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Differentiating Details

A unique ceiling can provide an elegant touch. The talented artists at Decker Ross Interiors designed this circular recess above a breakfast nook in this Key West-inspired home. The faux wrought iron pattern contrasts nicely with the painted blue background to add a beautiful art element above the chandelier. Decker Ross Interiors is located at 1445 Court Street in Clearwater and can be reached at (727) 442-9996. ■■

style

Each issue of *Tampa Bay Magazine* has a Style Section where we highlight unique and special items for your home. If you are a retailer and have any item that you feel should be featured in the Style Section, please send a photo of the item with a description along with your name, address and phone number to: Marc, *Tampa Bay Magazine*, 2531 Landmark Dr., Suite 101, Clearwater, FL 33761.

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KITCHENS

Where Magic Happens

By Marc Mencher



Decker Ross Interiors used coastal colors, woven detailed columns and a decorative backsplash to give this kitchen a Key West look.

DORIAN PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

For many of us, the kitchen is the heart of our home. It is where the day begins, where we greet family members, where we cook and eat. And for many of us, the kitchen is also where conversations occur, the place where important family decisions are made.

When designing or remodeling a kitchen, there is a seemingly endless array of options available. Since a kitchen's décor should reflect its owner's personality, you should decide what

is most important as you make your choices.

In addition to being beautiful and eye-catching, your kitchen should be functional. Many of these ideas should be self-evident, such as keeping the dishwasher close to the sink and having counter space next to the stove and refrigerator. Ideally, everyone needs an area to gather and sit together, along with convenient storage options. Other aspects such as adequate ventilation and strategic lighting are equally important.



Award-winning builders, Windstar Homes in Tampa, featured specially designed custom cabinets in this well-organized kitchen.

WINDSTAR HOMES

Many builders use an age-old model that is known as "the work triangle." This architectural concept connects the three main elements of a kitchen: the refrigerator, the stove and the sink, aligning them in a close proximity to save time and energy, creating a more efficient kitchen and enjoyable atmosphere. ▶

A kitchen's décor should reflect its owner's personality.



Volume ceilings and a well-designed floor plan provide plenty of useful space in this kitchen built by John Cannon Homes.

GENE POLLUX PHOTOGRAPHY

Modern Tampa Bay Homes used recessed lighting throughout this kitchen.



MODERN TAMPA BAY HOMES

Quality Marble built this oversized chef's island using Dupont Zodiaq's Calcutta Natura Quartz with a "waterfall edge to floor" appearance.



DUPONT ZODIAQ

Today, homeowners have an abundance of countertop choices with regards to design and materials. Imported marble has become a very popular selection for custom counters since it is available in a wide variety of colors and can be custom fit for any size. Solid granite, as well as cultured granite, which is a less expensive manufactured alternative, are other popular options. There is also the exotic Onyx Carrara Zodiac Quartz, which is extremely durable. This specialized quartz sparkles with an unusual depth and clarity to produce a 3-D effect due to its high content of crystal. Like marble, Zodiac Quartz offers superior strength, making it one of the more sought after components in today's high-end countertops. Even recycled glass is being used to create elegant and sophisticated kitchen work surfaces.

When building or remodeling kitchens, additional decisions need to be addressed with respect to flooring and lighting. Regardless of the your preferences, the flooring needs to be durable and stain resistant since most kitchens experience high traffic. As with our cabinets and countertops, kitchen flooring comes in an array of styles with options from exotic hardwood and marble to ceramic and laminate.

In this day and age, our kitchens should be every bit as individual as the chefs that cook in them and the families that live in them. When designing your dream kitchen, keep your needs and wants in mind, as it will be you who spends the majority of time in your culinary oasis. ■■■