

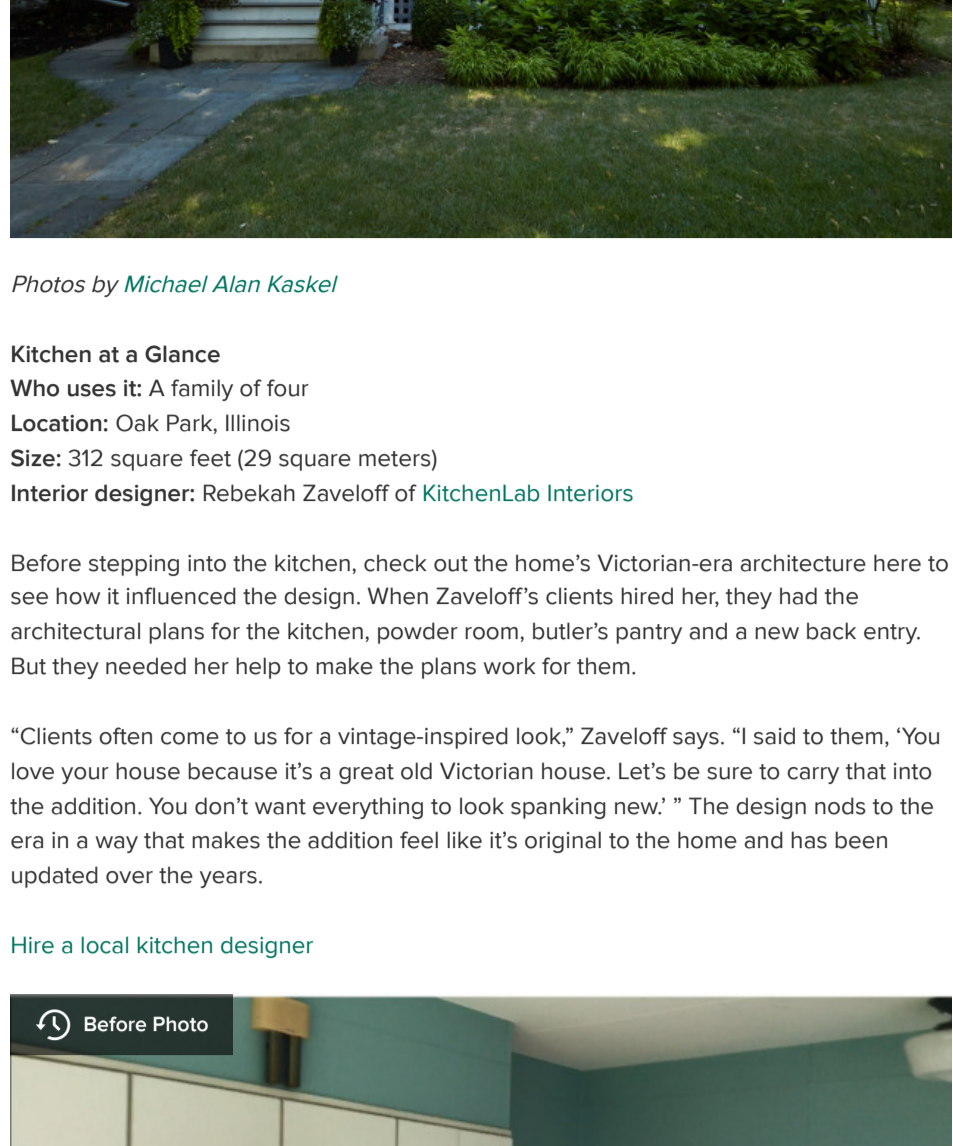
Kitchen of the Week: Family-Friendly With Vintage Character

A pro designs a kitchen that suits an Illinois home's Victorian architecture and supports family time

Becky Harris July 24, 2020
Houzz Contributor. Hi there! I live in a 1940s cottage in Atlanta that I'll describe as "coll... More

Save | Comment 76 | Like 191 | Share

This family of four in Oak Park, Illinois, wanted to be able to hang out and cook together in the kitchen, but the closed-off and cramped room in the Victorian home thwarted those plans. The homeowners had architectural plans for an addition drawn up, but the kitchen design felt too modern to them. They had admired interior designer Rebekah Zaveloff's vintage-inspired designs on local kitchen tours for years, so they hired her to make the addition fit their lifestyle and their home. The designer's era-appropriate intervention made the new space feel as though it had always been part of the house and had evolved over time.



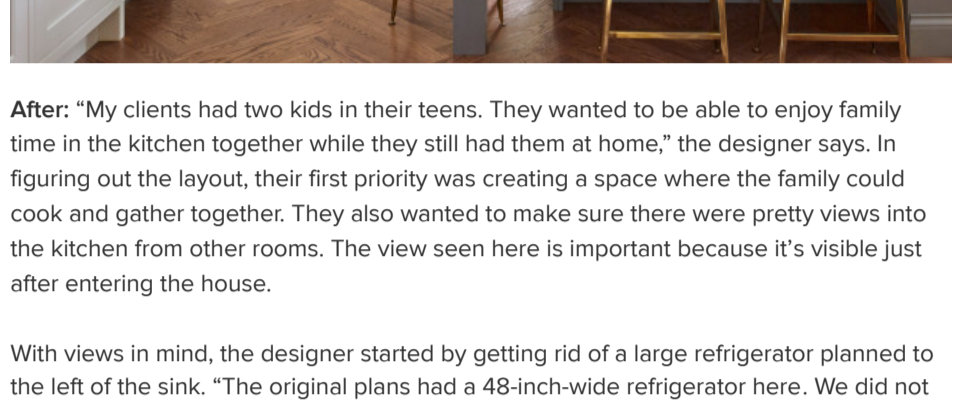
Photos by Michael Alan Kaskel

Kitchen at a Glance
Who uses it: A family of four
Location: Oak Park, Illinois
Size: 312 square feet (29 square meters)
Interior designer: Rebekah Zaveloff of KitchenLab Interiors

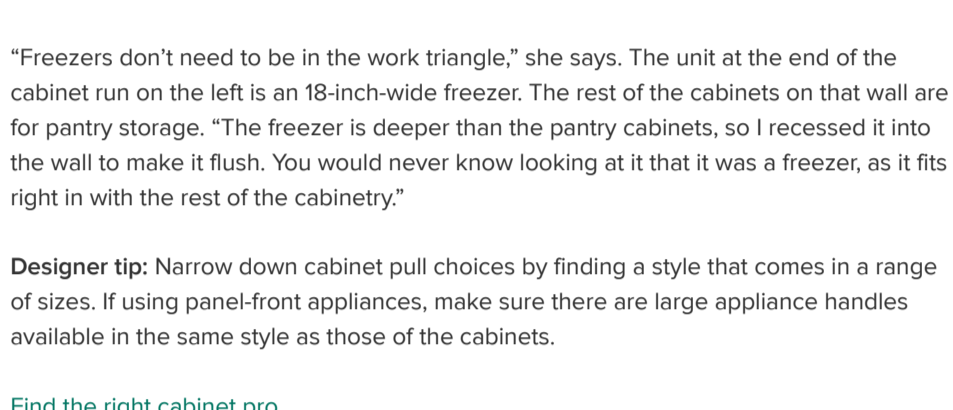
Before stepping into the kitchen, check out the home's Victorian-era architecture here to see how it influenced the design. When Zaveloff's clients hired her, they had the architectural plans for the kitchen, powder room, butler's pantry and a new back entry. But they needed her help to make the plans work for them.

"Clients often come to us for a vintage-inspired look," Zaveloff says. "I said to them, 'You love your house because it's a great old Victorian house. Let's be sure to carry that into the addition. You don't want everything to look spanking new.'" The design nods to the era in a way that makes the addition feel like it's original to the home and has been updated over the years.

[Hire a local kitchen designer](#)



Before: This glimpse of the previous kitchen shows why the cramped, closed-off and dated space wasn't working for the family. It was located off the back of the house and was removed to make room for the addition.



After: "My clients had two kids in their teens. They wanted to be able to enjoy family time in the kitchen together while they still had them at home," the designer says. In figuring out the layout, their first priority was creating a space where the family could cook and gather together. They also wanted to make sure there were pretty views into the kitchen from other rooms. The view seen here is important because it's visible just after entering the house.

With the views in mind, the designer started by getting rid of a large refrigerator placed to the left of the sink. "The original plans had a 48-inch-wide refrigerator here. We did not want that to be the focal point," she says. "With the flexibility of today's separate column refrigerators and freezers, we were able to break them up and integrate them seamlessly." Panel fronts that match the cabinetry camouflage the appliances. Zaveloff balanced the 30-inch fridge she specified with a pretty glass china cabinet that sits atop the counter next to it.

"Freezers don't need to be in the work triangle," she says. The unit at the end of the cabinet run on the left is an 18-inch-wide freezer. The rest of the cabinets on that wall are for pantry storage. "The freezer is deeper than the pantry cabinets, so I recessed it into the wall to make it flush. You would never know looking at it that it was a freezer, as it fits right in with the rest of the cabinetry."

Designer tip: Narrow down cabinet pull choices by finding a style that comes in a range of sizes. If using panel-front appliances, make sure there are large appliance handles available in the same style as those of the cabinets.

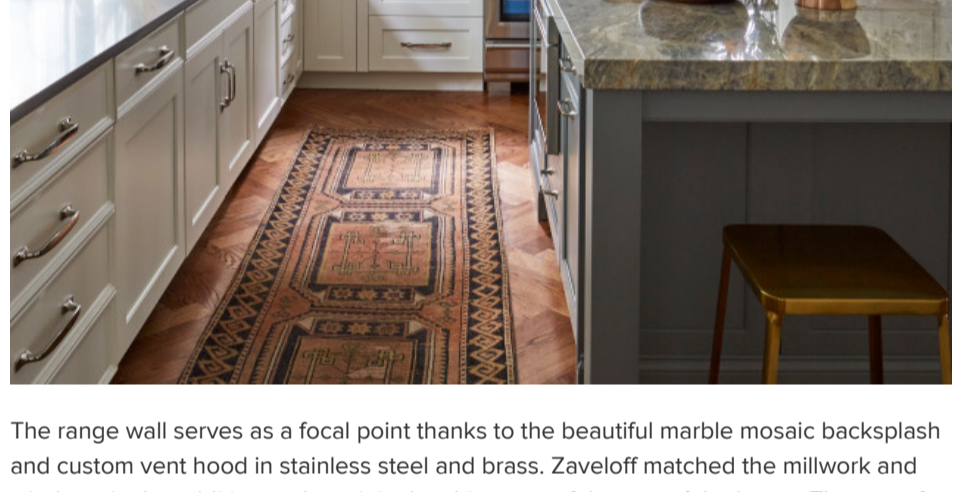
[Find the right cabinet pro](#)



You can see the addition and the way the spaces fit together in this floor plan. The right side of the plan, beyond the dining and living rooms, is the addition. The main kitchen is at the bottom, with a large island. The pantry cabinets and freezer are in the top left corner of the kitchen. At the end of their wall is a landing station, and behind the wall is a butler's pantry that leads to the dining room. The new powder room is across from the butler's pantry.

In the top right corner is a new mudroom entry that connects to the backyard and driveway. It also contains the basement stairs.

The former kitchen occupied a small square near the top right side of the plan where the powder room and butler's pantry are now. "It was basically a tear-off," Zaveloff says.

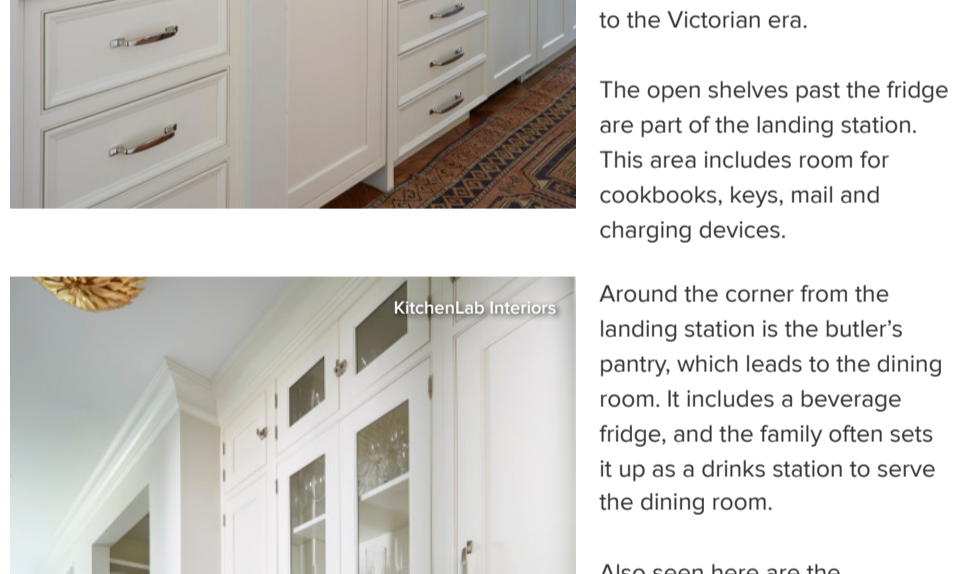


One of the family's must-haves was a big island for working and seating. "They wanted to have room for people to sit on two sides," Zaveloff says. Rather than a typical block of cabinets topped with a counter, she designed one with legs on the seating side and varied massing to create more of a custom furniture look. And with the view from other rooms in mind, she hid elements such as the microwave drawer on the other side. This side has some storage cabinets under the seating area, while the microwave drawer and trash pullouts face the sink.

The island countertop is Sapphire Pearl quartzite. The designer specified a built-up mitered edge to give it a thicker appearance. This makes it stand out from the perimeter counters and adds to the custom look of the island.

The pendant lights over the island have concrete shades. "Those were backordered for six months, so we tried to find alternatives," she says. "But nothing was as good. The wait was worth it — they complement the island color so well."

Wall paint: Sheep's Wool, Benjamin Moore; living room rug: Rouzati Rugs

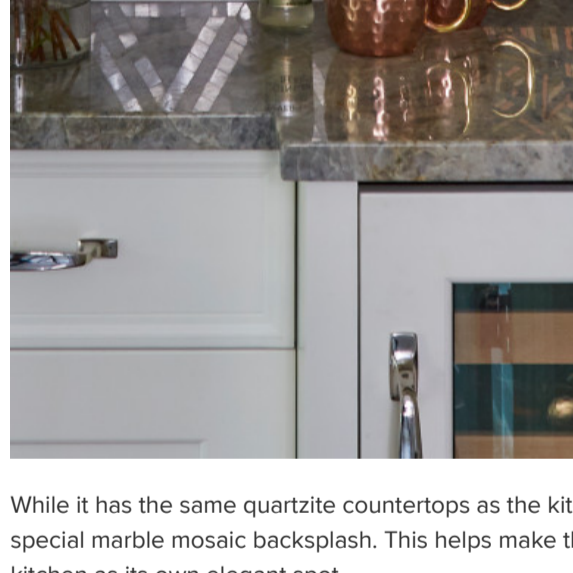


The range wall serves as a focal point thanks to the Zaveloff marble mosaic backsplash and custom vent hood in stainless steel and brass. Zaveloff matched the millwork and windows in the addition to the original architecture of the rest of the home. The rest of the backsplash is subway tile that extends to the ceiling. These tiled walls nod to the era, while their elongated 3-by-12-inch tiles update it.

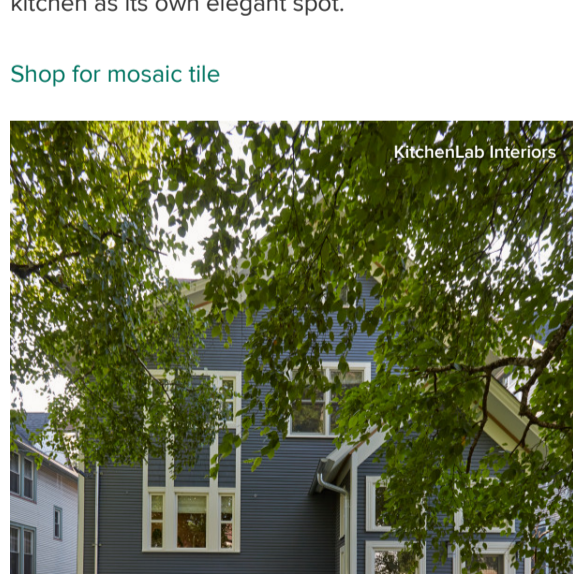
The homeowners knew they wanted a prep sink so multiple people could work in the kitchen together, but they didn't want one in the island. "I told them about a professional chef I'd worked with on his home kitchen. He had specified a prep sink next to the range for convenience," she says. They liked the idea, so she placed one to the right of the range.

The prep sink and its plumbing took up storage space, so Zaveloff specified storage in the island across from the range to keep cooking items close at hand. The range-facing side of the island has room for pots, pans and cutting boards, as well as a pullout knife block.

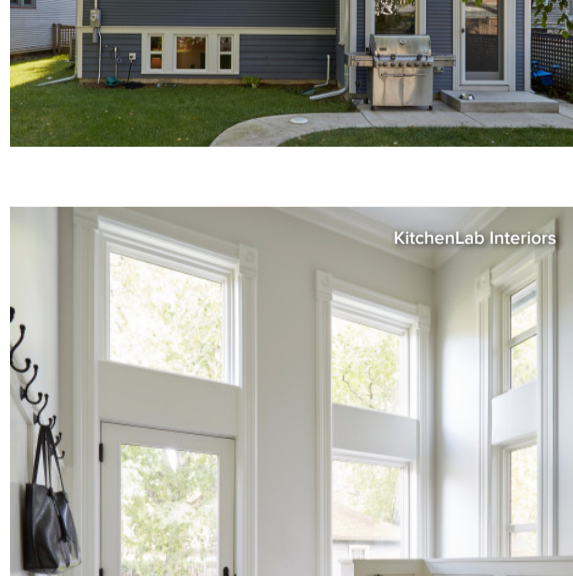
Marble mosaic and ceramic subway tile: TieBar



The hardware and faucets are polished nickel. The designer mixed in brass accents on the hood, stools and light fixtures. Mixing finishes lends a timeless feel.



Mixing cabinetry finishes creates that feel as well. Here, a mix of frameless molded drawer fronts and beaded Shaker-style cabinet doors add to the vintage look. Feet on the lower cabinets give them a furniture look appropriate to the Victorian era.



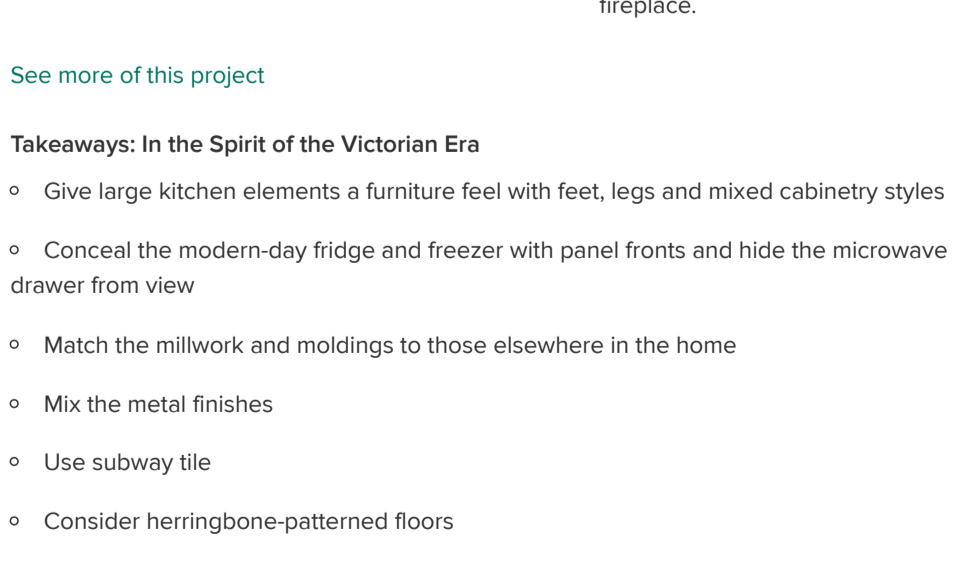
The open shelves past the fridge are part of the landing station. This area includes room for cookbooks, keys, mail and charging devices.



Around the corner from the landing station is the butler's pantry, which leads to the dining room. It includes a beverage fridge, and the family often sets it up as a drinks station to serve the dining room.

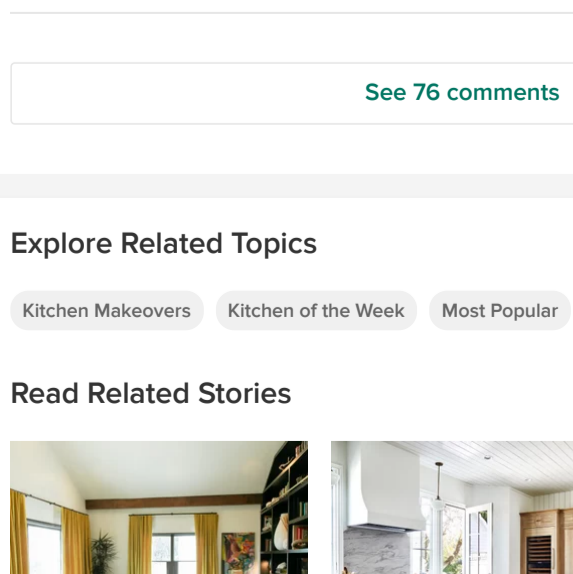


Also seen here are herringbone oak floors that were part of the renovation. Zaveloff added a mix of rugs she sourced at North Carolina's High Point Market throughout the first floor. "They add so much warmth," she says.

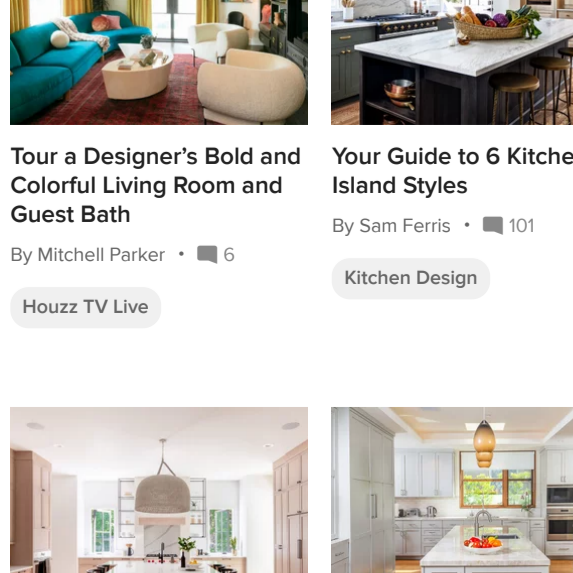


While it has the same quartzite countertops as the kitchen, the butler's pantry has a special marble mosaic backsplash. This helps make the pantry stand out from the kitchen as its own elegant spot.

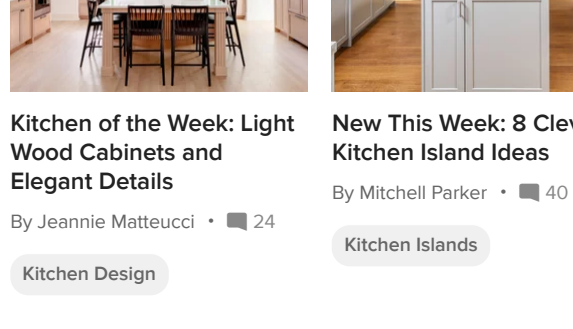
[Shop for mosaic tile](#)



This is how the addition looks from the backyard. The entry on the right is the new mudroom.



Previously, the home lacked a mudroom space. Zaveloff turned a new back hallway into a drop zone by adding a bench with space beneath it for storage and hooks for coats and bags. Behind the bench are the stairs to the basement. A glass door and multiple windows keep the space light-filled.



An encaustic cement tile floor grounds the mudroom with pattern. "I liked the idea of patterned tile nodding to the era, even if this isn't a Victorian pattern," Zaveloff says. "It can hide a lot of mess, it's more casual in this new part of the home, and it's fun." The colors also pick up on the exterior paint color, creating a nice transition upon entering.

The stairs lead up to the landing zone and kitchen. Zaveloff also redecorated the rest of the first floor, including with rugs, lighting, furniture, paint and a new tile surround for the fireplace.

[See more of this project](#)

Takeaways: In the Spirit of the Victorian Era

- Give large kitchen elements a furniture feel with feet, legs and mixed cabinetry styles
- Conceal the modern-day fridge and freezer with panel fronts and hide the microwave drawer from view
- Match the millwork and moldings to those elsewhere in the home
- Mix the metal finishes
- Use subway tile
- Consider herringbone-patterned floors

Read more Houzz | Browse kitchen photos | Hire a kitchen remodeler | Shop for kitchen products

Save | Comment 76 | Like 191 | Share

[See 76 comments](#)

Explore Related Topics

Kitchen Makeovers | Kitchen of the Week | Most Popular

Read Related Stories

Tour a Designer's Bold and Colorful Living Room and Guest Bath
By Mitchell Parker • 6

Your Guide to 6 Kitchen Island Styles
By Sam Ferris • 101

How to Plan the Perfect U-Shaped Kitchen
By lvkitchens • 113

Kitchen of the Week: Light Wood Cabinets and Elegant Details
By Jeannie Matteucci • 24

New This Week: 8 Clever Kitchen Island Ideas
By Mitchell Parker • 40

New This Week: 4 Kitchens With Dramatic Black Cabinets
By Mitchell Parker • 15