

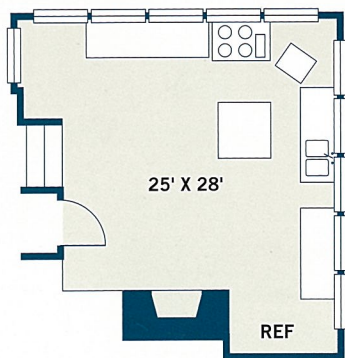
contemporary kitchen style

the essential handbook for an innovative design



*Mervyn Kaufman and the editors of
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roll with it



ABOVE: In plan, this kitchen is essentially an expanded L with a modest-size island. The room's lack of wall cabinets means there is space for windows that supply much-needed light and ventilation, plus outdoor views.

equipped with a center island

and commercial stainless steel appliances plus a double-sink unit, this industrial-style chef's work center has just about everything—except a surfeit of kitchen cabinets.

“The owner wanted an open, urbane kitchen that was highly functional and super-utilitarian, one that would not obstruct views of the woods and river outside,” said designer/builder Charles Ferguson, of the Meridian Company in Beaufort, South Carolina. “And he wanted great flexibility.”

Ferguson, in turn, added a Greenville architect, Charles Lachanos, to the team. Together, they came up with a low-budget design that really takes the toque. Lachanos took advantage of the kitchen's 14-foot-high walls and turned the 300-square-foot space into a loftlike setting. By putting banks of windows on two of the walls, he complemented the architecture of the shingle-style house and underscored the beauty of the owner's 26-acre property on tranquil Coosaw Island.

“The biggest challenge was finding a place for storage,” said Lachanos. “With so many windows in this room, there was no place to put cabinets.” So,

LEFT: Those are not base cabinets against the wall; they are restaurant-grade stainless steel tables. The designer had mahogany cabinet and drawer boxes built to fit on each worktable shelf.

OPPOSITE: In the island, movable wood drawers expand the amount of top-shelf space that is usable. The deep tones of the mahogany storage components complement the floor, which is made of reclaimed Douglas fir. Window light eases the heaviness of all the dark wood.

Ferguson turned to a kitchen-supply house and substituted rolling stainless steel tables for fixed cabinets. One table has become the 4-by-4-foot central island; others stand side by side, forming a countertop around the kitchen's perimeter. The tables cost no more than \$120 each, much less expensive than conventional cabinetry. “They can all be rolled around as needed,” Ferguson declared. “When the cook is working, they can be pulled together; when people are eating in the kitchen, the island can be pushed aside and set up as a small table. Even the range can be moved out a few inches from the wall.”

To facilitate storage and give the tables a less sterile look, Ferguson specified drawer boxes of dovetailed mahogany, lined with maple, that fit on the shelves of the worktables. The woody warmth complements the wide reclaimed Douglas fir planks of the floor and the stucco fireplace.

Glass shelves mounted within some of the windows form artistic perches for glassware and china, and industrial track lighting can be adjusted to illuminate individual workstations to suit the task at hand. A stand-up mahogany pantry, which





OPPOSITE: This genuine commercial range is not insulated, creating heat-safety issues that, quite conveniently, the steel tables resolve. Stainless steel being a poor heat conductor, it acts as an excellent countertop material here. Also, the table configuration makes it possible to sustain the minimum 3 inches between the heat source and the wood cabinets.

Ferguson designed to match the table drawers, provides a convenient spot for food storage.

“This design not only shows off kitchen equipment but also fits in with the sculptural nature of the house,” Lachanos remarked. “What we produced is eco-friendly—we’re not using hardwoods or wasting trees on cabinetry.” And should the owner ever decide to move, all he has to do is roll his kitchen into his new home.



ABOVE: One of the kitchen’s few fixed elements, the sink and stainless steel stand complete a restaurant-like look. The high arc of the wall-mounted faucet is great for filling tall pots, and the sprayer hose can blast the food residue off those pots—plus all the food-encrusted dishes—when the meal is over.



cutting cabinets

Assembling a kitchen without cabinets may seem implausible, but designer/builder Charles Ferguson and architect Charles Lachanos figured out a way.

turn the tables The design team effectively transformed restaurant-grade steel tables (left) into contemporary kitchen furniture by outfitting them with variable-size wooden drawers.

wheel the deal The fact that the stainless steel tables are on wheels (below, left) lets the homeowner locate storage where he wants it and move it out of the way when he needs to.

look at things your way Glass shelves (below) provide storage without adding visual bulk, sacrificing light, or compromising the view.

