

Simply Stylish

Writer Marirose Krall | Photographer Linda Pordon | Designer Katherine Cowley | Location Holmdel, NJ

A Holmdel kitchen merges sleek fixtures with rustic accents



The kitchen features rustic wood accents against sleek cabinetry and contemporary lighting. "The organic elements work to create a "wow" effect while balancing the contrast of the light and dark paint and stone as well as the modern lines of the light fixtures," designer Katherine Cowley says.

"I wanted a lot," Neeti Dharia says when describing the kitchen in the newly built residence she and her husband, Devasish Majumdar, own in Holmdel. Dharia had a particular style in mind, designer Katherine Cowley says. "They wanted a modern barn aesthetic, which is a look that I love," says Cowley, of Brielle-based Moose Interior Designs. Dharia adds, "We cook a lot, and we have two young kids. We wanted something very inviting and open and spacious, something easy to move around in." In addition, Dharia notes, "We wanted something very calming."

Furnishings and fixtures were carefully selected to foster that calming atmosphere. Cowley explains, "The moldings and casings in the kitchen are purposefully simple, with no crown and Shaker-style doors, lending a timeless farmhouse feel that is also modern in its minimalist style."

The sleek cabinetry is balanced by rustic wood accents. "The beams were sourced from western Pennsylvania," Dharia says. "They're beautiful pine and they coordinate with the white oak on the hood and on the floors." Cowley calls the wood beams the "statement feature" in the space.



It was very important to homeowner Neeti Dharia that the island top be one solid slab. "I didn't want to see a seam," she says. "Bedrock Granite did a good job without seams." The globe pendants over the island are a favorite of Dharia's. "They're beautiful with the clear glass. I love when it's a sunny day and the light is shining in. They catch the sunlight. It's really stunning."

The warm wood tones continue with the stools at the island as well as the dining table. Cowley notes that the table's "unique pillar legs add a modern style that offsets the cleaner lines of the chairs, which are upholstered in a linen neutral."

While white tones make up the majority of the space, the room also features bolder touches. Small doses of black in the window trim, faucet and pot filler make an emphatic, but not overwrought, statement. The island features a deep, rich tone as well. "We painted it 'Hale Navy' by Benjamin Moore — a deep shade that makes for a dramatic focal point," Cowley says. "It's a beautiful color that complements the darker elements in the windows and plumbing fixtures, while bringing more depth and sophistication than you get with basic black."

Dharia explains why color selection was so important in this space. "We based the whole house's color scheme off the kitchen. It's the center point. It's where the family gathers. It was very important to us to have that same look throughout our home. Kat was instrumental in carrying that palette through the rest of the house."



"The clients have young children so ample storage was important to them, which I understand as a young mother myself," Cowley says. "The pantry has a timeless, farmhouse feel with its barn door, which we kept all white in order to make it clean and functional. The X detail in the wood adds to the barn aesthetic."

Lighting also plays an important role in the look of the space, and it comes from many different sources. "This kitchen has undercounter lights, sconces and overhead lighting that allow for subtle, moody lighting that is perfect for entertaining," Cowley says. "The large window brings in abundant light. I'm always interested in maximizing the natural light in a space as it does wonders in making a room look its best."

The lighting and other accents in the room feature various tones of the same metal, carefully selected to work together. Cowley says, "The most challenging part of the project was the time required in matching the various brass elements. With lighting, fixtures and hardware coming from various vendors, we had to be very diligent about sampling products and matching the color and tone to ensure a cohesive design."

Dharia adds, "Kat did a beautiful job making sure the brass in the pulls, in the sconces and in the pendants over the island were maybe not an identical match but played off each other really well. She did a great job making sure that it was really pleasing to the eye."



The kitchen dining area features a wood table surrounded by sleek wood and iron chairs. "The clients and I were very much on the same page with our tastes," Cowley says. "But I did push them out of their comfort zone with some more eclectic choices for their furniture. They trusted me to choose pieces they normally wouldn't, and it's gratifying to see how much they love the end result."