

life in the slow lane

A busy couple's getaway kitchen is a place to relax and take a deep breath. The low-key, laid-back look creates a peaceful, easy feel.

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The kitchen of Margaret and John Torell's getaway home in South Carolina is like a breath of fresh air, thanks to its open layout, beach-inspired look, and old-fashioned touches.





thought it was a nice representation of the beach and seashells.”

The layout is just as laid-back and easy to live with as the color scheme. Architect Sam Furr nestled the kitchen in the hub of the house, where it has clear sight lines to the eating area, family room (via a pass-through), formal dining room, living room, and laundry. “It strikes that careful balance people are always looking for,” Furr says, “where it can accommodate a fairly large crowd and be open to the rest of the house—but not too open. People in the living and dining areas don’t want to be looking at dirty dishes in the kitchen.”

A long island funnels traffic away from the cooking area. The couple’s three children and their friends can come in from playing, wash their hands at the perimeter sink, grab a snack or beverage from the refrigerator drawers, and hop on the island stools without getting in the way of meal prep. “My kids definitely wanted an island where they could sit and eat,” Margaret says.

The island’s top is a combination of black walnut and fossil stone, with the walnut eating-counter portion slightly higher than the stone sink surround. “I wanted to break up the island’s mass, and we wanted to add wood texture to the kitchen,” Garcia says. “We also



A long exhalation

after the hustle and bustle of the regular routine. That’s what this vacation home off the coast of South Carolina feels like to Margaret and John Torell.

The couple wanted something different from their primary home, a traditional and colorful brick Colonial in New York. “For this house, I wanted something much softer,” Margaret says.

That included the kitchen. “It was really important to keep everything low-key,” says kitchen designer Regina Garcia, a member of the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA). “We didn’t want anything popping out. Margaret likes simplicity and a little texture—nothing too hard-line contemporary, nothing overly fussy.”

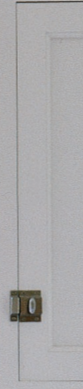
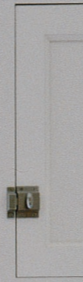
The nearby beach inspired the color scheme: white-sand painted cabinetry, aloe-color walls, driftwood-hue flooring, and a tile backsplash reminiscent of tumbled beach glass. The countertops are honed fossil stone, a natural material in a pale sage-green color.

“What’s interesting about it is that you will see lots of cut-throughs of fossils in the stone,” Garcia says. “I

ABOVE LEFT: The two sinks—this one on the perimeter and a second on the island—are twins. Both are apron-front models with identical brushed-nickel, high-arc faucets.

LEFT: A glass-tile backsplash and a convenient pot-filler faucet set off the range. The tile recalls tumbled beach glass, a fitting choice for the kitchen’s seaside setting.

OPPOSITE: Anyone sitting at the island or standing at either sink enjoys the wealth of natural light and pleasant island views.





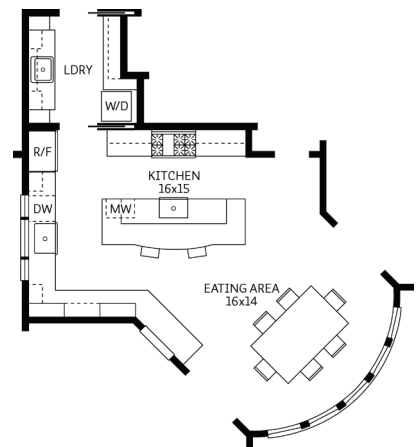
LEFT: Two garages keep snacks and small appliances hidden yet handy. The pass-through to the left looks into the family room. BELOW LEFT: The adjacent laundry room has a stacked washer and dryer and its own sink. BELOW: A space-saving microwave drawer snugs into the island. Fossilstone and black walnut coexist peacefully above the oven. OPPOSITE: An arc of windows brightens the eating area and its gleaming mahogany floor. Margaret found the chairs before moving in.



wondered how we could raise it slightly without going to barstool height, which would be too high for the kids.”

Other choices impart vintage character to the new room. The cabinets boast recessed-panel doors, latches, bin pulls, and divided-light glass fronts (on some of the upper units). Portions of the backsplash and island base are sheathed in classic beaded-board paneling. And the pendants over the island are on an old-fashioned pulley system so Margaret can raise or lower them. “I also like how the lights layer up,” Garcia says. “Sometimes pendants look too skinny and get lost in a kitchen. But at the same time, we didn’t want a punch of color. These gave us the best of both worlds.”

This is definitely the best of worlds for the couple. “It feels like a room, not a kitchen,” Margaret says. “My husband will be at the table with his computer, the kids are in the family room watching TV, and I am doing laundry, and it feels like we’re all together.” **KBI**



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