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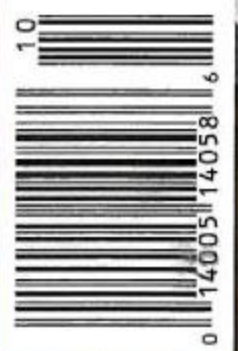
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# water for elegance

Taking its color cues from the home's lakeside locale, this new kitchen offers sophisticated serenity.

PHOTO: JENNIFER DEWITT  
STYLING: JANE LINDEN  
DESIGN: NICOLE ORSINI



For more information on how to create a sophisticated lakeside kitchen, visit [www.usacabinetry.com](http://www.usacabinetry.com).



**T**he cool, refreshing waters of Wisconsin's Lake Geneva have long been a lure for busy folks in Chicago. So when one such couple built this second home on the lake, it's not surprising that the outdoors directly inspired the look of the spacious kitchen.

"We chose a calm color palette to get you in that relaxed lake mood and to complement the tones of the grass, trees, and water outside," says Chicago-based interior designer Tracy Hickman, who worked with the homeowners and architect John Myefski on the project. "One of our primary goals was to frame the views to the lake and make them the focal point."

The 13×22-foot kitchen is open to the adjacent family room, which overlooks the lake. Hickman referenced the watery hues in materials such as unoled soapstone countertops in a beautiful blue-gray shade and blue glass subway tiles on the backsplash that are "rippled like the lake," she says.

Though they designed it as a second home, the owners plan to eventually make this their permanent residence. They needed a space that functioned for large family gatherings as well as just the two of them. Lots of storage was a must-have.

"Zoning out" allowed Hickman to tailor each area and its storage to a specific purpose. "We played with a lot of different configurations for the appliance placement to keep traffic out of the kitchen when there are guests," Hickman says. Locating one sink and dish storage on the room's side wall, separate from the island prep zone, ensures easy access to dishware near the dining area. The layout also allows guests and grandchildren to help themselves from the refrigerator without interrupting the cook.

**OPPOSITE:** The wall opposite the refrigerator area holds the room's only window and serves mainly as a beverage center and buffet. **ABOVE LEFT:** Reminiscent of a porthole, the round window adds to the nautical feel. **LEFT:** The faucet's brushed nickel finish gives a traditional-style fixture modern flair.





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**Creating a relaxed and inviting space drove every design choice.** 99

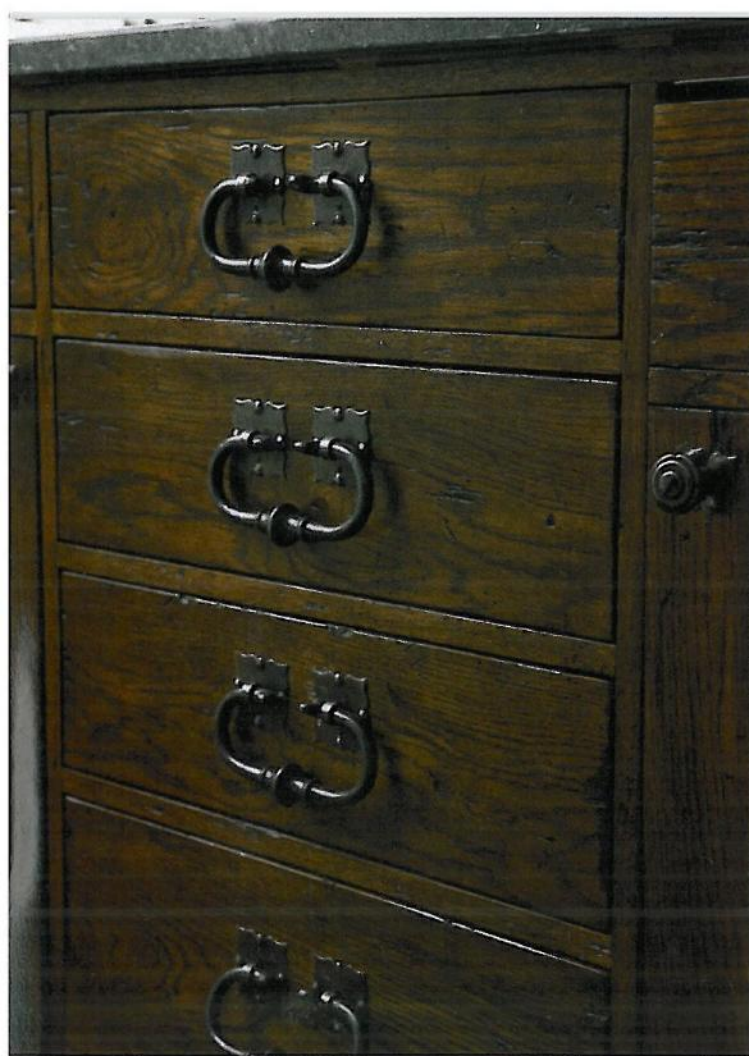
interior designer TRACY HICKMAN

The back wall houses the cooktop, with pot and pan storage in drawers below and space for additional cookware in cabinets above. A walk-in pantry is tucked behind the range wall. Bakeware and utensils for food prep are housed in the island. A stretch of countertop along another wall serves as a beverage area, with a wine refrigerator and glassware storage.

Dividing the kitchen this way ensures that the large island stays clear for food prep and presentation while still allowing the cook to interact with guests. "The island is definitely a focal point, but it needed to be both hardworking and handsome," Hickman says. "I wanted it to look like a piece of casual furniture but also to be a distinct departure in color and texture from the painted cabinets on the perimeter walls." To achieve this, she designed the piece to accommodate a prep sink and storage but kept it open on the ends for a farm-table look. "Using antique French oak was critical to giving this piece some immediate history and to helping it look authentic. I also wanted it to complement the hand-scraped floors," she says.

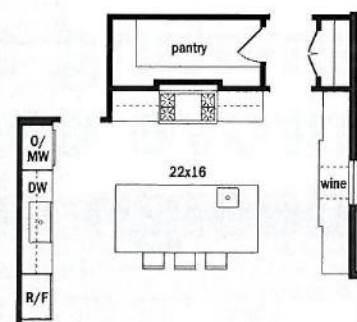
**OPPOSITE:** The custom stainless-steel range hood was designed to complement the blue and gray tones in the soapstone countertops. Deep drawers underneath the cooktop store pots and pans; a recessed niche provides a handy perch for oils. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Interior designer Tracy Hickman designed the distinctive hood with a gunmetal gray patina. Similar materials in drapery rods throughout the house connect the open kitchen to the adjoining living spaces. **RIGHT:** Classic subway-style tile gets a lake-inspired twist with a wavy texture and a watery blue color.





## STORAGE TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Deep drawers below the cooktop and pullout columns on either side pack the cooking area with convenient storage.
- 2 Tall wall cabinets extend storage within the kitchen.
- 3 A walk-in pantry stores food and cleaning supplies.
- 4 An adjacent room provides natural light, minimizing the need for kitchen windows and maximizing storage opportunities.



The kitchen is designed to complement the views outside, but the only window in the actual work core is the round one in the beverage area. "I changed the original architectural elevations and added that round window to break up the rectangular lines of the cabinets and to give the eye an interesting focal point," Hickman says. She chose a cream color for the walls and white for the ceiling to add the illusion of even more light.

Not long after the house was finished, Hickman and Myefski were invited to dinner. They were able to enjoy a boat ride on the lake and see the homeowners and kitchen in action. "It was great to have the chance to enjoy a space we had all worked so hard to create," Hickman says. "It functioned just as we hoped it would." **KBI**  
RESOURCES BEGIN ON PAGE 132.

**OPPOSITE:** Multiple appliances and the cleanup sink are concentrated on one wall. "The homeowners really liked white-painted cabinets with inset glass. It gives the wall the simplicity of a turn-of-the-century butler's pantry," architect John Myefski says. **ABOVE LEFT:** Reclaimed French oak was distressed to give the island the feel of age. Chunky pewter pulls complement the kitchen's blue-gray tones. **LEFT:** The dining area is open to the kitchen and serves as both a breakfast room and a more formal entertaining space.

