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## shore thing

a beach-inspired kitchen  
is ideal for a Floridian family

porcelain gods  
wood work

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# Cheeseburger in Paradise

For this beach-loving family, the kitchen is a virtual Buffett buffet

By Christina Trauthwein



What starts with "A," is used everyday and is 26 in total? Most people would immediately say the alphabet. No brainer, right? But wouldn't they be surprised to find out that for this truly unique home in St. Petersburg, FL, the answer is actually appliances. That's right, 26 of them! And yes, they are all functioning and operated daily. Seem excessive? Well, that may be true for your average family, but for this one, it seems very normal. Let's just say that in this case, less is not more, which makes perfect sense for a family of eight whose life is based on multiples. In fact, if appliances aplenty wows you, you'll be equally awed by the twin islands—oh, and the five different countertop materials, variety of primary colors and vast array of decorative hardware. It would seem that this assorted collection might result in a visual cacophony of sorts, but it works surprisingly well. Instead of visual chaos, it's organized chaos, planned with precision by the design team of Ron Haynes and Bruce Laughridge, of Tampa-based Urban Innovations, Inc.

And maybe why this unconventional remodel does work is because the 26-ft. x 23-ft. kitchen is based on a theme: the lyrical lifestyle of singer Jimmy Buffett, a favorite of the homeowners. It's casual, relaxed, informal—just like the family that uses it. In both the songs of the musical icon and the motif of this kitchen, sand and surf are key elements, yet the message is far from typically nautical (we've all seen the clichéd sailboat- and ocean-inspired themes) and much more beach-oriented. Specifically, the design incorporates those items found on the beach, or in other words, washed ashore. "We went for the salvaged look," said Haynes.

And it's truly amazing how much planning went into something that's meant to look rather random. For example, doors and drawers are a raised-panel frame profile, and each is finished in distressed white, red, yellow, green or blue, or mahogany with a woven raffia inset panel, giving them the appropriate "found" look. To add to the mix, the decorative hardware is a variety of metal, wood, ceramic, glass and bone. Sizes and patterns vary from coral replicas to animal shapes (yes, there's even a gecko).

"It's playful," said Haynes. "The kitchen is alive and animated, just like the family who inhabits it." To top it all off, a 4-in. round structural steel column, protruding through one island is enclosed in mahogany and wrapped with rope at the top to create a round "mast," like that of a shipwrecked vessel. Countertops vary from fossil stone to concrete to solid mahogany to copper to stained mdf.

Based on the personalities of the homeowners and their desire for a completely casual and livable space, it's easy to see why they would request that their kitchen, the center of family activity, be anything but linear. "They specifically told us 'no straight lines,'" said Laughridge. The architecture almost mirrors their lifestyle: fluid and free, not confined to straight lines and solid boundaries. This is most apparent when viewing the islands—by themselves and in context of their location within the space. Both are organic in form, with rounded edges, wave-like flourishes and serpentine details. Overhead, the soffit mimics the undulating

shapes—specifically the mahogany countertop—as does the low-voltage rail lighting. "It really seems to flow like a current," said Haynes, "which plays right into the theme."

Accommodating the many appliances was of primary importance, so the conventional work triangle was not applicable. The husband and wife have separate work centers, designated by the two islands: He does most of the cooking, so his is a large, 12-ft., 6-in. prep and cooking center, containing two grills (a closed 36-in. and open 30-in.), a 15-in. wok burner, 15-in. deep fryer, 15-in. steamer, warming drawer, refrigerator drawer, 36-in. dishwasher, a two-drawer dishwasher and a sink. "The ventilation, as you can imagine, was a major engineering feat as it had to address all of the cooking appliances," said Haynes. A powerful, double-walled 5-ft. x 6-ft. custom copper hood with make-up air intake adequately answers the need; heat lamps over a raised stainless central shelf, similar to what you'd find at a diner, help to keep food warm.

Her island is 16 ft. long and is primarily for service and clean up. It contains a 30-in., copper farm sink, 24-in. wine refrigerator, 36-in. griddle with rear downdraft vent, dishwasher, double roll-out waste receptacles and an icemaker. There is also a raised, 54-in. end section for small appliances. The primary feature of this island, however, is a 12-ft.-long, 3-in.-thick, floating, French-curved mahogany bar, which terminates with a 29-in.-high, 52-in.-diameter, round dining table. "There's plenty of seating for the family and their guests," said Laughridge.

But wait, if you're keeping count, that's not it: The remaining appliances are located on a wall, which essentially forms the backdrop for the two islands. Here, you'll find two ovens, a warming drawer, microwave and built-in coffee machine. "The placement was primarily dictated by height, addressing both ease of operation and child safety," said Haynes. A drink mixer, something the husband specially requested, plasma monitor and a 42-in.-high computer desk round out the wall. "It's a Mondrian kind of configuration," said Laughridge. "It's like doing a gallery wall of photographs. We were stuck with various sizes but used it to our advantage to create a collage of sorts." Added Haynes, "Because there is so much going on, you don't notice how busy it is. It all kind of melds together."

Located behind this wall is a 4-ft., 4-in. x 5-ft., 6-in. pantry with access to a 4-ft. x 6-ft. walk-in refrigerator. This unit allows for bulk storage of perishables with a shelf area accessible to the kitchen via an etched-glass and metal-frame door.

The finished product has a surprisingly cohesive feel, appealing to both the adults and children while remaining true to their casual lifestyle. Playful and highly functional, this kitchen is a reflection of the unique energy of its family and likewise, is inviting to all of the many guests. And with six kids, believe me, there are many. "At times, the whole neighborhood lives in the house," said Laughridge. "And that's just fine with the clients. They love it." ■



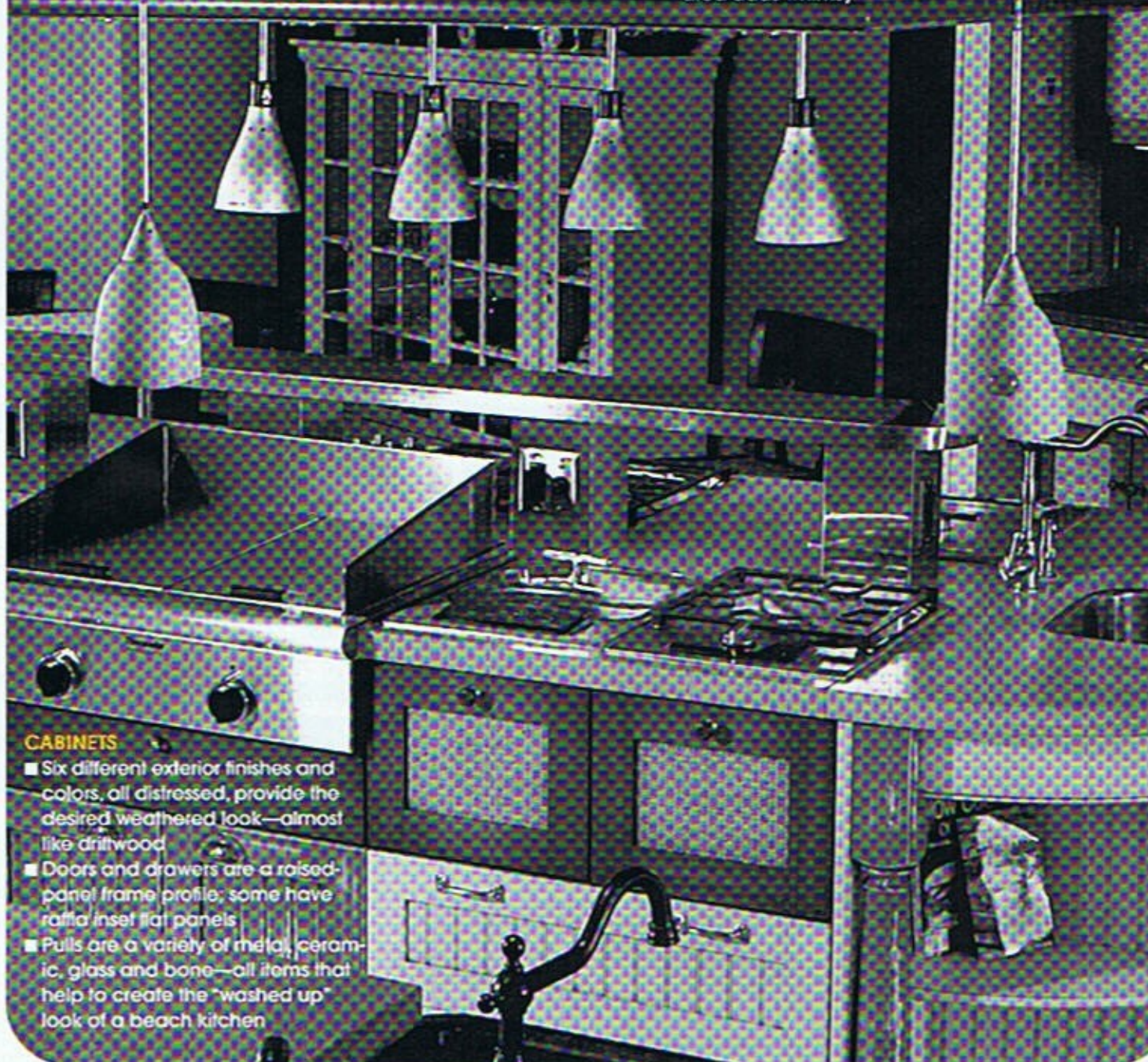
*The kitchen, which is completely open to all living areas, forms the center for family activity. The kitchen had to include plenty of built-in eating space and accommodate a long list of appliances. Additional requirements included an easy traffic pattern and the appearance of fluid, not square lines. The completed kitchen is comprised of two islands, which form two specific work centers, a wall of appliances and a walk-in pantry with a walk-in refrigerator. "It's far from a traditional kitchen," said the design team, "but it certainly reflects the clients, how they live and their interests. And ultimately, that is what is important."*

### (HIS) ISLAND

- Large cooking center containing two grills, a wok burner, deep fryer, steamer, warming drawer, refrigerator drawer, dishwasher, dishwasher drawers and a sink
- Custom copper hood is not only beautiful but high-performing to handle the abundance of appliances; make-up air vents line the perimeter
- A raised, stainless-steel shelf is a great place to rest cooked food; suspended heat lamps keep it warm
- Primary countertop is concrete; another made from fossil stone serves as a buffer between the dining area and kitchen and is perfect for buffet service

### LIGHTING

- Recessed downlights are located within the pattern of the silver embossed-metal ceiling panels; some have colored trim
- Indirect cove lighting behind the perimeter trim provides indirect illumination
- Halogen pendants of ceramic with inset colored glass hang over the bar, mirroring the curvature of the mahogany counter below and ceiling soffit above, and provide an illusionary wall to the open plan
- Handblown glass chandelier in dining area adds whimsy



### CABINETS

- Six different exterior finishes and colors, all distressed, provide the desired weathered look—almost like driftwood
- Doors and drawers are a raised-panel frame profile; some have raised inset flat panels
- Pulls are a variety of metal, ceramic, glass and bone—all items that help to create the “washed up” look of a beach kitchen





The appliance wall (left) has the charm of a patchwork pattern, yet is entirely functional and used daily. Though much thought went into the placement of the units, the result is a rather casual interpretation of the traditional work triangle. "It just didn't apply here," said Laughridge. "It had to be modified to work with the architecture." Adjacent, a walk-in pantry provides access to a walk-in refrigerator. Between the two stands a freezer with mahogany doors and a rattan inset panel. "Pineapples are stencilled onto the doors," said Haynes. "Not only is it an island theme, but it's the symbol of welcome, which is ideal for this family." Her Island (bottom left) contains many "gadgets," but is primarily for serving. An exquisite serpentine bar, made from mahogany, provides a place for the six kids to snack. The underside is clad in galvanized metal. Cabinets on one end house smaller appliances and cutlery and conceal structural support. In lieu of upper wall cabinets, plenty of storage is located along the base of the islands (above). Flooring throughout is bamboo.



## SOURCES

Designer: Ron Haynes and Bruce Laughridge —  
Urban Innovations, Inc., Tampa, FL

Architect: Phil Cambell—Tampa, FL

### Manufacturers

Custom cabinetry: Bright Wood Works—St. Petersburg, FL

Microwave: GE

Coffee maker: Miele

Convection ovens: Gaggenau

Warming drawers: Dacor

Freezer, refrigerator drawer: Sub-Zero

Deep fryer, cooktop, steamer, wok burner and  
downdraft vent: Wolf

Grill and dishwasher: Dacor

Electric griddle: Wells Mfg.

Ice maker: Scotman

Dishwasher drawers: Fisher & Paykel

Undercounter refrigerator and wine cooler: Sub-Zero

Custom hood: Oney Sheet Metal, Inc.

Lighting: Prima (low-voltage pendants); Halo (recessed  
fixtures); Eurofase (chandelier)

Photography: © Brad Augsburg



1



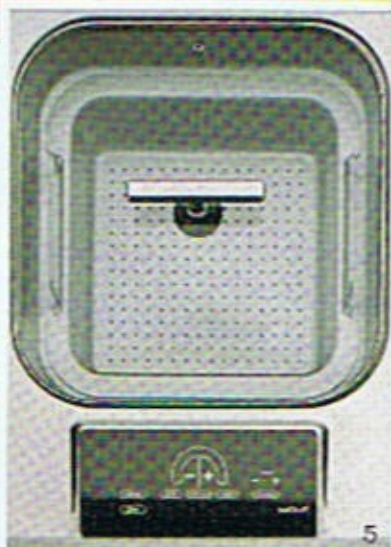
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5

**1** Miele's built-in coffee system, a favorite among many designers, is also a favorite of this family. Located on the appliance wall and out of reach of the children, the unit features fully automatic controls, making it easy to turn each cup of joe into an individual experience. Simply select the grind, push a button for choice of beverage and the system brews it on demand. **Circle No. 105**

**2** A 36-in., built-in electric griddle from Wells Mfg. adds a truly commercial touch to the kitchen. Incorporated into his island, the husband uses it to cook for the family. A removable splash-guard means the concrete countertops will stay clean. Located on the island next to the steamer, deep fryer and wok burner, a cooking center is created. **Circle No. 106**

**3** A 30-in., GE Advantium built-in wall oven located on the appliance wall offers a powerful halogen system to speed-cook food up to four times faster than a traditional oven, according to the company. This is ideal for a family of eight who is always on the move. It is shown in stainless, but is available in white, bisque and black as well. **Circle No. 107**

**4** The chandelier over the oval mahogany dining table is made of handblown glass by Eurofase. "It's like glassware sitting inside spiral arms," said Laughridge, "and looks like something you could have made yourself, which suits the creative interests of this family." Free-form and vibrant, it adds a whimsical touch. **Circle No. 108**

**5** His cooking island is equipped with Wolf's steamer in stainless steel, ensuring that meals are not only delicious but healthy. It measures 15 in. x 13 1/2 in. x 21 in. and has a two-gallon storage capacity. **Circle No. 109**