

URBAN
SLEEK



SMOOTH OPERATOR

Decorator Julia Black's galley kitchen gets a crisp black and white makeover that combines practicality with pizzazz



PHOTOGRAPHY BY SIAN RICHARDS

DESIGN: BLACK GENERAL CONTRACTING & OLYMPIC KITCHENS.



BLACK CABINETRY

If something unexpected appeals, follow your instinct. "I immediately fell in love with the charcoal finish of this recycled-veneer cabinetry, and so I used that as the starting point for the kitchen," says Julia.

PLAN AHEAD

Make the most of a galley kitchen. "There isn't a lot of space here," says Julia, "so we thought carefully about how we'd manoeuvre in it. I advise actually practising a walk-through of cooking, eating a meal and cleaning up. You want everything within easy reach, and there's no such thing as over-planning."

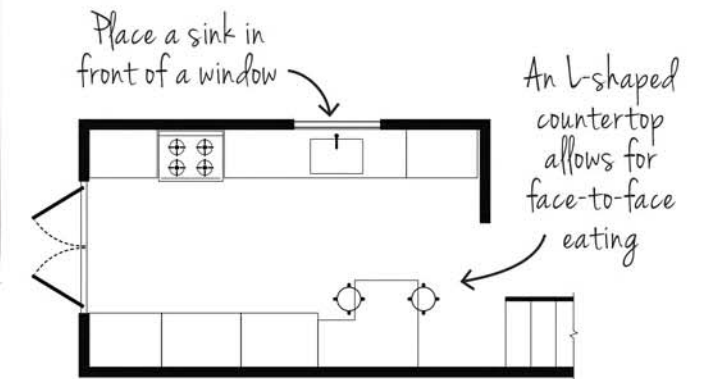
→
Introduce a layer of softness and texture with an area rug

GET PERSONAL

"I decorated the kitchen like any room in the house," says Julia. "I love texture, so I added framed artwork, sculptural accents, ceramics and flowers throughout the space. I'm just such a sucker for fresh flowers in the kitchen!"

BUILT-IN BEAUTY

"The wine storage and shelf above it were an opportunity to break up all of the closed cabinetry. We're not big wine people, but it's nice to have stock for unexpected guests, and I love the way the bottles look when so neatly stored," says Julia.



FLOOR PLAN

A streamlined galley kitchen maximizes cabinet space in this urban house and even allows for a pint-sized eating nook.

Couples with young children usually like practical rooms with light, easy-to-clean neutral colours. "I gravitate toward black and white," says homeowner, decorator and stylist Julia Black. She and her husband, Andrew—who have a two-year-old daughter, Quinn, a boxer named Parker and a baby on the way—are clearly an exception. "Dark floors and cabinets can show more dust and dirt," admits Julia, "so if you are the type of person who gets stressed out by this, avoid black as best you can." Inclined more to positivity than to stressing, Julia sees black as a great motivator. "We wanted to be aware of dog hair and

dust, so we could stay on top of cleaning and keep the place spic and span."

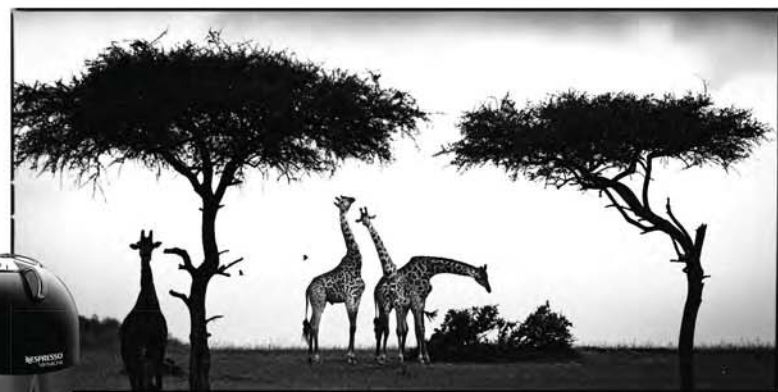
Their new 150-square-foot kitchen certainly is that, and a far cry from its previous state: a space with no dishwasher, no storage and 1920s-era cabinetry. It demanded a complete demo and rebuild, a big project for any family. "It is always a challenge," says Julia, "but one I quite love. You have to dance around with different millwork, furniture, finishes and accessories to get the best balanced result. And with another kid on the way, I'd say the dance continues, just to a different tune."

CLASSIC CONTRAST

Julia chose white engineered-stone countertops and continued the same material up the wall as a backsplash, as a counterpoint to the black cabinetry. "It has a clean, modern feel, yet it's still bold and creates tension against the black."

MULTI-PURPOSE NOOK

Small but effective, this peninsula provides a spot for casual meals, a buffet surface and an entertainment area. "It's great when we entertain and use it as a bar or food station. Also, I'm a bit of a TV junkie and can't live without one in the kitchen. This small, white-framed style blends in nicely and is on a retractable arm, so it can be angled for easy viewing."



GIRAFFE BETWEEN TREES, LAURENT BAHEUX \$114, YELLOWKORNER.COM.



NESPRESSO VERTUOLINE \$300, THEBAY.COM.



CARLISLE METAL COUNTER STOOL \$99/FOR 2, TARGET.CA

URBAN SLEEK

With clean lines and a basic black and white palette, any decorative touches add big impact



20TH-CENTURY FACTORY FILAMENT SMOKE GLASS PENDANT \$130, RESTORATIONHARDWARE.COM.



MUD AUSTRALIA PINK BOWL \$37, GRETELHOME.COM.



PINSTRIP (SOPHIE) RUNNER \$2,100, OLIVERIYAPHE.COM.

ESSENTIALS

BUILDING BLOCKS

Choose flat door fronts with streamlined handles to achieve this minimalist look. Engineered quartz works for both backsplash and counters.



AKURUM/GNOSJO CABINETS \$69/LINEAR FT., IKEA.CA.



ZODIAQ CLOUD WHITE PRICE UPON REQUEST, DUPONT.COM.

engineered quartz countertops

black appliances



U-shaped handle

DELTA WIRE PULL \$8, SWORDFISHAGENCY.COM.



BLACK ICE DOUBLE WALL OVEN \$2,999, WHIRLPOOL.CA.

"A galley kitchen was the only option for our home – it allows for an open walkway through the first floor and keeps the view to the backyard open as well."

- Julia Black, designer/homeowner