



everyday elegance

Sophisticated materials and furnishings with a sense of couture detailing give this family kitchen a comfortable opulence.

Field Editor Jorge S. Arango Photographer John Bessler



Walnut and white cabinets create a fascinating study of dark and light in this New York kitchen. Fashion-forward details and a mix of materials add layers of interest.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, COOKING IN THIS INVITING SANDY POINT, NEW YORK, KITCHEN WAS ONCE A SOLITARY AFFAIR.

The home's former main-level floor plan left the kitchen walled off from the adjacent family room and across a 6½-foot-wide aisle from the dining room. Thanks to a new open floor plan—and a sophisticated pairing of stained-wood and white cabinets—the remodeled kitchen is now a prime hangout space for this family of four and their frequent guests.

Kitchen designer John Starck helped the homeowners shift space to create a new and improved layout that encourages family togetherness and makes entertaining easier. He first cut a double doorway between the kitchen and the adjacent family room to open up the two rooms. Next, he annexed the awkward hallway, making room for a handy bar/pantry area and an extra dining peninsula at one end of the kitchen.

Within the main cooking zone, he emphasized efficiency by placing the main sink and dishwasher in the island, directly across from the range. A wall oven and microwave oven are tucked at one side of the range, while the refrigerator anchors the opposite side of the cooking area. Because the freezer is accessed less often, Starck placed that appliance on the other side of the island (directly opposite the refrigerator), where it's out of the way but easily accessible.

The homeowners requested white cabinetry, but Starck was worried that all white might feel too cold in such a large space. To add interest and warmth, he mixed in stained-wood cabinetry, Calacatta Borghini marble countertops with gray veining on the island and peninsula, and French pewter countertops flanking the range. “If you're doing a white kitchen, you have to break it up with other materials,” Starck says.



The kitchen's varied materials help give the room a style all its own. It's a little bit vintage, thanks to traditional cabinets with classic bin pulls and random-width oak flooring, and a little bit modern, thanks to accents of polished and brushed metal. Glamorous couturere like detailing—quilted leather stools, chandeliers with crystal pendants, and silvery grass-cloth wallpaper in the adjoining eating area—adds just enough sophistication to ensure that the space functions equally well for casual family meals and elegant dinners with friends.

RESOURCES BEGIN ON PAGE 140.

ABOVE A stainless-steel apron-front sink offers a modern take on the classic farmhouse look. The island's dark walnut cabinetry contrasts handsomely with the gray-veined white marble countertop. Behind the island, floor-to-ceiling walnut cabinets conceal a pantry and freezer at one side of the doorway into the family room. **OPPOSITE** A simple hood featuring a mix of polished and brushed metal and rivet detailing tops a professional-style range. Bin pulls on the drawers, old-fashioned cabinet latches, and pewter countertops enhance the kitchen's vintage style.



DESIGN STRATEGY >> Add interest to a white kitchen by including at least three different materials. More can work, but three should be your minimum, says designer John Starck.

THIS PHOTO Silvery grass cloth adds drama to the eating area's angled walls. Built-in window seats and painted planks on the ceiling lend architectural character.





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1 English mesh panels and steel bands add a vintage look to the doors of a cabinet at one end of the new peninsula.

2 Quilted leather stools with Art Deco silhouettes at the island's dining bar recall a chic Chanel handbag; nickel studs add a fashion edge.

3 Chandeliers above the island contemporize a traditional form with polished nickel, translucent mesh shades, and simple crystal pendants.

4 By annexing the former hallway between the kitchen and dining room, designer John Starck created enough room for a dining peninsula and a bar/pantry area. A wine cooler paired with refrigerator drawers keeps beverages handy but out of the main cooking area.

5 Plumbing fixtures feature a satin-nickel finish and strike a balance between traditional forms and modern simplicity.