

ALL IN THE

Family

A trio of kids under five influenced the design of a large coastal kitchen.

BY LENORE CULLEN BARNES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTIAN SCULLY/DESIGN IMAGING STUDIOS

The large White Maccabias Quartzite island is command central for the family. A distance of four feet between range and island as well as sink and island allows good flow while preparing meals or socializing.



Brookhaven by Wood-Mode cabinets feature flush inset doors painted Alpine White on the perimeter cabinetry and Platinum on the island. A microwave drawer is tucked beneath the island.



WHETHER THEY'RE CELEBRATING a birthday, Christmas or the most recent addition to the family, the kitchen is truly the heart of this young family's Wickford, Rhode Island, home. With three children under the age of five, life hums in the beautiful and high-functioning kitchen that serves as command central.

While working with architect Michael D. Collins of Natick to design the home, the couple enlisted the expertise of Audrey Anderson, designer/owner of Apex Kitchens, early in the process. "Because the kitchen is so important to the house, people often design around it," says Anderson. "This couple often brought their children with them to our meetings, which showed me right away how family oriented they are."

With togetherness a priority, the couple wanted a large island. Anderson designed a generous one that accommodates the entire family and provides entertaining space for larger crowds. Expansive windows overlooking Wickford Harbor, white-painted cabinetry and light-toned stone achieve the "beachy airy feel" the couple sought.

A large farmer's sink was also high on their wish list. "We have three kids on stools helping wash the dishes," says the wife. "Playing with bubbles and water keeps the kids occupied for hours."

Anderson kept these enthusiastic young helpers in mind when designing the cabinetry. A floor-to-ceiling pantry stores the children's stash of snacks

and drinks. In one corner, cabinets function like an appliance garage, in this case concealing baby bottles.

"Audrey always went out of her way and paid attention to every detail," the wife points out. One of those details is a custom wood vent hood, designed with respect for the husband's tall height. Anderson also suggested bringing the three windows above the sink down to meet the counter. "A lot of people place windows too high," she says. "It feels like you're part of the outdoors when they're lower."

Anderson recommends choosing cabinetry before countertop material. "The white recessed panels are in keeping with the coastal Shingle Style design," she notes, explaining that by paneling the appliances the look is "furniture," not "industrial."

The couple chose gray-veined white quartzite for the counters, island and backsplash. "Having the same stone on all three works exceptionally well here because it's not busy," says Anderson. "It's subtle and serene." Which, she might add, is the perfect counterpoint to this lively, growing family. **H**