



Pattern Play

AN ARTFUL MIX OF FINISHES, SHAPES, AND STYLES INVIGORATES
A NEUTRAL TONE-ON-TONE PALETTE

WRITTEN BY AMY ELBERT
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANCESCO LAGNESE

What's a mother to do? Nancy Epstein, founder and CEO of Artistic Tile, was helping her son and his wife select tile designs for their new home in New Jersey. "Our biggest challenge was that they wanted the same material—Calacatta Gold—in every room in the house," Nancy says with a chuckle. While a neutral palette creates a timeless backdrop, an all-white space can become monotonous. Nancy's solution was to mix things up. "If you like very white and beige colorways ►

KITCHENS

Kitchen Rutt Regency cabinets on the sink wall and in the cooking area are painted linen white; the island is stained white; the island is stained walnut. Two Franke sinks with Dornbracht faucets offer dual work zones. The floor is Artistic Tile's "Vestige Ash" in Chevron.

Range wall Stainless steel shelves bookend the custom hood and 48-inch Wolf rangetop. The wall is Artistic Tile's Calacatta Gold marble.

Designers RitaLuisa Garcés (seated) and Nancy Epstein collaborated on the project.

Family dining area French doors open to the backyard, which features a grill and outdoor entertaining area. The family usually dines at the round Zoffany table seated on "Normandie" chairs from Artistic Frame. The chair fabric is by Duralee.

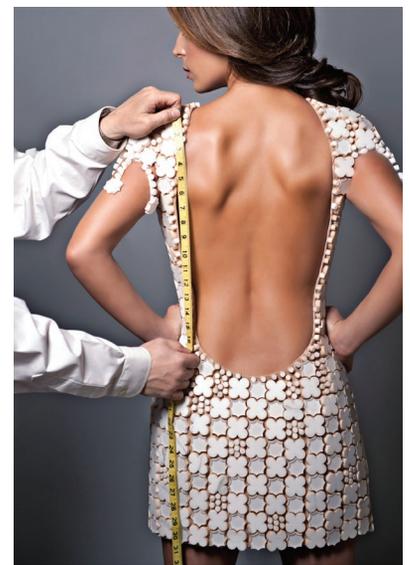
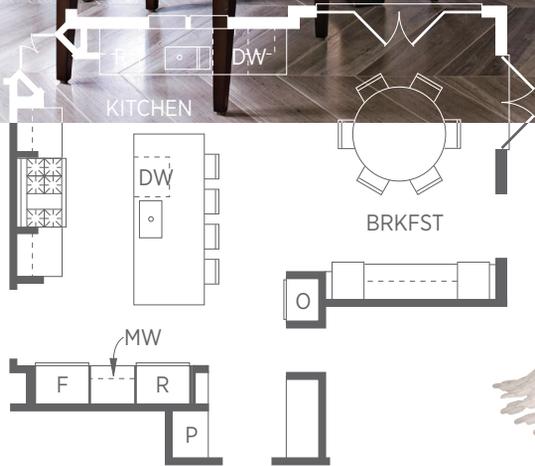


and want to use a lot of tile product, changing patterns and textures will give your eye the visual relief it needs," Nancy explains.

Nearly all the marble in this kitchen is Calacatta Gold, but the variety of formats and finishes makes for a sophisticated and elegant space—while still maintaining the simplicity that Nancy's daughter-in-law prefers. Elongated brick tiles with a honed finish cover the backsplashes and the dramatic arched wall that houses the range and custom stainless steel hood. The underside of the arch is lined with polished mosaics. The countertops are two-inch-thick slabs of polished Calacatta Gold.

"Everything has some weight, some girth to it," Nancy says. "A common design mistake is making things too skinny. We want people to be skinny—not tile. You want to feel tile's majesty and its beauty."

Floors are a warm-toned limestone with a brushed finish that creates texture and accents the stone's veining. "When you walk in the room, you see the dimension of the floor," Nancy says.



Tile Tailors

“We wanted to position ourselves as hip, hot, sexy, forward-thinking, and fashionable,” says Nancy Epstein, CEO of Artistic Tile, about the eye-catching ads showing models wearing clothing made of tiles. Yes, they are actual tiles, she says, which are sewn to a fabric underbody—but they aren’t for sale. “They’re miserably heavy and very hard to wear. We just want people to know we can help them fashion their dream,” Nancy says. Just as a costume designer fabricates gowns, tile designers can customize tiles to fulfill a homeowner’s vision.

The chevron pattern creates a sense of movement and adds another layer of subtle pattern to the room. “With such a large space, we didn’t want a lot of big plain tiles,” Nancy says. “We wanted the floor to have interest yet be relatively simple.”

And the tile surfaces are easy to care for—an important issue for this family of five with children ages 9, 7, and 4, plus a gigantic Italian Mastiff that Nancy calls Mudge the Monster Dog.

“A kitchen is not beautiful if it doesn’t function well. This space functions really well,” Nancy says.

That’s thanks in large part to kitchen designer RitaLuisa Garcés, who helped lay out and outfit the room as well as the adjacent butler’s pantry, mudroom, desk area, and back entry hall.

The walnut island, with sink and dishwasher, anchors the kitchen and, along with the range wall, defines the main work zone. Just steps away are a separate full-height 36-inch-wide stainless steel refrigerator and freezer. A second sink under a window offers

views to the backyard where the children often play. Next to that sink is another dishwasher and two undercounter refrigerator drawers that allow children to help themselves to water and juice without getting underfoot in the main prep area.

Cabinets are a mix of painted white and dark-stained walnut with a decorative bead around the perimeter and stylized bin pulls for the drawers. “We always played with a delicate balance between contemporary and traditional elements,” Garcés says.

Nancy knows all about delicate balances. “It is hard designing for family. You want to respect everyone’s feelings.” Happily, everyone is thrilled with the end result. “We have a large family and we get together often,” Nancy says. “This is a great space for entertaining and family living. I love spending time here with my grandchildren.”

Kitchen designer: RitaLuisa Garcés, Bilotta Kitchens

Interior designer: Jack Levy

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