

This kitchen is warm and welcoming, with the contrast of the bell curved glass lights and the stunning farm table.

CLEAN *And* CRISP

A Michigan family creates a functional and communal kitchen.

BY TONIKA REED

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATE BENJAMIN

If you have a growing family, your kitchen needs plenty of seating and storage to create an open atmosphere and accommodate everybody's needs. At the Westchester home in Birmingham, Michigan, the new owners were less than satisfied with the results of the previous renovation and contacted Main Street Design Build to give their kitchen the custom revamp it needed.

From the Edison bulb pendant lights to the traditional farm table, each intentional piece creates a communal eat-in space that fits and sits the entire family. Christine Ramaekers, Certified Kitchen Designer (CKD) and co-owner of Main Street Design Build, stresses the importance of stylistic integrity when remodeling your home. "Think about the integrity of your house and align it with your architectural style," she says. "Dig out the details that are in the house and try to improvise. Then personalize it. In addition to making it part of the house, make it part of the family."

"Make the space your own.

In addition to making it part of the house, make it part of the family."





(opposite) With the hand-rubbed, cherry wood island as the focal point, the white cabinets add a cool, classic ambience. (above, left) This walk-in pantry has fun, sliding barn doors and is perfect for storing extra appliances, keeping a wine collection and hiding sweet treats. The maple butcher block countertops provide an extra workspace in the kitchen, and high shelves maximize the opportunity for storage. (above, right) A custom fireplace framed in Carrara marble is all this pup and family need. The family displays their photos, trinkets from travel and extra lighting on the mantel.

Farmhouse style is all about function and family, so look for elements in your kitchen that will make them work well and last for generations.

PERFECT PATINA

Farmhouse style is all about function and family, so look for elements in your kitchen that will work well and last for generations. In the Westchester kitchen, one of the most important highlights is the center island, which the family uses more often than the table. This island boasts a cherry wood countertop that provides a long-lasting farmhouse feel and will wear well as it ages. "The island will get a real nice patina to it over time," Christine says.

The warm wood of the island, table and floors works with the cool colors of the kitchen's walls and cabinetry, giving the space a crisp and clean feel. Behind sliding barn doors, the walk-in pantry adds to the fresh feeling with plenty of additional storage for appliances and a beautiful maple butcher block workspace.

FOREVER ELEMENTS

Adjacent to the kitchen is a living area, where the Main Street team decided to add a custom fireplace as the space's focal point. "It's really fun because it's got the flat board, framed upper section and the stacked marble around the hearth itself," Christine says. "It coordinates really well with the molding throughout the house. The Carrara marble gives it a timeless feel." Together, the farmhouse kitchen and classic fireplace provide a family-oriented atmosphere that will mature beautifully through the years.

SEE SOURCES, PAGE 128.

CUTTING EDGE COUNTERTOPS

Doing a kitchen renovation this year? Here are 4 farmhouse-friendly countertop options.

WOOD. Butcher block countertops look homey and are a great option for DIY renovations, as they are cost-effective and easy to install. They do, however, come with a bit of maintenance, and you'll need to treat them periodically to keep them waterproof. Also, be sure to note if you want the surface to be edge-grain, which looks like long strips, or end grain, which creates a checkerboard pattern.

GRANITE. This stone material is a classic option that can be coordinated to suit most color palettes. Granite is also very durable—it's one of the hardest natural materials on earth, though be sure to wipe up spills quickly to avoid staining the stone over time. The cost of granite has dropped as it has become more wide-spread, so it's comparable to other options like quartz.

SOAPSTONE. This is a versatile and durable material that often appears in historic homes, so it has a traditional look. Most soapstone is gray with veins running through it, and it will darken with a patina over time. It's vulnerable to scratching, so you'll want to maintain it with regular coats of oil to hide the scratches.

STAINLESS STEEL. This material will provide a modern industrial look to your farmhouse kitchen. It's heat resistant and easy to clean, and because many stainless steel countertops are custom installed, you can get a seamless surface. These countertops are on the expensive side, and while not quite as vulnerable to scratches, the material can dent if you're not careful.