



THE MAIN EVENT

It's the ultimate great room, a kitchen with multimedia entertainment.

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This 1,000-square-foot, light-filled kitchen serves as a multifunction comfort center at the heart of the house. Appliances and equipment are at hand for entertaining on a large scale; the room also contains comfortable upholstered pieces, a large-screen TV and stereo components, an intimate dining area, and a cozy place just to relax. Beadboard painted a warm white panels the entire interior.

cozy chairs, and, oh yes, sufficient equipment to cook up a storm

Does history matter? Well, yes. The entertainment executive who commissioned Glenn Gissler, a New York City-based, architecture-trained designer, to create interiors for her generous-size Shingle Style beach house wanted comfortable rooms that looked neither new nor "decorated." Given that the three-level year-round getaway conceived by architect Francis Fleetwood contains some rather grand spaces, this was no simple task.

Every house needs a heart and a focus. The 1,000-square-foot open-plan kitchen, says the client, "is the focal point of the house, which is as it should be. A live-in kitchen is about getting back to basics. Even in big houses, friends and family all want to get together in one room. I wanted a place where we could watch TV, cook together, serve dinner, have drinks and hors d'oeuvres. The house itself is very comfortable, but I thought we needed a room that would be more relaxed, in contrast to the formal entry and living and dining rooms."

With four sets of French doors on one wall and windows on another, the kitchen opens onto a covered terrace that leads to the pool. In addition to all the appliances and equipment necessary for entertaining on a grand scale, the room contains the house's stereo system; a large-screen TV behind beadboard doors fronting a wall of storage; a lounge area; a dining table that seats six; an island with storage and pull-up seating; and two wingback chairs at the far end.

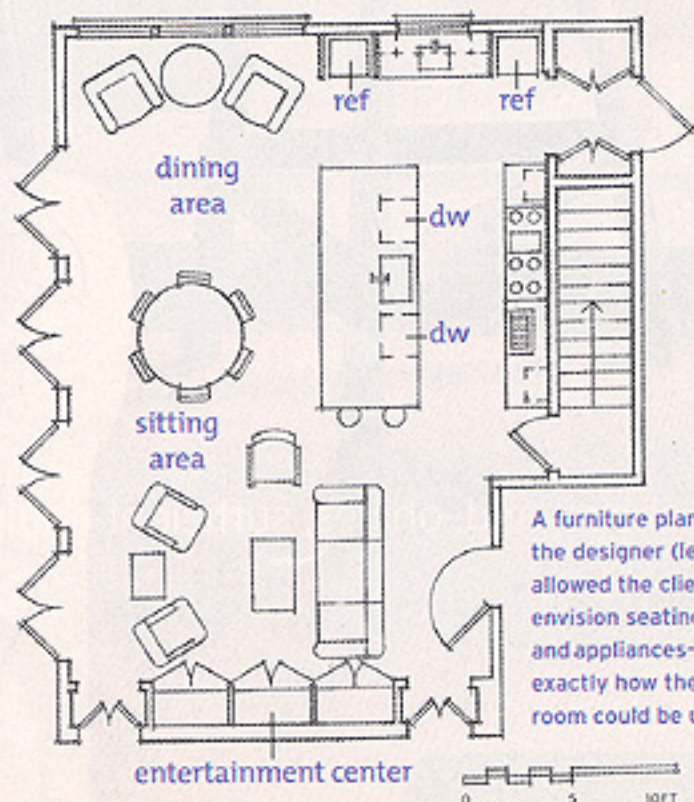
From the earliest planning stages, Gissler knew he wanted the space "to be an updated interpretation of summery Shingle Style design, not some campy attempt at postmodernism." So simplicity reigns. Simple beaded wainscoting and beadboard-paneled cabinetry envelop the kitchen. Counters are honed-and-sealed limestone. Subway tiles behind the stove offer practicality and some attractive shine. Random-width, wide-plank floors with chamfered edges are stained dark. "I love the look of a dark floor with light walls. The contrast makes the room rich, crisp, fresh, and clear," enthuses Gissler.

Unlined wool curtains hang from a continuous iron rod, filtering the light. Other details include glass cabinet knobs, brushed-nickel bin pulls, lighting recessed in the ceiling, and a comfortable mix of antique and new furnishings. The reverse side of a printed fabric upholsters the sofa: "This creates a faint pattern, as if it's been bleached by the sun," says Gissler.

"Glenn did a great job assembling things that look like they've always been there," says the owner, savoring the designer's deft hand at instant history.



New York City-based designer Glenn Gissler (left) masterminded a warm-white kitchen with farmhouse details for this Shingle Style house on Long Island, NY. Gissler, who didn't want the new interiors to have that "new car" feeling, kept the room's look simple and authentic by using classic materials. Honed-and-sealed limestone tops an island housing multiple storage options for cooking equipment and utensils, as well as the subwoofer for the room's entertainment system. Cabinet knobs are glass and the bin pulls sport a brushed-nickel finish.



A furniture plan by the designer (left) allowed the client to envision seating and appliances—and exactly how the room could be used.



What makes a "great room" great? Size, certainly. But also a space that suits plenty of different uses. **LEFT:** A new dining table seats six in antique chairs. **RIGHT:** A pair of just-right-for-entertaining SubZero refrigerators flank one of the windows; wing chairs create a quiet seating area. Stairs (not shown here) descend to a large pantry and wine cellar; a vestibule provides additional storage and houses the microwave. **BELOW:** Five windows on one wall and a series of French doors on another flood the room with light; a second sink takes the overflow of cooking-prep tasks. A warm-white paint, used throughout the room, keeps all the cabinetry from looking intimidating.



Every house needs a heart and a focus. This kitchen provides exactly that: a place for lots of people, lots of uses

KITCHEN PREP

Before creating a new kitchen, designer Glenn Gissler believes, you need a full information download on how a house's inhabitants eat, work, cook, entertain, and live. Consider:

- Where will technology—computer, TV, music system—go? Here, an island houses an element of the TV and stereo system.
- What about liquor—and entertaining needs? This kitchen contains a wet bar, and an extensive wine cellar is downstairs.
- Can storage overflow into other areas? A downstairs pantry and a vestibule off the kitchen offer necessary extra shelving without sacrificing room space.



For entertaining on a large scale, the kitchen includes (above) a six-burner stainless-steel range with a griddle and double oven. Alongside it sits a separate grill.