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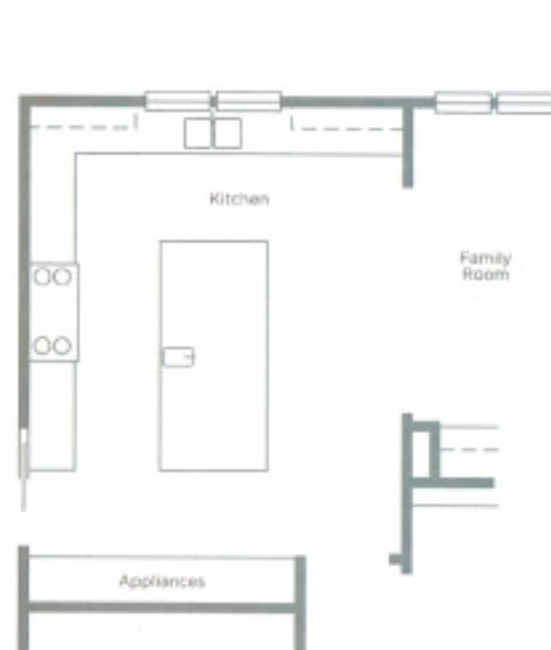
On a recent TV game show, the host asked a contestant what he'd do with his winnings. "I'll give my wife her dream bathroom," he replied without hesitation, a plan that was met with enthusiastic applause. Times have changed: In aspirational America, the bathroom has become the splurge of choice. The luxury bath has joined the professional kitchen as a room to live in. In this, our annual Kitchen and Bath issue, we look at outstanding examples on this front, as well as a trio of homes with quite pleasing wet rooms of their own. We've even included a High/Low, in which we create a fantasy bathroom on two renovation budgets. The contestant, by the way, won his jackpot. So presumably he and his wife have joined those who have taken a sledgehammer to the bathroom that came with their house or the kitchen they couldn't eat in. "Kitchens and bathrooms sell houses," says one TV makeover designer adamantly. That's the new "location, location, location" of the real estate trade and the new design mantra for 21st-century living. —*The Editors*

FLAWLESS IN SEATTLE

IN A CENTURY-OLD HOME IN
SEATTLE, AN EXPANDED KITCHEN
DESIGNED BY STUART SILK OPTS
FOR AN INVITING MODERNISM



Owner David Sinegal (pictured) says that the sculptural island is the heart of his renovated kitchen. An added edge gives the Calcutta marble counter the illusion of greater thickness; brushed-nickel wings accommodate seating on three sides. The same marble continues up the wall behind the range, where a narrow shelf elevates ordinary cruets into works of art. A custom hood enclosure reflects the bank of windows in the adjacent family room addition. The framed photograph is by Steven N. Meyers.



"I don't believe in work triangles," says architect Stuart Silk, who clustered most of the appliances on a single wall to minimize their presence. The swarthy cabinets, dove-gray walls and white trim echo finishes in the rest of the century-old home. To reduce the project's environmental impact, the architects recycled the old kitchen fixtures, built the new kitchen atop the existing footprint and used locally made cabinets and natural materials, earning Built Green certification for the project.



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Beguiled by its stately rooms and stellar views from Seattle's Queen Anne Hill, David Sinegal purchased his venerable 1910 colonial three years ago and has spent most of the time since updating and expanding it. One of his last projects was an addition that opened up the original kitchen, which had been divided into a cramped cooking area and breakfast nook. "It was really chopped up," summarizes Stuart Silk of Seattle's Stuart Silk Architects.

And if the spaces did not suit the home's generous proportions, the avocado cabinets and sponge-painted walls did nothing to enhance its appeal. "I wanted to do right by the house," says Sinegal, a divorced father of three. At the same time, he adds, "I didn't want something that was typical." Working with colleagues Robert Okazaki and S. Joshua Brincko, Silk gutted the space and incorporated part of a neighboring powder room to create a capacious new kitchen—80

square feet larger than the original—designed to bring people together. The new family room that adjoins the kitchen has windows on three sides, which provides the kitchen with much of its light.

Rift-cut white-oak cabinets, stained dark brown so they look like wenge, now make a dramatic backdrop for snowy Calcutta marble counters. "If you had counters that were more neutral, it would diminish the contrast, which would take away some of the sizzle

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN GRANEN
Above (clockwise from top left): Display nooks crown the windows; brushed nickel-plated steel lends beguiling sheen, not icy shine, to the island; upper cabinets were banished behind the range in favor of a marble shelf; a Venetian-plaster wall and flamed-finished limestone floor add color and texture to the room (barstools from David Smith & Co. in Seattle were made in Java); pewter knobs complement the rift-cut oak cabinets.

PRODUCED BY LINDA HUMPHREY. PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN GRANEN.
WRITTEN BY FRED ALBERT.

that's going on in here," suggests Sinegal, a marketing consultant. That contrast gives the space a museum-like quality that puts anything you set in it—from prosciutto to people—in high relief.

Appliances are consigned to a stainless-steel command center at one end of the room. "It's not my intention to make a refrigerator a focal point for a kitchen," says Silk. "I prefer to have the appliances invisible, and that's the best way to do it—to group them together." One exception is the Wolf range, which dominates the long wall beneath a sublimely understated hood.

Understatement ends at the island. "We wanted to push the envelope aesthetically, and we figured the best way to do that was to make the island into something special," Silk says. Brushed-nickel wings extend from either end of a marble-top base, lightening the mass of the 9½-foot-long counter and affording ample seating on

three sides. "It seems to have a magnetic draw," marvels Sinegal. Other rooms may boast mountain and skyline views, but when friends drop by, "they all assume their places around the island."

A former Costco executive (his father cofounded the company), Sinegal cultivated an interest in food while ordering specialty grocery products for the chain. Nowadays, his culinary exploits are limited to the occasional batch of chicken mole. "I aspire to be a fantastic chef," he says with a laugh. But remodeling the kitchen was less about cooking and more about creating an experience he could share with friends and family. "I enjoy entertaining. I enjoy the sense of community that comes with a kitchen," he says. "It's the one room where everybody comes together, so I wanted it to be a showplace." ❀

See Resources, last pages.