

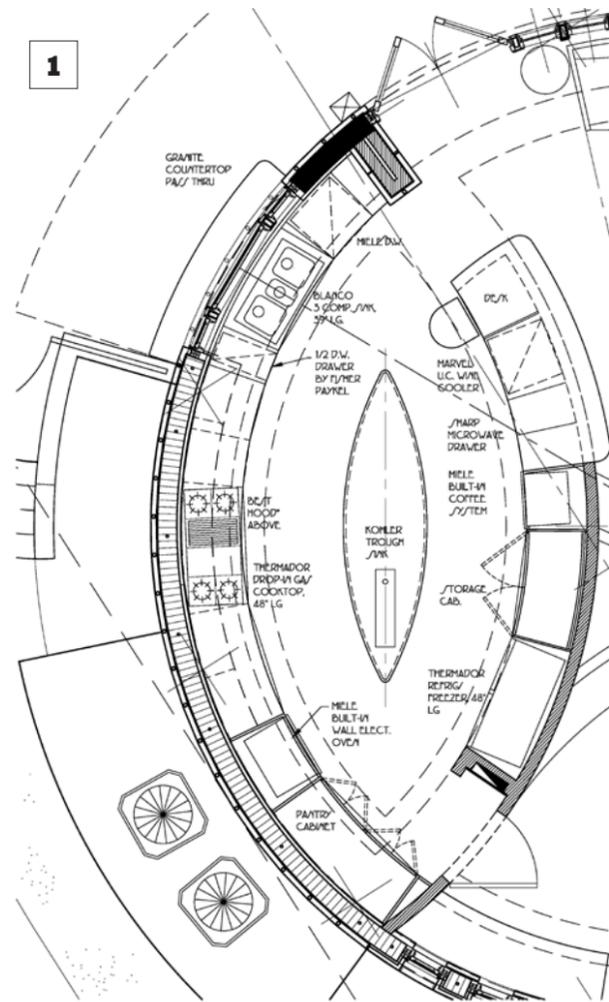


Intelligent design

A feast of features and functionality offers 10 things to love about Derek and Lisa Vander Ploeg's Boca Raton kitchen.

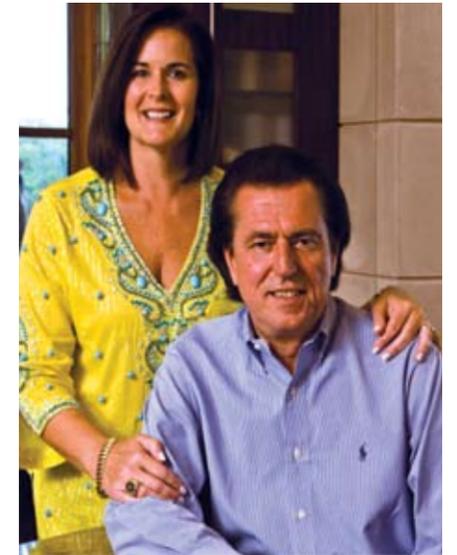
BY BRAD MEE

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1 FUNCTIONAL FLOORPLAN

The Vander Ploegs designed efficient activity zones into their kitchen. The room's task-oriented north wall hosts a professional-grade sink ergonomically positioned between dual dishwashers and the range and double ovens. The storage-rich south wall features an integrated pantry and the refrigerator/freezer. Nearby, a desk area flanks a bank of built-in appliances, including a wine cooler, a steam oven, a microwave drawer, a coffee center and a TV. The central island visually separates the distinct work areas while providing a place to work and relax.



Call it architecturally intriguing, extraordinarily equipped or simply stunning, and you'll get no argument. But call it a trophy kitchen, and fists may fly. After all, architect Derek Vander Ploeg and his interior designer wife, Lisa, take great pride in the fact that their shapely new kitchen is as functional as it is fabulous.

How did the talented couple pack so much performance into their high-style kitchen? To begin, the Vander Ploegs designed their Boca Raton home with the kitchen opening to an adjoining sitting area as well as to views of their pool and the Intracoastal beyond. Then they created curved walls to enclose the football-shaped galley kitchen, creating an intriguing, contoured character. They lavished the moderately sized room with handsome cabinetry, state-of-the-art appliances and streamlined fixtures. And, at its core, they placed a uniquely shaped island that helps divide the area into distinct work zones.

"It's a very well-thought-out space," says Lisa. "The kitchen will accommodate four cooks at once, and, with under 500 square feet, every square inch is functional workspace."

While there are many things to love about this kitchen, the following 10 elements top our list of favorites.



2 DYNAMIC DETAILS

To complement the home's stunning Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired architecture, Derek and Lisa dressed the clean-lined kitchen with authentic materials, including nickel-plated back-splash tiles, "rainforest green" marble countertops and Sapele mahogany cabinetry. Danny Bell, owner of Interior Services in Boca Raton, crafted the custom furniture-grade cabinets. "Rather than using stain, we dye-wrapped the exotic wood to balance and enhance its color, graining and light refraction," he says. Flutex glass serves as vertically striped, semitransparent door panels for the upper cabinets.

3 DISHWASHING DUO

Two dishwashers flank the working sink, offering convenient spots to clean the dishes. "When we have a party, I clean the stemware in the drawer dishwasher and the plates, pots and pans in the larger one," says Lisa. The drawer dishwasher is ergonomically positioned at counter height, making loading and unloading its contents easy.

4 STEAM AND SIP

A Miele steam oven provides an easy and healthy way to prepare everything from vegetables and fish to stews and rice dishes. Positioned above it, a built-in Miele coffee machine treats the Vander Ploegs to piping-hot cappuccinos and espressos with the simple push of a button.



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INTEGRATED WORK STATION

A counter-height work area inhabits the end of the south wall, providing a spot to sit and review recipes as well as visit with anyone seated at the adjoining breakfast bar.



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6 PREP-SINK

Strategically positioned between the refrigerator and the cooking area, this island prep sink is great for rinsing and preparing food. It also doubles as a stylish ice tray for cooling bottles of wine and fresh shrimp during a party.



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7 PERFORMING PANTRY

No more lost cans of tuna or hidden boxes of cereal. This pantry pullout system by Hafele transforms a section of the wall into an extremely efficient and accessible storage space.



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8 CUSTOM SPICE DRAWER

"I need to have a place for everything," says Lisa. And that includes spices. Ideally located below the Thermador cooktop, this customized spice drawer keeps containers organized, accessible and close at hand.



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9 BREAKFAST BAR

Merging the kitchen with the neighboring family room, the broad breakfast bar provides a casual place to sit, dine and enjoy a bird's-eye view of the kitchen.



10 OVER-SINK SERVING WINDOW

What better and more convenient place for a large pass-through window than between the kitchen sink and the outdoor barbecue area? To further the feature's functionality, Derek and Lisa added a large marble ledge that appears as if extended from the interior countertop.



GET COOKING

Sure, the Vander Ploegs' kitchen is tasty—but no more than the foods created and served there. Lisa offers up one of her favorites, snapper Rangoon.

Snapper Rangoon

Serves 4

This takes about 10 to 15 minutes to prepare and then no more than 20 minutes to cook (depending on the size of the fillet).

- 1 cup flour for dredging
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 6-ounce snapper fillets
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 4 tablespoons canola oil
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 3 cups diced fruit (can use any one or a combination, such as banana, melon, pineapple, strawberry or mango)
- Chopped flat-leaf parsley

1. Mix flour with salt and pepper; put flour in shallow dish. Dredge fish and shake off excess flour. Beat eggs with milk and dip fish in it.
2. Heat oil in large sauté pan over medium heat and cook fillets on each side about 4 minutes. Do not crowd pan; you may have to cook fish in 2 batches. Keep fish warm in low oven while cooking and preparing sauce.
3. In same pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add lime juice and fruit; cook, swirling pan, until fruit is heated through. Juices will thicken on their own. Remove fish from oven, place on serving platter and pour juices and fruit over fish. Garnish with chopped parsley and serve immediately.

