

TRANSFORMATIONS  
INSIDE + OUT

# athome

*fresh start!*

CITY CHIC  
TIMELESS STYLE



KITCHEN SPECIAL  
NEW + REVIVED







Past the foyer, arched doorways guide you through the stair hall to the kitchen. **opposite:** Mahogany French casement windows from Sorpetaler let in plenty of natural light, and open shelving above the sink lends a living space feel to the kitchen.

# CLASS ACT

*Classic and contemporary come together in a brand-new kitchen*

architecture **DOUGLAS VANDERHORN ARCHITECTS** interiors **TAMARA K DESIGNS**

interview **LAUREN FETTERMAN** photographs **STACY BASS**



**Can you tell me a little bit about the home that houses this kitchen?**

**Douglas VanderHorn:** It's a very elegant French Normandy-style home, and we chose this to resonate with some of the other houses in the neighborhood. It has a very symmetrical front façade, where you come up an allée of trees straight to the front door. It's a stone house with a slate roof, so it looks fairly important for not being a very big house. We designed it for a successful family.

**Tamara Kilmurray:** The clients are a fun, interesting couple, and I had worked on a project with them before that Doug had been involved with as well. With everyone on this project being people I enjoyed working with, this was a great job to have.

**What inspired the design of the kitchen?**

**DV:** The house is an elegant, classic style, but the interior is decid-

edly contemporary and open. Although the home is new, it looks like a classic, older home, so you don't expect this kind of open planning inside. The clients wanted a family kitchen, something that was large and more of a living space. There are various areas to do food prep and to sit, and it has a warm feel. This kitchen is open to the breakfast area and the family room—it's really one space that flows together.

**TK:** The challenge was taking the shell of a very traditional house and making sure the kitchen was appropriate for that, and yet we wanted to modernize it a bit. It was about finding a way to put a modern-day kitchen in an Old World-looking house.

**How did you site the kitchen in the home?**

**DV:** This kitchen isn't that far from the formal side of the house. You



"The clients wanted a family kitchen, something that was large and more of a **living space**."

—DOUGLAS VANDERHORN

The open kitchen plan showcases the perfect blend of classic elements, such as the gray-veined countertops, with contemporary touches, like the clean-lined faucets. The flooring is pale gray four-inch-wide quarter sawn white oak, and the elegant crown molding and millwork are a nod to the home's traditional feel.





**top left:** A generously sized walk-in storage pantry offers ample space. **top right:** A bright white custom hood from Vent-A-Hood is accented with polished nickel strapping. The Ilve stove was on the clients' list of must-have features. **bottom left:** Polished nickel light fixtures from Hudson Lighting are suspended over the island, which discreetly houses a microwave at one end. **bottom right:** Surrounded by windows, an L-shaped bench provides seating in the breakfast nook. **opposite:** A traditional French-style paneled door leads into the storage pantry. Natural stone-and-glass tile backsplash from Porcelanosa and polished nickel hardware add additional shimmer to the space. The honed white mountain quartzite countertops from Dente Trading Co. were fabricated by Alise Stone.



see this elegant staircase, and with the doors open, you see the stove and the hood, which isn't the most formal arrangement. This is a really livable home in the way it's planned—it's planned for a contemporary lifestyle, as opposed to a more formal arrangement, where the kitchen would be the farthest thing from the front door.

#### What materials and finishes did you use in here?

DV: The lower cabinets are rift sawn oak in a custom medium-gray stain, and the upper cabinets are simply painted white. Although the cabinets have a traditional feel, it's a decidedly contemporary take on it. The countertops are honed white mountain quartzite with a crisp linear vein pattern—it's a classic material cut with a contemporary feel, with the thick countertop with an eased edge. The mahogany French casement windows are by Sorpetaler in Europe.

TK: The client loves a little bit of shine, so as much as the kitchen was meant to be more of a quiet room, there is a lot of polished nickel in here. The backsplash has natural stone, glass and some silvery glitz in it, so it gives a little more of that jewelry-type feeling without taking over the kitchen.

#### How did you accommodate the need for storage?

DV: When you're doing a clean and elegant kitchen, it's helpful to get the storage elements out of the way. In this case, we have a large storage pantry as well as an additional serving pantry.

TK: I'm a serious cook, so I was making them steal inches from

other parts of the kitchen and from other rooms because I was adamant that there needed to be a good-sized walk-in pantry! [laughs] There is also a lot of storage along the backside of the island where the stools are as well as in the perimeter cabinets.

DV: On the wall where the sink is, you would normally have more cabinetry, but it looks really pretty with those display shelves. It's a little less like a kitchen that way and more like a living space.

#### What stands out to you in this kitchen?

DV: I think the finish on the cabinets is quite unique, as well as the metal feet on the island. The island is really more of a furniture piece as opposed to just another cabinet. All of the cabinetry has feet or legs, but the island in particular is a piece of furniture by the way it's completely off the ground.

TK: Because of its size, we didn't want it to look like someone had dropped a giant island in the middle of the kitchen. We wanted it to feel like there was some air underneath it. The polished nickel caps on the feet bring your eye down and add a little bit of shine where you wouldn't expect it.

#### RESOURCES

Architect: Douglas VanderHorn Architects, Greenwich; 203-622-7000; [vanderhornarchitects.com](http://vanderhornarchitects.com)

Interior designer: Tamara K Designs, Riverside; 917-434-8638

Builder: Peerless Construction, Old Greenwich; 203-273-9394; [peerlessconstruction.net](http://peerlessconstruction.net)