoy Interior Design LLC savoyinteriordesignllc.com njs@savoyinteriordesignllc.com

Nancy believes that beauty in interior architecture speaks without a word-from the heart to the eye of the beholder. Her firm does residential and light commercial interior design with a focus on kitchens.

To select the kitchens featured in this issue of Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens, the editorial team was thrilled to team up with a panel of seven area experts who know a good deal about kitchen design. We share a few of their comments within each kitchen's coverage. and we'll introduce them to you here.

#### **Paul Morrison**

Corporate Chef, Sysco sysco.com Paul.Morrison@BuckheadMeat.com

Now a Corporate Chef for Sysco, Paul has spent 20 years in the culinary space honing his love for farm-to-table style food, as well as seasonal cuisine and appliances used to craft them!

#### Arthi Subramaniam

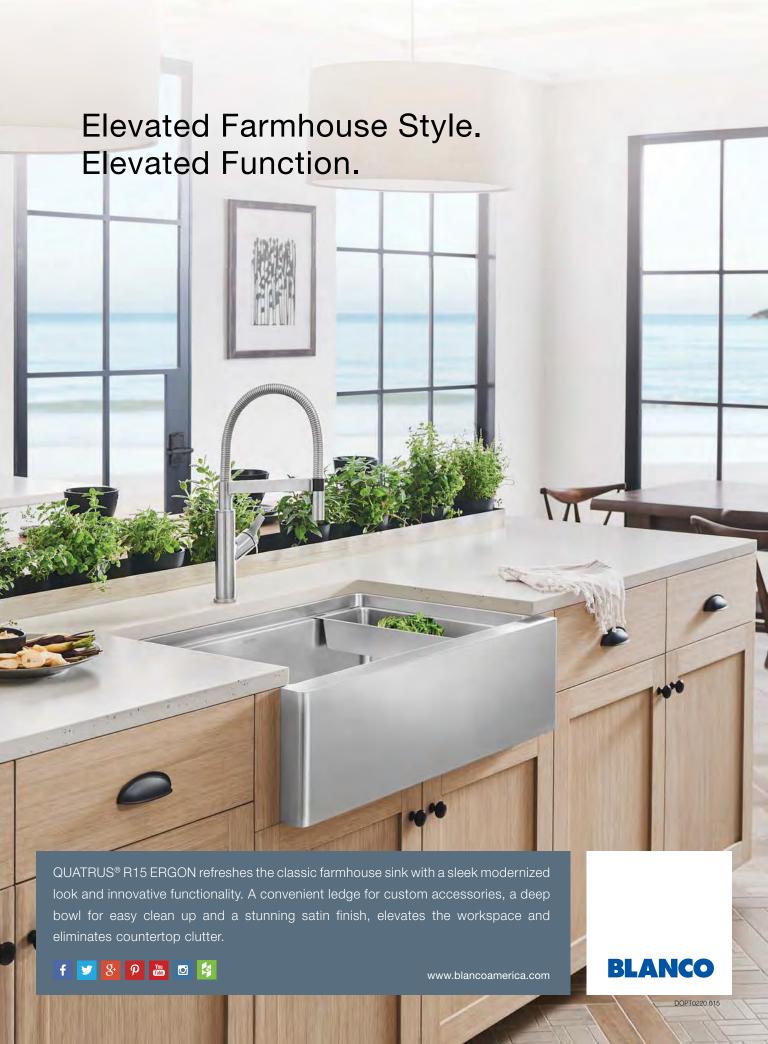
Food Editor, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette post-gazette.com asubramaniam@post-gazette.com

As a food editor, writer and recipe tester, Arthi loves a well-designed kitchen that is equipped with appliances that will help make magic happen.

#### Rosa Colucci

Color Consultant, PPG Paints ppgpaints.com Rosa.Colucci@ppg.com

Rosa provides color design services for residential and commercial spaces. She believes that the right color can make your spirits soar.



Presto kitchen remodel merges form and function

#### BY ABBY WEINGARTEN

Indian cuisine is whipped up daily in Bimal Bedi's Presto kitchen and every mega-modern appliance in the remodeled room makes it a chef's utopia. • When she is cooking for her husband, Maninder, and their two teenagers, her new premium range, hood and complementing amenities make her culinary time easy to savor. • "This kitchen is fabulous," Bimal says. "I've gotten a lot of 'wows' about it."







Waterfall countertops and large orb lighting bring a modern elegance to the space. Over in the cooking area, there's a fantastic feel with the custom statement hood over a spectacular range.



-Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens judge

#### A black and white aesthetic

That wow factor is due, in part, to the vision of interior designer Natalia Dragunova of Notion LLC. The look of the space is fairly transitional but it has some décor twists.

"Bimal loves sharp colors, so we went with black cabinetry. She wanted a brushed brass finish for the hardware and we also incorporated that into the hood a little. We kind of mixed a traditional design with modern finishes," Dragunova says. "This is not just a show kitchen. She is a cook, so this kitchen gets used day in and day out."

To accommodate Bimal's cooking needs, the appliances were cherry-picked for utility. She chose Sub-Zero integrated refrigerator/freezer columns and an integrated wine unit; a Wolf dual fuel range and a drop-down drawer microwave; a BEST built-in range hood and exterior blower; a Bosch custom-panel dishwasher; and a Brizo Litze smart-touch pull-down faucet. These pieces make the kitchen a standout in the revamped 6,500 square-foot, four-bedroom home, where the Bedis have lived for 12 years.

"I really like my hood and blower because we cook a lot of Indian food with onions, garlic and ginger. Before, the aromas would just stay in the house, but this hood gets rid of them all," Bimal says. "I also like the bigger stove and fridge, and the hot water faucet provides instant hot water. It makes my cooking time shorter for anything I have to add hot water to, and I can have tea in seconds. I enjoy having six burners on my stove and having a second dishwasher too—these are a big deal when you have kids."

#### Making a statement

The kitchen layout is separated into a cooking area, a relaxing spot, and a coffee and tea station. One of Bimal's favorite conveniences—the hood—is a statement feature that is as practical as it is aesthetically pleasing.

"That hood was the biggest challenge for us because of the way it was constructed; it is made of two different stone materials. I wanted it to look black on the outside and white on the inside, so we had to miter the pieces," Dragunova says. "The hood area is a little over eight feet and it is probably my favorite look in the kitchen."

Bimal's preferred color scheme is especially unique.

"When I tell people the kitchen is black and white, they're surprised when they see it because it's much warmer than what it sounds like," Bimal says. "I think the gold hardware and the metal back-splash add a lot of warmth. I love the look of it."

So does Dragunova. "Bimal is wonderful. She really let me do what I wanted to do," she says, adding that features like the hood and quartz columns were gratifyingly bold design statements. "That she trusted me so much was, to me, as a designer, just absolutely amazing."

#### **APPLIANCES**

Sub-Zero 30" Integrated Refrigerator/ Freezer Column (IC-30RID-RH/ IC-30FI-LH), Sub-Zero 18" Integrated Wine Unit (IW-18-RH), Wolf 48" Dual Fuel Range (DF486G), Wolf E Series Drop-Down Drawer Microwave (MDD24TE/S/TH), BEST Built-In Range Hood (CP57E482SB), BEST Exterior Blower (EB15), Bosch 800 Custom Panel Dishwasher (SHV878WD3N)

#### **PLUMBING**

Brizo Litze Smart Touch Pull-Down Faucet (64043LF-GL), Brizo Mini Hot Water Dispenser (MT1840DIY-NL/PVDBB)



Notion LLC is a full service interior design company specializing in unique and functional kitchen and bath concepts. We are a one stop resource for custom design and installation specializing in gourmet kitchens, custom cabinets, spa inspired bathrooms, custom wet bars, distinctive entertainment areas, and libraries. From concept to completion, we pride ourselves in making sure that your job is delivered with the highest quality craftsmanship and materials while meeting budget and scheduling requirements.



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It is hard for us to imagine purposely hiding the kitchen in a small back corner of the house. But the kitchen used to be a place to prep for parties, not host them. As homeowners renovate their gorgeous, turn-of-the-century homes in Pittsburgh they depend on experts like Sarah Drake, AIA and Ida McConnell of Cuvée Kitchen Design to modernize and open their kitchen spaces while respecting the integrity of their historic homes.

"Pittsburgh's large turn-of-the-century homes have wonderful woodwork and great ceiling heights, but the kitchen areas are typically secondary spaces," Drake explains. "This renovation respects the bones of the house while updating the home for a family of five in the 21st century."

#### Outside influence

Creating the true gathering space of the open kitchen and living area was achieved by eliminating a masonry fireplace, a back staircase, and all the walls in the back of the first floor of the home.

"Expansive, contemporary windows bring in much-needed light during Pittsburgh's gray days, and their scale is in balance with the traditional wood, bay window and wainscoting of the existing space," Drake describes.

Green foliage of spring and summer trees is invited into the kitchen through the black-cased windows and adds natural green to the white-on-white kitchen space. Natural walnut stools at the island mimic the tree bark right outside the newly added patio door.

#### White on white on white

Drake referred the homeowners to McConnell who helped bring their vision of a big, open area kitchen to life.

"A lot of kitchen designs include cabinetry extended to the ceiling with molding," McConnell says of popular kitchen design. "We went in the complete opposite direction in this space, using no upper cabinets. The cabinets were incased, then recessed flush into the wall to look more like built-in furniture pieces."

The cabinetry was purposely simplistic, but included half-inch framing around each door to add dimension.

"The stove is symmetrically balanced in the kitchen to the fireplace in the sitting area," Drake says. "The plaster hood and flush-mounted, white stone backsplash are minimally detailed to not draw attention."

McConnell adds, "We did white on white on white...we searched very hard for paint to match the quartz countertop on the wall cabinetry. We wanted that back wall to be a blank palate."



#### Steel island

The homeowners wanted some warmth and felt that stainless appliances from Don's Appliances gave them that pop they needed. The JennAir refrigerator and double ovens were recessed into the drywall giving them a custom fit, and the JennAir microwave and Bosch dishwasher disappear in the island. A second, functional cooking sink is located between the range and double ovens to keep the island sink clean and open for entertaining. The only overhead shelving in the space is located above a beverage center opposite the double ovens in the butler's pantry which leads into the dining room.

The island has the warmth of a gray, marble, waterfall countertop that complements the stainless steel appliances. The lighting over the island is simplistic, but interesting with a touch of whimsy.

"The kitchen design is beautifully modern while tying into the warmth in the rest of the home," McConnell says of the space. "It is a very refreshing part of the house."







This is a beautiful space for family fun. I really like the modern vibe, especially the light fixtures. The abundance of natural light makes this kitchen very inviting.



-Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens judge

APPLIANCES JennAir Obsidian Bottom-Mount Refrigerator (JB36NXFXLE), JennAir 36" Gas Cooktop (JGCP436WP), JennAir Electric Wall Oven (JJW3830DP). JennAir Undercounter Microwave Drawer (JMDFS24GS), Bosch 800 Series Dishwasher (SHP878WD5N), U-Line 1000 Series Beverage Center (U-1224BEVS-00B)



Celebrating 27 years of business, Cuvée Kitchen Designs, Inc. is women-owned and operated by business partners Ida McConnell and Joyce Cessar. We specialize in mid-to-high end luxury kitchen and baths, along with other rooms throughout the home involving cabinetry. Years of expertise and vast resources have allowed Cuvée Kitchen Designs to make each creation

unique and a true reflection of the client's lifestyle. Our attention to detail and personalized service provide our clients with a very collaborative and positive experience on every project.

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## INTOWOODS

#### Material selections honor this home's bucolic setting BY LEE RHODES



Golden sunlight pours in through the windows of Robert Gaskill's kitchen, which is situated on the edge of a state park. Tucked beneath the canopy of trees, the continuous glass windows are positioned to maximize the views, and the dramatic post-and-beam construction reinforces that this inviting retreat has nature as its focus. • The vision for the kitchen was part of an overall intent to create an open floor plan that is ideal for entertaining. As an architect and owner of Gaskill Architecture LLC, Gaskill knew that, for his own home, he wanted to create a natural, modern design. The exterior materials were continued throughout the interior design which further emphasizes the visual connection to nature. • "The natural palette of the stone exterior, with different textures and colors of wood, influenced the interior," he explains. "We also wanted the cabinetry to really blend with the Douglas fir frame of the home." >







#### Industrious design

The kitchen's custom cabinetry, by Santa's Kitchen and Home, pairs well with the room's industrial detailing and concrete features. Specifically, the large island is topped with a stunning 800+ pound concrete slab from Hoadley Artisan Surfaces, and the island is wrapped in patinaed corten steel. Integrated into the island is a Stainless Steel Cube Sink by Franke and a Brizo Solna articulating faucet.

Concrete panels around the range complement the island top, while corten metal is repeated on the kitchen's custom hood, which is, as Gaskill explains, intended to rust. "Once it rusts, it creates a patina that protects the metal," he says. "We introduced it in the great room as well."

The kitchen further honors natural and industrial materials via the black leathered granite countertops; the heavy iron bar stools with walnut seats; and locally sourced hickory wood floors, distressed with a graphite stain.



This beautiful entry distinguishes itself by way of fine craftsmanship and a genuine attention to detail. The carefully curated palette of natural materials, honestly expressed, is limited to the essential and strengthens the entire composition.



-Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens judge





#### Power pantry

Another amazing feature is the large walk-in pantry, which includes base cabinets, wall cabinets and extra storage. "With any open floor plan design, there is a necessity to have extra storage nearby in a pantry," explains Gaskill. Custom steel library-type ladders on rollers allow the homeowners to access the high sides of the pantry. The pantry also holds a True wine unit, Thermador steam oven, stainless steel sink by Franke and another Brizo Solna faucet.

The kitchen's main appliances are all cleanly flush mounted along the appliance wall. The 60-inch professional range by Thermador, which Gaskill cites as his favorite feature, has two full size ovens, six burners and a griddle. Thermador also provided the refrigerators, freezer, coffeemaker and the luxury Emerald-series dishwasher.

"We love our appliances. The design of the kitchen is truly enhanced by the quality and caliber of the amazing features," Gaskill concludes. "Overall, this kitchen is so beautiful, extremely functional and is the heart of our amazing home!"

#### APPLIANCES/PLUMBING

KITCHEN Thermador 60" Professional Range (PRD606WEG), Thermador 36" Column Refrigerator/Freezer (T36IR900SP/ T36IF900SP), Thermador Glass Door Refrigerator (T24UR920LS), Thermador Emerald-Series Dishwasher (DWHD650WFP), BEST Custom Hood Insert (PK2245), Brizo Solna articulating faucet (63221LF-BL), FRANKE Stainless Steel Cube Sink (CUX120) PANTRY TRUE Dual-Zone Wine Cabinet (TWC-15-L-SG-B), Brizo Solna Pull-down Prep Faucet (63920LF-BL), Thermador Professional 30" Built-In Single Convection Wall Oven (PODS301W)



Gaskill Architecture LLC is a boutique residential design firm focusing on projects of every scale. Our passion is residential design. Every project is unique and tailored to fit our client's site as well as how they live. We believe that understanding our clients' vision and goals are the fundamental principles for a successful project. We offer a fully integrated design approach starting with a comprehensive site analysis, architecture, interior design and construction administration services. Our design process is very engaging with the integration of our collaborative software tools, which also provides a clear visual understanding of each project. Any project can excel in design, regardless of the budget. Our creativeness is what differentiates us.



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Venetia kitchen features a sleek design with an eye-catching twist

#### BY ABBY WEINGARTEN

Photos by Melissa Carter, Eleven Photography LLC

Ultra-sleek and teeming with high-end appliances, Tanya Corry says her Venetia kitchen is "the heart of the party."

 As the core of her 1973-built, three-bedroom, threebathroom home, Tanya's kitchen is ideal for entertaining and socializing. When she hosts gatherings, her guests congregate around the oversized island as she whips up dishes with her Wolf double-wall oven and range. • "Over the holidays, I hosted a party with over 20 quests, and I truly had a chance to test out some of the finer things with my appliances," Tanya says. "The double oven, with its gourmet module, allowed me to roast one of the best ribs of beef to date. The fact that I can monitor this on my mobile phone is just fabulous, not to mention convenient."







This kitchen is artfully contemporary with a blend of gloss cabinets, glass, metal and stone. I love the use of color and how the appliances are skillfully placed to keep the kitchen open and functional.

—Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens judge's comment





# A polished look

This is just one of the modern conveniences that was built into Tanya's new kitchen with the help of contractors Todd and Judy Bush of TJ Bush Enterprises and interior designer Natalia Dragunova of Notion LLC.

Craftsman Ken Leech painted the custom cabinetry in a metallic paint with a high-gloss, high-sheen automotive finish. Complementing the shine is a host of new appliances, including a Wolf double-wall oven, a sealed burner range top and a warming drawer; Sub-Zero refrigerator and freezer columns, as well as an integrated wine refrigerator; a Scotsman ice machine; and a Bosch Benchmark dishwasher.

"I think what makes these appliances unique is how well they fit into the sleek look of the overall design of the kitchen," Dragunova says. "The refrigerators are practically invisible, which make this kitchen flow so nicely."

## Unexpected elements

There is quartz stone around the integrated wine cabinet. A saltwater fish tank has a custom ventilation system behind the cabinets to exhaust the humid air to the exterior of the home. All of the cabinet drawers and doors have push-toopen features, and none of the appliances have handles. The dishwasher and ice maker only require a small finger pull, which is tucked underneath the countertop. And the glass countertops are lit from underneath with a quarterinch LED mat, which was custom-designed for the space.

"And as far as the flooring goes, Tanya knew what she didn't want. She didn't want hardwood. She didn't want tile with a lot of grout lines. That didn't leave us too many options, but we did find Dekton large-format tile to minimize the grout lines," Judy Bush says. "The use of the tile did, however, require that pretty much the whole first floor of the house be reinforced and leveled up. But it looks great and cleans up easily."

Every engineering challenge—from the floor leveling to the fish tank construction—was worth the added effort. Tanya now relishes every luxury and automated amenity.

"The kitchen has everything I need and want—from the beauty of my saltwater fish tank and the luxury of my wine refrigerator to the wow factor of my lighted glass waterfall countertop," she says. "I truly love my whole kitchen."





### **APPLIANCES**

Wolf 30" Double Wall Oven (DO30TM/S/TH), Wolf 48" Sealed Burner Range Top (SRT486C), Sub-Zero 30" Refrigerator/ Freezer columns (IC-30FI-LH, IC-30R-RH), Sub-Zero 24" Integrated Wine Refrigerator (IW-24-LH), Wolf 30" Warming Drawer (WWD30), Scotsman Ice Machine (SCCP50MA-1SU), Bosch Benchmark Dishwasher (SHV88PW53N)



TJ Bush Enterprises Inc is owned and operated by Todd and Judy Bush. Our motto is Quality Work. We strive to achieve this by providing the very best quality workmanship and materials on the job from beginning to end. We love to use new and innovative products in our designs and solve design issues in a creative matter. We believe in treating each and every customer with fairness and honesty.

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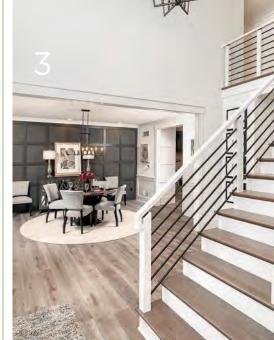
# HOT TRENDS IN NEW HOME BUILDING

Premier Pittsburgh builder shares his top requests from buyers

BY KAREN BRADNER | Photos by Lukas Kot

With over 30 years of experience under his tool belt, Kent Koch, founder of Koch Construction Company, has seen trends come and go in the residential homebuilding business. His team is behind the creation of some of the finest custom homes in Greater Pittsburgh. Recently, he invited us into one of his properties in Marshall Township and shared what his experience shows that high-end homebuyers are looking for in a new home. >









# 1 Farm-fresh style

Without a doubt, the modern farm-house style is in high demand. White exteriors are most common. Small accent windows and banks of tall narrow windows are clad in black. On this particular home, awnings add interest and are supported by metal brackets designed by Kent. The interior of the home features a lot of what he calls "nickel gap" walls—a siding which is similar to shiplap.

# 2 Clean and simple lines

"In regard to trim, people are not necessarily wanting less trim work done, but they want a cleaner, simpler look to their woodwork," Kent says. "The effect is not as ornate as it has been in the past." Popular neutral paint colors, in soft gray and greige, cover the walls.

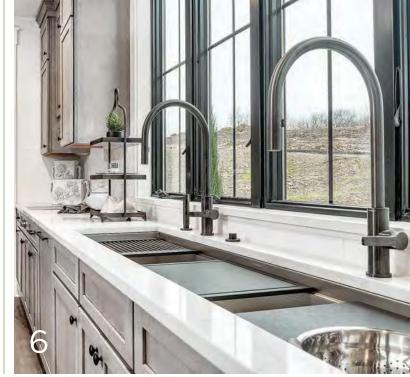
# 3 Less carpet, more wood

It used to be that the Koch team would cover a portion of the first floor in hardwood, and the complete second floor in carpeting. Today, the entire first floor, staircase, upstairs hallway and master bedroom are often hardwood. And carpeting the steps is becoming less and less common.

This could be due to an effort to reduce allergens and dust.







## 4 Outdoor living

Everyone wants a covered porch, Kent says, but often these porches block light from entering the home. In this example, the porch was positioned so that most of its length is pulled away from the house to allow the kitchen to be flooded with daylight.

# 5 Getaway master bath

It's all about the experience in today's spa-like master bath retreats. Large soaking tubs and oversized showers are high on the wish list. This bath's floors and walls are covered in large format porcelain tile. "We wanted to create a sense that the soaking tub and doorless, zero-entry shower are one cohesive space," Kent says.

### 6 Sinks and more sinks

The forward trend is multiple—and larger—sinks with more functions than just washing dishes. This home features two Galley Workstations: a large one by the windows and a smaller one on the island. These sinks are designed to be multi-functional and to completely handle the various stages of meal prep. Accessories can be swapped between the two areas.



# 7 Statement lighting

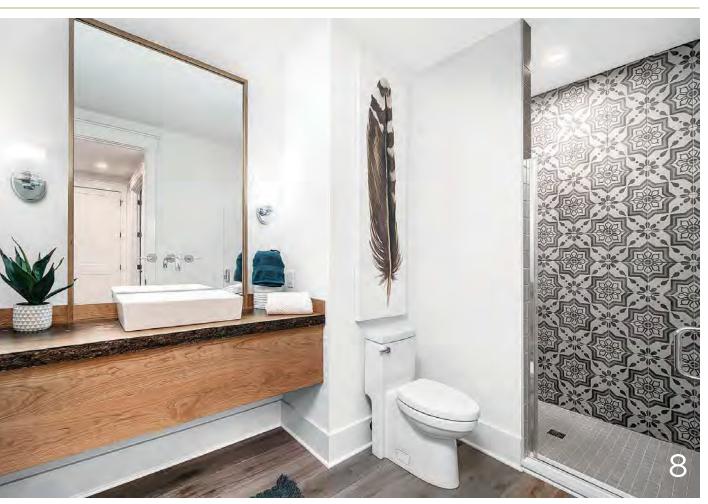
Designers and savvy homeowners are looking to lighting for making a statement and adding the occasional bit of bling. "I think lighting gives a sense of elegance to the home," Kent says.

# 8 Modern plumbing

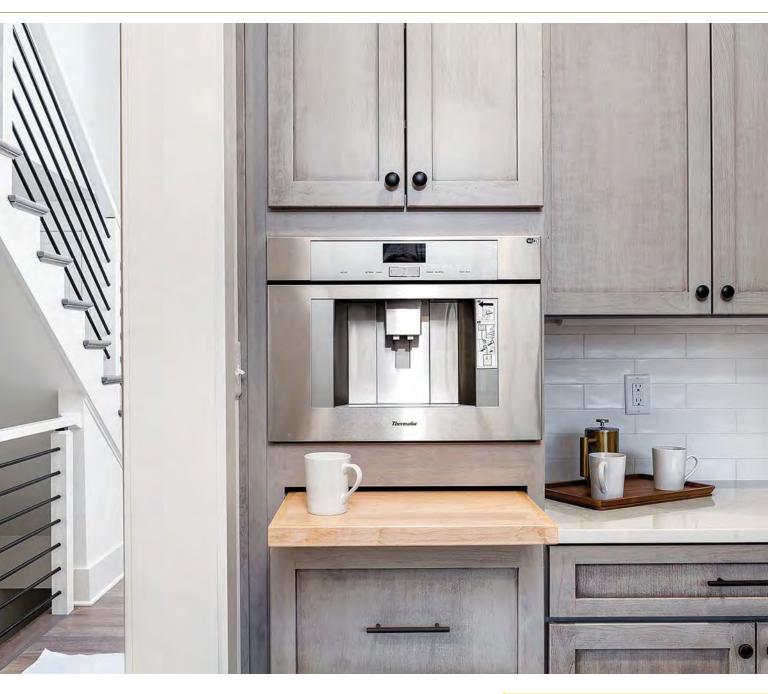
Similar to light fixtures, homeowners are making a statement with highend faucets and fixtures. These pieces are adding a decidedly modern flair.

### 9 Mixed metals

When it comes to pulls, handles, doorknobs and more, buyers are not playing the match game. It's not uncommon for any hardware found in the home to be a blend of oil-rubbed bronze, brushed nickel, chrome, stainless steel, and matte brass finishes. ▶







# 10 Upscale appliances

Discerning home buyers want high-quality appliances that offer convenience and time savings. This home has a beverage bar off the master bedroom, which features a coffee station and wine fridge. Other popular appliances include induction cooktops, icemakers, dual dishwashers and both traditional and convection ovens.

### **DETAILS ABOUT THIS HOUSE**

**Builder** Koch Construction Company Architect Robert Gaskill, Gaskill Architecture LLC

Kichler lighting, Thermador appliances, plumbing fixtures Don's Appliances Location Mallard Pond,

Marshall Township

Bedrooms 4 + optional 5th (currently a study with private bath)

**Baths** 5-1/2 Square footage 4,500

School District North Allegheny Listing agent Brian Teyssier,

RE/MAX RE Solutions



Just over 25 years ago, in 1988, Koch Construction Company started building residential homes in the Pittsburgh area. Over the years our family run business has grown and not only does custom homes, but commercial buildings, urban buildings, trim work for other builders, as well as, rejuvenating interior & exterior spaces in existing homes.







# Kitchen reconfigured to make room for family and functionality

### BY HILARY DANINHIRSCH

Before she redesigned her Gibsonia kitchen, Megan Ries did not have room for the large appliances she wanted, as the space was much too narrow. By eliminating both a pantry and a coat closet, designer Mike Santa, owner of Santa's Kitchen and Home, reconfigured the space to be appliance-ready. • Megan also wanted to update the design and make it more functional for her family. "I wanted it to be something that would be timeless but completely different from what we had," she says. Previously, the kitchen was cream with chocolate brown; she wanted something more colorful, but still neutral.

# **Gray matters**

The new kitchen is predominantly gray, with a dark island and refinished light floors. The island is stained walnut with a quartzite countertop. Santa calls the kitchen 'elegant traditional,' as the homeowners chose high end materials but went with more traditional cabinets. Custom paneling and gold knobs and pulls were rich touches that elevated the space, along with giving it a clean look.

"It is rich looking, with a lot of wainscoting panels. Everything is covered in wood; there is no exposed drywall," says Santa.

# Making way

The pantry was eliminated and replaced with an oversized Wolf range, expertly placed at an angle in a corner niche with a marble and antique mirror backsplash.

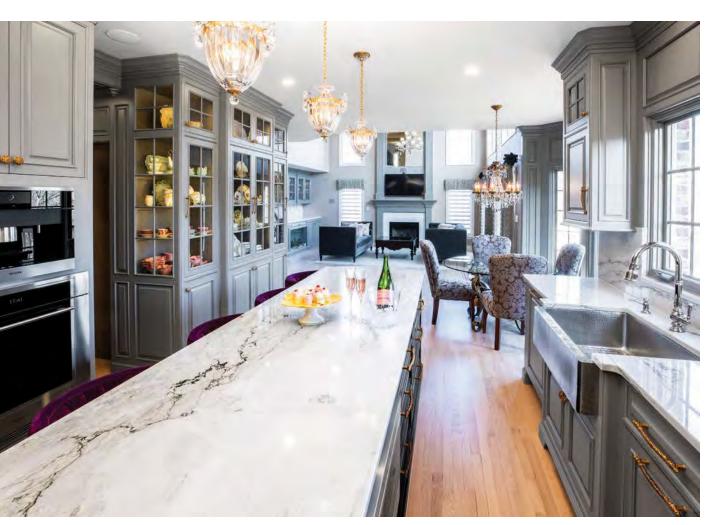
A custom-fit wine storage unit, which was on the dream wish list for the homeowners, is flanked by an upright Sub-Zero refrigerator and freezer. "It is integrated into one unit that looks really sharp," says Santa. Megan loves the look of it as well and noted that it has plenty of space for all of the food, so that she no longer has to use a spare refrigerator for overflow.



Having a nice mix of seating between the freestanding table, island and even the lounge seating allows for all generations to mix and mingle freely without being trapped behind a monster island.

—Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens judge









She also appreciates the functionality of her appliances. "The Wolf range is superior," she says, noting how fast it heats up and how quickly it bakes cookies. The range contains a temperature probe, and her appliances can be connected to an

She chose Miele for her coffeemaker, which is to the right of her refrigerator. "We've always had a built-in coffeemaker but never one this fancy," says Megan. "It makes delicious coffee."

# Room to maneuver

Megan, who went to art school and likes whimsical décor, is also a collector of vintage and modern dishes. After the kitchen redesign, she is now able to display her collection in a lighted curio cabinet against one wall, with room for collectible vases in the overhead cabinets above the sink and range.

Santa says that even though the space is still narrow, it is now more spacious, especially with the pantry elimination. "Their island is a little skinnier but they have good walking room around it, and now they have a ton of storage," he says.

Even though her new kitchen is large enough to accommodate a table and chairs, Megan says her family generally eats most meals at the island. She agrees that the kitchen's overall functionality is a huge improvement, from the layout to the large, multi-functional appliances. They also built a custom laundry room that looks like an extension of the kitchen.

"I am just in awe—I sit there and stare at it and enjoy it," adds Megan. "I love everything we picked out. I wouldn't have changed a thing."

APPLIANCES Sub-Zero 30" Integrated Freezer Column (IC-30FI-LH), Sub-Zero 17.3 CU FT Integrated Refrigerator Column (IC-30RID-RH), Sub-Zero 18" Integrated Wine Storage (IW-18-RH), Wolf 36" Professional Dual Fuel Range (DF366), Wolf 30 M Series Single Oven (SO30TM/S/TH), Miele Plumbed Coffee System, Wolf Built-In Microwave (MD24TE/S), Cove Dishwasher (DW2450)



Michael Santa launched Santa's Kitchen and Home in 1997. He quickly established himself as a company unparalleled to any in his industry. His goal is to use the client's ideas to guide him in designing the perfect use and functionality of the space, all the while creating a stunning room in the home that is above and beyond what the customer envisioned.



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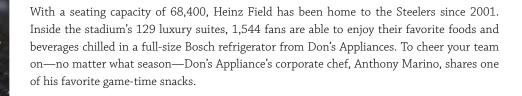
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### **Ingredients**

1 pound ground beef

8 oz nacho tortilla chips or 8 oz tortilla chips

4 oz arugula

4 oz crumbled bacon

4 oz shredded sharp cheddar cheese

2 oz pickle chips

2 sliced red banana peppers

2 oz crumbled blue cheese

2 jalapenos sliced

2 oz mild banana peppers

3 oz salsa

2 tablespoons hot sauce

3 oz sour cream

Cilantro for garnish

### **Directions**

Cook ground meat over medium heat in skillet. Top nachos with meat and other ingredients. Garnish with cilantro and enjoy!

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-Monica Agbalog, Luxury Suites Manager, Heinz Field



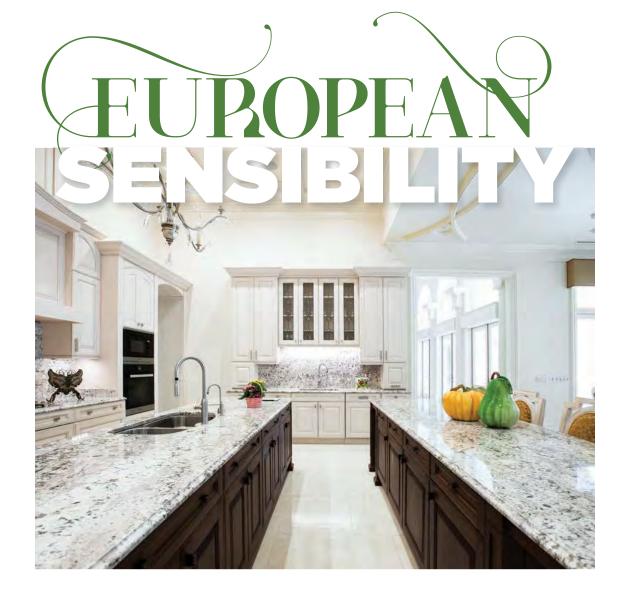






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# Chateau-inspired kitchen features exquisite craftsmanship

**BY LEE RHODES** | Photos by Gary Yon

A dramatic blend of Old World refinement and modern American amenities, the Nese home is a haven for entertaining. Richly dark wood tones, glazed finishes, and taupe furnishings are contrasted with whitewashed maple cabinetry and ornamental ceilings, creating a sophisticated yet inviting ambiance. Bob Hueffed, designer with Morrison Kitchen & Bath, describes it as such: "The primary driving force was the French chateau-style, though it's not highly defined. Then there's a little Italianate thrown in, along with some Gothic details." ▶





The kitchen may best exemplify this design approach, and one of this room's first challenges was to design in such a way as to accommodate 16-foot-high ceilings and the expansiveness of the room. While large rooms can be ideal for entertaining, they can lack warmth and feel awkward if not treated properly. As a first step, Hueffed made sure all of the home's ceilings, including the kitchens, include a beam or molded effect for visual complexity and interest.

### In the zone

To further address the challenge, the team created a visual focal point by extending the cooktop area and hood the full 16 feet to the ceiling in order to anchor the space and keep the room in balance. They also created zones, or standalone areas with the appearance of furniture groupings, to visually divide the space and avoid the appearance of the standard L-shaped kitchen. Doubling up with dual islands adds heft, and the heavy antiqued walnut of the islands helps counterbalance the lighter hues of the walls, cabinetry and floor. Also, the second island provides comfortable seating and, more importantly, a buffet area, allowing the family to entertain for large groups, and providing caterers with a spacious area upon which to set up.



The polished floors highlight the kitchen appliances giving each a star role. Truly Old World elegance in a large space. Beautiful harmony of light and dark woods. Space for all appliances thoughtfully planned out.

—Pittsburgh's Finest Kitchens judge









"The owner loves to cook," explains Hueffed, "and a well-appointed kitchen like this is a lifelong dream for her." To accommodate her needs, the main kitchen has two dishwashers, while the pantry kitchen has one too, a Miele. The pantry also holds a JennAir freestanding French door refrigerator, to complement the main fridge and freezer column in the kitchen. Finally, the main kitchen contains other innovative Miele appliances, including an electric cooktop, wall oven, warming drawer, built-in coffee system and microwave.

The incredible functionality of the kitchen is rivaled only by its aesthetic value. Exquisite craftsmanship, for instance, is on display via the Wood-Mode custom cabinetry. Hueffed incorporated glass in some of the cabinets to create a threedimensional effect. "It's a way to add depth," he says.

# A bit of bling

The cabinetry's hardware adds panache, and Hueffed advises that this is an area where homeowners should not skimp. "There are thousands of pieces, and hundreds of styles of hardware," he says. "Look for options that have quality to them and keep in mind that it doesn't hurt to spend more. It ends up being the 'jewelry' in the room."

Ultimately, all of the home's details combine to reflect both the splendor of European sensibilities and the simplicity of the rural French countryside. 🌢

APPLIANCES MAIN KITCHEN Sub-Zero 36" Refrigerator and Freezer Column (IC-36RID-RH/ IC-36FI-LH), Miele 42" Gas Cooktop (KM3485GSS), Miele Electric Cooktop (CS1322BGSS-240V), Miele 30" Wall Oven (H6680BPSS), Miele Dishwasher (G6565SCVI), Miele Warming Drawer (ESW6380FB), Miele Built-In Coffee System (CVA6405SS), Miele Microwave (M6040SCSS), Best Hood Insert (ILB11) PANTRY Miele Dishwasher (G6565SCVI), JennAir Freestanding French Door Refrigerator (JFI2089WTS) BAR U-Line Refrigerator/ Freezer Combo (U-CO1224FINT-00A), U-Line Under Counter Wine Unit (U-1215WCINT-00A)

# MORRISON KITCHEN BATH

Morrison Kitchen & Bath is a second generation design firm located on Rte 51 in Baldwin Boro. Started in 1957, they have been remodeling kitchens and bathrooms for 62 years. The firm represents the most respected names in cabinetry. Morrison also designs and installs wine cellars, bars, custom closets and built-in cabinetry for entertainment centers and offices.

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# Ultimate At-Home Bar

### BY LEE RHODES

The kitchen has long been the home's centerpiece, but lately, forward-thinking homeowners have realized that a well-appointed at-home bar has just as much merit. With inspired design ideas and innovative appliance options, today's at-home bar can become your new favorite gathering place. Here are two examples of how an athome bar can invite life into your home. >





Photos this page by Gary Yon

# Warm and elegant

In a Fox Chapel bar, the intent was to seamlessly transition between adjoining spaces. Bob Hueffed with Morrison Kitchen & Bath designed the bar to tie into the warm paneling and richness of the library and living room-rooms the bar is connected to. He accomplished this by blending wood contours and beams against the sleek, contemporary prominence of smooth stone, creating a sense of intimate warmth.

"At-home bars used to be secluded spaces, like man caves in the basement," explains Hueffed. "They are becoming more common and are now part of the entertaining, great room and kitchen space. It creates interconnected activity."

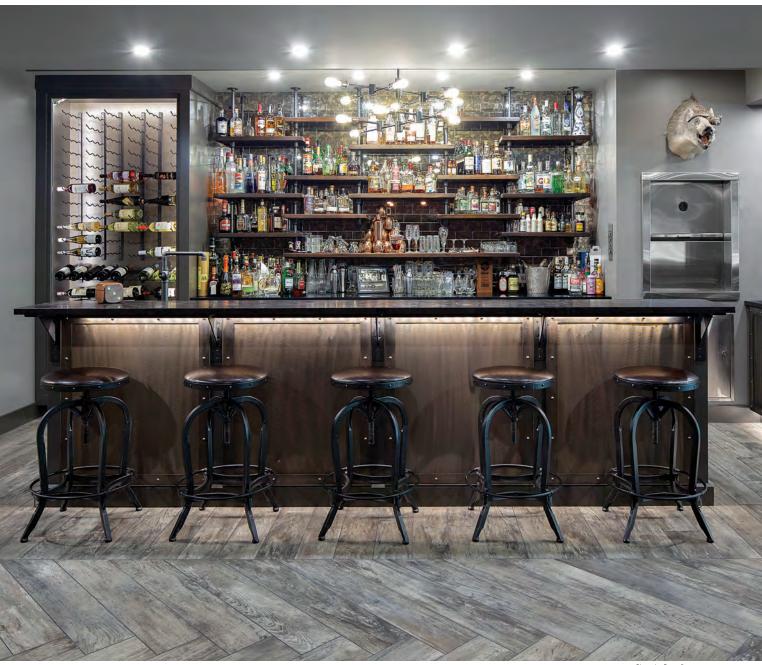


Photo by Dave Bryce

# Hip and industrial

The Canonsburg bar also cleverly blends two aesthetics, with multiple metal and wood combinations. To name a few, the bar's shelving units are custom designed with reclaimed wood and metal piping; accent walls feature cork and metal feck wallpaper; and the Ceramiche Tile flooring resembles herringbone-patterned wood.

Interior designer Sara Hardy with Gaskill Architecture explains, "The overall look is an industrial, steam punk sort of design and resembles a speakeasy. The palette is neutral and balances out the hard and soft materials." Robert Gaskill, the architect, explains that the entire lower level, including the bar, was designed as a mixture of entertaining spaces, anchored by the three-story glass staircase that connects all levels of the home.



Photo by Gary Yor

# Equipment and options

Another element that connects all home bars is the plethora of appliance options—with pleasing designs—available today. As Tim Hillebrand with Don's Appliances explains, "All appliances come in stainless or with a wood front panel option. Some have brass or copper hinges and handles. And you can get them in any one of 12 colors."

For those looking to incorporate a home bar, Hillebrand has several recommendations. An ice machine is a must, preferably one that produces the smaller, nugget-type ice, which doesn't stick together and will absorb some liquids in drinks. A wine unit is also essential, and he recommends a three-zone unit.

"You're able to keep reds and two different whites at three different temperatures," he explains. "Or you can adjust temperatures based on the season or event. It's very adaptable." Other wine accoutrements include the U-Line in-

counter cooling cylinder, Plum automatic wine dispenser, and Thermador dishwasher with wine rack accessory; the wash cycle completes within 20 minutes.

For the beer drinker, double-tap beer systems allow for two smaller kegs that can be changed out frequently. Round out your space with an under-counter microwave drawer; a beverage center with glass doors; and a wet sink, which makes it easy for cleanup and for mixing drinks.

As you consider your home bar, Hillebrand suggests thinking through your needs - how often are you entertaining and how many guests, do you already have a wine cellar, do you need a microwave for hors d'oeuvres for example.

Ultimately, a well-equipped at-home bar can provide the ideal relaxation space and become the new centerpiece in your home. 🌘





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