

PEEK INSIDE 10 GORGEOUS HOMES AND GARDENS

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Organic finishes and dramatic features capture a sun-kissed Mediterranean mood in this Florida kitchen.

WRITER DEBRA LANDWEHR ENGLE | PHOTOGRAPHER JEAN ALLSOPP
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Oversize rattan pendant lights from France focus task lighting on the kitchen island, where a bar area invites guests to pull up a seat.



TOP: A recessed stainless-steel sink keeps the island's profile streamlined. **ABOVE:** Hand-troweled plaster, rounded at the corners, softly outlines niches for cabinetry. "The plaster is what really defines the space," architect Marieanne Khoury-Vogt says. **OPPOSITE:** A vaulted ceiling crowns the dining area next to the kitchen.

The best recipes are often simple and fresh, with only a few choice ingredients to make the dish shine.

Succulent strawberries and cream, for example. Or a white-rum cocktail with fresh mint, fresh lime, a little sugar, and a splash of clear, sparkling water.

This kitchen has that same kind of "less is more" formula, relying on just three organic materials in a sun-drenched setting, with an occasional glimmer of steel to lend it a modern Mediterranean feel. "It was a very conscious decision to keep the palette simple," says architect Marieanne Khoury-Vogt, who collaborated with architect Steve Mouzon and interior designer Beth Dillard on the whole-house project. The walls and ceiling are luminous hand-troweled Venetian plaster in white. The horizontal surfaces are sand-color stone—buffed limestone for the countertops, Dominican shell stone for the floor. The cabinetry is reclaimed red gum with a dense, dynamic grain.

Set in a community of whitewashed structures in Alys Beach, Florida—and inspired by those in Bermuda, Greece, and Morocco—the home's exterior walls are 8 inches thick. In the kitchen, plaster-covered "buttresses" create a series of niches for appliances and cabinetry. The range tucks into an arched alcove roughly 8 feet across, and the refrigerator has its own cubby. "When the light comes in," Mouzon says, "it bounces off those thick-walled buttresses and then diffuses, making for a more beautiful light within the room."

The primary source of that natural light is a private courtyard, accessed through a series of glass doors. Two windowed alcoves, complete with bar seating, showcase the lush garden view. The shell-stone flooring continues into the white-walled courtyard—proving just how durable and easy-care the material truly is.

The island gathers essential functions in one spot for family and friends. And the open floor plan allows for easy flow and communication between the kitchen and dining area. "If you're in the kitchen, you're not isolated," Khoury-Vogt says. "You can participate in the life of the house."

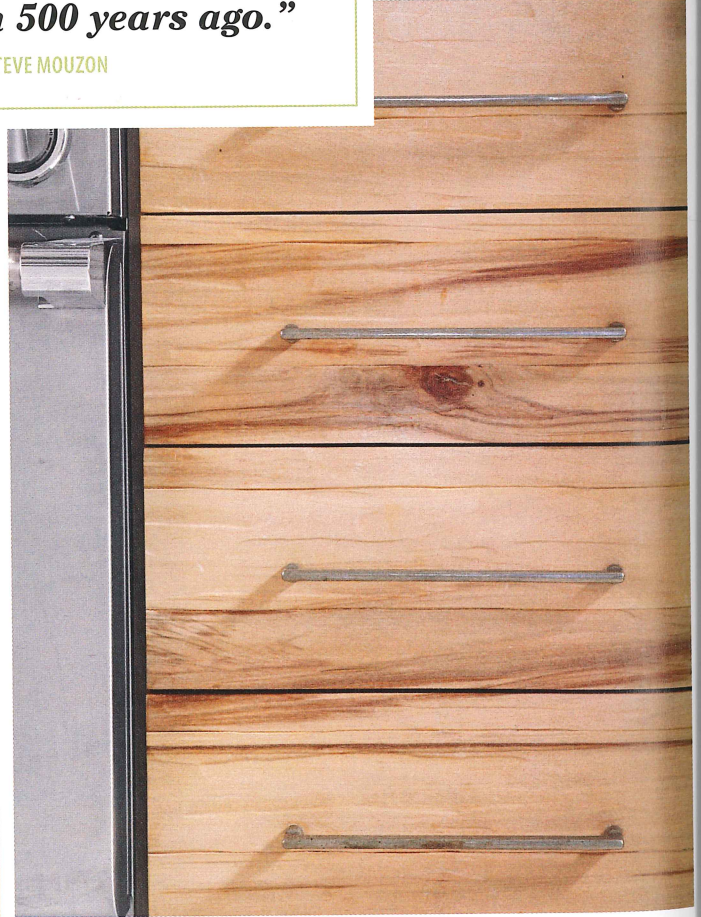
Although there's no pantry, storage is plentiful. "Wherever we had added depth in the walls, it became an opportunity to capture space for storage and niches," Khoury-Vogt says. The ample storage keeps countertops uncluttered—which fosters a sense of serenity that's beautiful in its simplicity.





“Everything about the kitchen seems substantial. It’s like a converted wine cellar from 500 years ago.”

ARCHITECT STEVE MOUZON



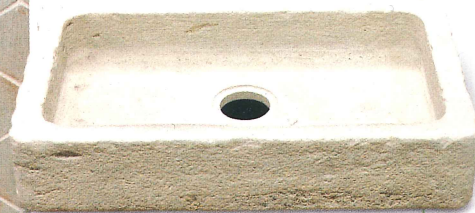


OPPOSITE ABOVE: Red-gum planks serve as high wainscoting, emphasizing the room's window niches. **OPPOSITE, BELOW LEFT:** Hand-hammered hardware lends an industrial look to cabinet doors. **OPPOSITE, BELOW RIGHT:** The kitchen's warmth comes from reclaimed red gum cabinets. "When the raw wood arrived, it looked like it could be burned as trash," interior designer Beth Dillard says. But when installers scraped it by hand, the beauty emerged. A light coat of wax protects the wood, making it easy to maintain. **ABOVE:** For smooth continuity, the range hood is finished with the same Venetian plaster as the walls.

MATERIAL MATTERS



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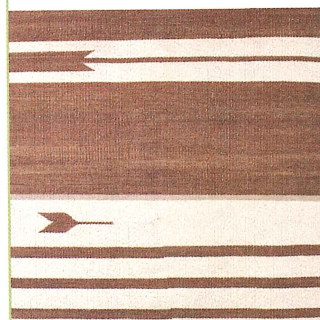
TITAN STONE APRON FARMHOUSE SINK
\$5,500; waterworks.com



JAVANESE BAR STOOL
\$479; wisteria.com



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\$40 per square foot;
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