



FRIENDS AND FAMILY CONGREGATE IN THIS MERCER ISLAND KITCHEN

ASSEMBLY REQUIRED

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER HAUPT PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN FRANCIS



The way to the heart of this vibrant Mercer Island home is through its kitchen, which serves as a meeting ground for friends and family, as well as global cultures and the breathtaking natural surroundings.

The homeowners, professional philanthropists who hail from Israel and South Africa, wanted a warm and open space that connects with the rest of the house as well as the spectacular views of Lake Washington. "When we entertain, which is often, cooking wonderful meals with our friends is part of the fun," says the wife. "Even when we're not entertaining, friends will ask if they can come over specifically to cook in this kitchen."

Along with the spacious cooking area, there's also a sitting nook with an inviting tiled fireplace and a dining area with a huge mahogany table that is the center of many lively discussions.

"We designed the entire home—including the exterior landscape—around the kitchen," says architect Brad Sturman, who worked with Dow Construction to create this hillside home.

Sunlight pours into the gold-and-earth-tone room, which seems to emit its own warmth and energy, from the Jerusalem Gold limestone floor tiles that evoke images of a sandy desert to the 11-foot ceilings with subtle recessed lighting, to the blond anigre cabinets fitted with frosted-glass doors. "We used a variety of materials and textures to enhance the feeling that flecks of light were bouncing off the surfaces," says Sturman. "The idea was to integrate the elements of nature and bring the outdoors inside."

Dark granite counters speckled with gold are paired with shiny metal fixtures and splashes of sky-blue and clay-red wall tiles, pulling in the sparkling lake like the moon's pull on the tide. Sipping morning tea while gazing out the sliding glass doors, it's easy to imagine you're on the deck of a yacht floating in the Mediterranean—a serene retreat removed from the cares of the world. ■

Jennifer Haupt frequently writes about home design, community action and other issues for regional and national magazines.

THIS MERCER ISLAND KITCHEN IS SITUATED ON THE LOWER LEVEL OF A HILLSIDE HOME, ASSURING READY ACCESS TO THE BACKYARD WHERE THE FAMILY SPENDS MUCH OF THEIR TIME. THE ISLAND BOASTS OPEN STORAGE, STAINLESS-STEEL DRAWERS, A LIMESTONE TOP AND ANIGRE SIDES—A MIX THAT HELPS DIMINISH ITS MASSIVE SCALE. CUSTOM CABINETS BY INTERIOR ENVIRONMENTS INC., (206) 764-4903.