



## TASTE OF TRANSITIONAL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GAIL OWENS

Interior designers and homeowners often call out the backsplash as their kitchens' focal point. Not so in this winning Encinitas kitchen. Both homeowner Joe Michniewicz and designer Megan Siason named the island as the front-and-center hot spot.

"I think one of the biggest items, aside from adding square footage, was bringing in the elongated island," Megan says. "The huge lack of storage space, combined with just two landing areas for the countertop, made the previous kitchen insanely inefficient. This island's counter space offers a lot more surface area for baking, prepping and

eating buffet style. And we gained a lot of room for storage within the island."

The top of the 13-foot island, as well as the perimeter counter space, conjures up the elegance of marble but consists of durable quartzite. The casual, traditional air of the island's turned legs, chunky base and accompanying driftwood-look swivel chairs offset the luxury of the stone's contemporary, satin finish. The play between the two styles has purpose.

"We wanted the 1980s builder's kitchen to become more open and modern yet match our Old World-style home and traditional furniture selections," Joe says. "The new kitchen is a crossover between traditional and modern. It has an updated look without feeling like you are walking into a style that was forced."

Cool shades of whites, blues and grays for countertops, cabinetry and stainless steel appliances neutralize traditional design. The hues rule with a light hand, as other tints were brought in for warmth and a more conventional sense.

"Bronze tones added in the backsplash, cabinet hardware

**Top left:** Like a chameleon, the glass backsplash changes color, switching from shades of translucent blue to metallic bronze, depending on the sun's angle.

**Bottom left:** Designer Megan Siason created a welcoming, spacious kitchen with ample storage and counter surface for efficient home routines and an easygoing flow for family gatherings.





and light fixtures balance existing furniture pieces,” Megan says. “Cabinets are not stark white but putty white. The wall color is Accessible Beige. The island base has a washed, coastal gray vibe. The Siberian oak flooring has a combination of ash tones and warm blondes. We didn’t want to go overly modern or overly traditional. Simplistic, elegant and transitional were more the key.”

Joe voiced complaints about the earlier cook space’s lack of flow.

“The kitchen was not laid out correctly,” he explains. “It was totally closed off from the rest of the house as its own little, separate room. It was narrow and long, and there was not a lot of room for people to move. When our son’s friends came over or our friends and relatives visited, it really felt cramped.”

Removing a wall that separated the kitchen from the family and dining areas transformed the space into a convivial gathering spot that is highly functional — or, as Joe puts it, “Everything is right where you need it, and it’s a joy to cook in it.”

“Joe and his wife, Katherine, entertain often,” Megan says. “Having a larger kitchen takes a lot of the stress away. The re-creation of their space has drastically improved their home life.”



Counter chairs that swivel feature a driftwood finish and nailheads that tie them into Joe and Katherine Michniewicz’s traditional/coastal style kitchen.

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“This is an impressive creation of a relaxed yet polished, coastal vibe.”

— JUDGE TONY GARCIA

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