



An 11-foot-long island includes a 9-foot-long, table-height dining counter that seats the whole family—including the dad, who navigates in a wheelchair. Glass mosaic tiles and stainless-steel elements mingle with mahogany cabinets, granite countertops, and limestone floor tiles.

Practical Beauty

At first glance, this dazzling contemporary kitchen is all about the glamour of high-end materials: thick slabs of sensuously veined stone, softly gleaming stainless steel, and shimmering glass mosaic tiles. But its true beauty is revealed only when you start to use the kitchen's well-designed spaces.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Installing a stainless-steel prep sink next to the cooktop minimizes heavy lifting. Tilt-out drawer fronts below the sink conceal easy-to-reach controls for exhaust fans and lights.

The island's drawers and cabinets are easier to open, thanks to wide, easy-to-grasp pulls instead of knobs. Storing dishes and cookware in deep pullout drawers makes it simpler for all family members to access exactly what they need.

A 30x40-inch primary sink aids cleanup with its shallow construction and commercial-style faucet installed in the middle of the bowl. The faucet's overhead spigot can be easily pulled and rotated.

OPPOSITE: Lift-and-slide cabinet doors offer easy access by exposing everything at once. Set at a lower level, the handy microwave drawer opens by pressing a button.



Work zones, appliances, and fixtures were chosen to suit users of all abilities—but in particular, a dad who uses a wheelchair and wants to fully participate with his wife in making family meals and entertaining their guests. Designer Sol Quintana Wagoner translated the couple's wish list for design and functionality into stunning reality.

The owners wanted an inviting contemporary style that would harmonize the kitchen with adjacent living areas, which open to the patio, pool, and stunning ocean views. To that end, Wagoner gave them dark mahogany perimeter cabinets that contrast beautifully with a white-painted two-tier island topped with granite. Stainless-steel cabinets tuck in between dark wood counterparts, offering visual interest and enhancing the kitchen's contemporary pedigree. Limestone floors stretch from kitchen to pool, emphasizing the home's open floor plan, while sparkling glass tiles cover entire walls and create an ethereal backdrop for storage and appliances.

Within this sophisticated setting, Wagoner hid universal design elements that make the space more accommodating for

everyone. "We focused on their mutual physical abilities, not the [husband's] disabilities," she says. She opted for a 56-inch-wide aisle that makes it easy for two cooks to work without colliding and more easily accommodates a wheelchair. She also lowered the island's eating bar to a standard table height and left extra space at each end for a wheelchair. A pullout pantry and pullout drawers for dishes offer nearly effortless access for all family members.

Appliances are also easily accessible. A tall, narrow refrigerator includes shelves that raise and lower at the touch of a button, while undercounter appliances—a drawer-style microwave oven and two freezer drawers—cater to both seated and standing users.

The end result is a luxurious and liberating kitchen that the whole family can use and enjoy. Accessible features are seamlessly integrated into the dazzling design, so the focus remains on the gorgeous mix of materials and the streamlined contemporary forms.

RESOURCES BEGIN ON PAGE 158