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BHG SIP Blue Checkout



Simply Dazzling

Rustic woods and industrial metals mix with razzle-dazzle in a Miami kitchen.

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Right: Surfaces alternate in texture, temperature, and pedigree, pairing cool whites and stainless steel with sumptuous white marble, warm terra-cotta floor tiles, and a rustic cypress wood ceiling.









Some Mediterranean-style homes feature kitchens with Tuscan columns and rich carvings to plead their case as transplanted villas. This kitchen chose a different tack: fusing Miami modernism with the Mediterranean's characteristic mix of rustic materials and formal panache.

"The house is like a wonderful old villa," says interior designer Judi Male, "but the kitchen hadn't been redone since it was built in the late 1980s. It was a very vanilla, very white-bread builder's kitchen." A designer with a penchant for style and storytelling, Male decided a more compelling narrative was in order: "Our goal was to create a multipurpose kitchen that looked like a villa's primitive barn that had been gutted and made into a huge family space."

Above: A custom table featuring a stainless-steel frame and glossy lacquer top joins smoothly upholstered banquette seating to create the notion of a built-in dining nook.

Left: A sheet of tempered glass clads the wall for a luminescent and easy-to-clean backsplash. Frameless white cabinets recede, giving focus to luxe highlights, including the T-bar crystal-drop chandelier, a sleek range hood, and a pivoting flat-panel television built in above the wall ovens.



Paneling the ceiling with rough natural cypress immediately set the story in motion, creating a crown of rusticity. It also solved some problems. "The ceiling had all kinds of soffits and was very dated. The paneling made it work," Male says. In tandem with the space's original terra-cotta floor tiles, the wood ceiling made the yarn of a converted barn believable. But here's where the story line takes a twist: Joining the rough-and-tumble quality is refinement—an equal contributor to the kitchen's character.

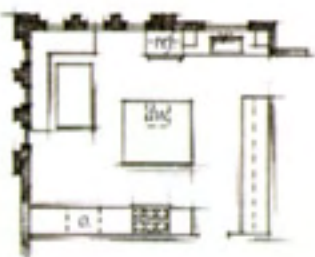
"These homeowners describe themselves as a denim kind of family—they're diamonds and jeans and Manolo Blahniks. They wanted the very best of every material," Male says. From counter to ceiling, tiny iridescent tiles add depth and a rainbow of mother-of-pearl color to a wall of open shelving. Even the shelves are sophisticated—cantilevered stainless steel designed by Male with touch lighting underneath.

Instead of tiles, a single sheet of tempered glass serves as a sleek backsplash for the range—and is one of the homeowners' favorite features. Dressy honed marble covers the countertops and crawls up either side of the sink window. The marble's silvery veins are complemented by stainless-steel appliances, more stainless steel on the island top, and a table designed by Male for the breakfast banquette. So much metal and so many streamlined shapes reveal an unmistakably modern mind-set, which Male manages to preserve even in the barnlike context.

Long, linear shapes recur, most prominently in the metal bars serving as minimalist drawer pulls. Their shape is repeated in the island's chandelier: a T-bar dressed with dangling strands of crystals in a traditional-meets-contemporary combo. But the ultimate modern gesture is the Philippe Starck Ghost chair—a clear classic—at the banquette.

A menagerie of farmyard-fowl collectibles parades across the kitchen's top shelf, tying the rustic with the modern and concluding the tale of a state-of-the-art kitchen designed to look as if it were built in the hull of an old villa's barn. ☺

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Right: Stainless-steel shelves cantilever over the service counter, standing out against the glamour of a mother-of-pearl mosaic-tile wall. **Left, Top to Bottom:** The crystal chandelier plays its glitz against a plank ceiling. Glasses are easy to grab from a shelf installed to face the sink. Stainless-steel shelves

mimic storage in old luncheonettes. Salvaged bits of terra-cotta and glass tile create a mosaic tracing the island. The island's stainless-steel counter extends past cabinetry to make legroom for dining.



