

KITCHENS

2015 HOUSE REVIEW THEMES

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The kitchen as focal point lives on, with increased emphasis on islands and pantries

By Larry W. Garnett, FAIBD, House Review Lead Designer

The kitchen as the center of our homes is no longer news, and it's certainly no surprise. This is the room where many of us really live. As a result, the kitchen must be carefully arranged to function as both a food preparation area and a gathering place for family and friends. While kitchens opening to the family room and breakfast area have been commonplace for some time now, what is new is that many designs now focus on just one dining

area. Outdoor kitchen and dining spaces continue to be some of the most oft-requested options by homebuyers, while separate food preparation areas and wine storage are high on the lists of those who are serious about entertaining. Take a look at what our Design Team has created this month, and remember, we always appreciate your comments.

Open-plan dwellings where the kitchens are the core of the home are in demand in a range of product types and in a variety of markets. We design them for stacked flats and townhomes for renters; for cluster housing targeted to first-time and market-rate clients; and for single-family-detached homes for affluent buyers. For many buyers, the open-plan kitchen serves as a showplace, with more serious food preparation and cleanup occurring in a small back kitchen. That back kitchen is outfitted with a dishwasher and strong exhaust fan to mitigate cooking odors. At Trevi, a single-family development of semi-custom homes in Irvine, Calif., for The New Home Co., one model offers a double kitchen for the serious cook and avid entertainer. This kitchen is flanked by a spacious dining room and a loggia for covered outdoor dining. It features two large islands surrounded by counter space. The kitchen boasts top-tier appliances such as Wolf ranges and Sub-Zero refrigerators.

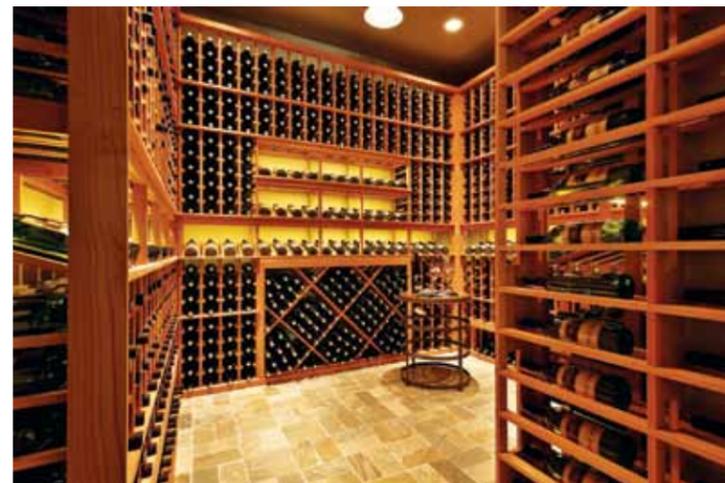
TREVI AT ORCHARD HILLS

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PLAN SIZE
Kitchen/dining: 625 sf



- A The Trevi kitchen is ideal for entertaining, with a large island for food preparation and presentation
- B A pantry that's lined with cabinets provides storage for equipment and grocery items
- C A wine cellar with temperature and humidity controls is set just off the dining room
- D The dining room seats 10, and meals can also be eaten on-the-go at the kitchen island
- E A loggia offers space for dining al fresco



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The prevalent design theme for most modern kitchens is simplicity. This is in contrast to just a few years back. At that point, buyers preferred angled countertops and partially closed-in kitchens with a smaller island and loads of cabinetry. The current trend is toward less cabinetry, more island space (much more), and big bulk-storage pantries. Kitchens today open wide to several other living spaces in the home. Our design reflects the current use of kitchen as core by making the kitchen what it has become: the axis around which all other spaces revolve.

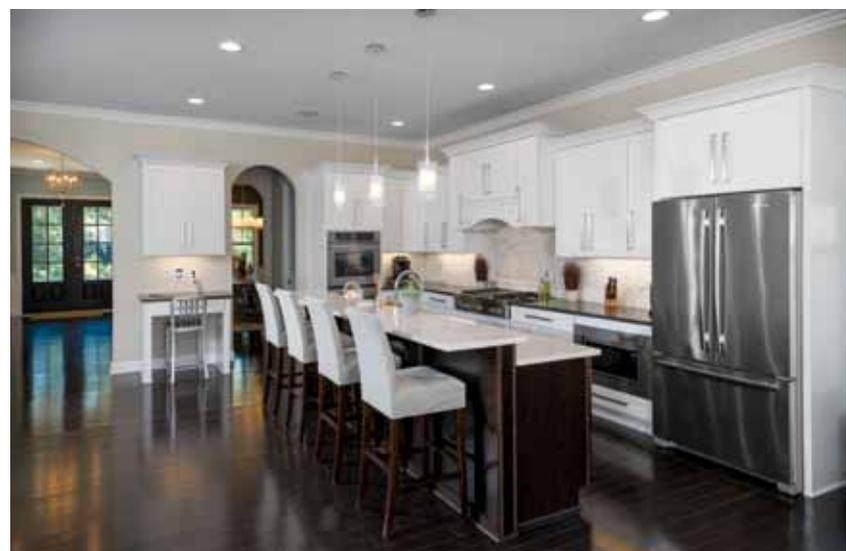
ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Kitchen/dining: 450 sf

- A** The simple, efficient design includes a large island
- B** The kitchen is the home's core—everything revolves around this space
- C** A large pantry provides bulk-item storage



THE OASIS

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Kitchen: 426 sf

Kitchens, the favorite place for friends and family to gather, need to be as beautiful as they are hard-working. Gone are the days when this room is tucked away, unseen. Now at the center of the floor plan, kitchens live on as the best room in the house for entertaining. They've gone from scullery to showpiece. Adjacent to this kitchen is a home studio that serves as a high-functioning utility room, complete with a dog wash; spacious sink; washer; dryer; drop zone; work area for arts, crafts, and school projects; and plenty of storage.

- A** Five operable skylights allow the kitchen to be flooded with natural light
- B** A wall of reflective tiles adds light and drama
- C** A generously sized center island functions as prep island and informal dining area
- D** Cabinets and hardware have a clean, modern style
- E** Commercial stove and cooktop, commercial hood, and pot filler make this kitchen ideal for serious cooking
- F** Behind what looks like a cabinet door is a spacious walk-in pantry that's big enough for small appliances as well as bulk-size grocery items



THE ASHFORD

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Kitchen/dining: 400 sf



Families seek homes with spaces that encourage interaction, and one of the best areas for this to occur is the kitchen. GMD Design Group worked with Beazer Homes' Virginia division to develop a plan for their Willowsford community. The result is the Ashford, which features a kitchen that serves as the home's social hub—fully integrated with the sun room, family room, breakfast room, and an outdoor covered porch. These spaces flow together so that each individual room lives larger than it otherwise might. There's abundant daylight throughout.



- Ⓐ Great room acts as gateway to the kitchen and is fully open to the adjacent spaces
- Ⓑ Covered porch provides a great outdoor living experience
- Ⓒ Breakfast, kitchen, and family room function as one large space
- Ⓓ Sun room has abundant natural light and is an extension of the kitchen and breakfast space
- Ⓔ Kitchen sink faces two windows and allows natural light to flow into the kitchen
- Ⓕ Island provides a generous workspace with visual connectivity to all adjoining spaces, with the breakfast table centrally set
- Ⓖ Pantry is placed outside of the main kitchen working area to allow for better circulation
- Ⓗ Laundry and mudroom are set near the kitchen, yet are protected from view
- Ⓘ Formal dining room is connected to the kitchen to make meal serving easy

THE JASMINE IV

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Kitchen/dining : 375 sf



Because the kitchen is the heart of the home, kitchen design is one of the most important considerations for potential buyers. They look for a great relationship between the kitchen and adjacent living spaces which typically include the family or great room, informal dining area, and outdoor patio, deck, or covered porch. Using a large island to separate the kitchen from the adjacent spaces is a popular design solution, with the island also serving as an informal dining area. The oversized island also functions well for entertaining, since guests tend to gather in the kitchen and having counter seating available to them is always a plus.

- A** Island seating eliminates the need for a breakfast table
- B** A sliding glass door to the covered porch lets more light into the kitchen area and allows better circulation to the outdoors
- C** A sought-after kitchen feature for most buyers, a walk-in pantry reduces the number of kitchen cabinets needed
- D** An optional butler's pantry between the kitchen and dining room could also accommodate a small desk

- that's nearby, yet away from kitchen commotion
- E** Keeping the flooring uniform between the kitchen, breakfast, and family room allows space for a large dining table, with plenty of room left for seating in the family room
- F** Adjacent to the kitchen, the outdoor space can be a covered porch with a grilling area, sink, and fireplace with room for dining and sitting areas