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Raising the Bar

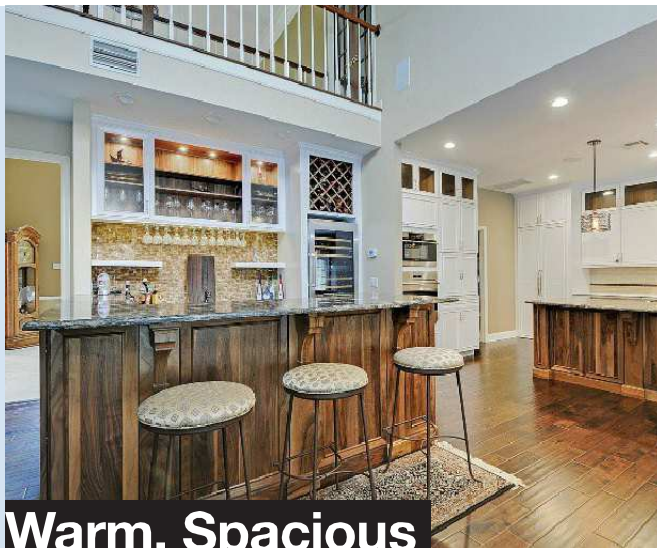
Homeowners are requesting everything from a simple beverage area to a tricked-out space with beer dispensers and ample storage options

BARS AND BEVERAGE CENTERS ARE THE NEW MUST-HAVES – either as part of the kitchen design or as their own spaces within the home. They can also range in size to accommodate groups or simply serve as a destination for crafting a cocktail or two.

BY CHELSIE BUTLER

We always try to build in a bar or snack bar area of some kind to make entertaining easier for the client,” said Susan Cracraft, AKBD, an interior designer with Haddad Hakansson Design Studio in Watertown, Mass. “We squeeze them into walkways and tuck them into unused corners of rooms, and we often use a shallow-depth, undercounter refrigerator to accomplish this easily in tight spots. We also build freestanding entertaining hutches into more open-concept designs to use for entertaining and storage of glassware, dishes and liquor.”

Here, *KBB* takes a closer look at three of these well-designed spaces.



Warm, Spacious and Integrated

To include a bar as part of a kitchen renovation, project designer Chris Druschel of S&W Kitchens in Longwood, Fla., removed an existing wall, which allowed for an expanded kitchen layout to accommodate a sizable bar.

“The idea behind the design was to incorporate the look of the kitchen but to also make it a freestanding, fully functioning bar with ample storage for wine and liquor, refrigeration, a sink and seating,” said Druschel.

He and his design assistant, Jessica Lowney, chose a coconut shell for the backsplash to emulate the wine cork look and white Shaker cabinets. The oil-rubbed bronze faucet and copper sink add to the space’s rustic feel and match the warm tones of the walnut interiors of the glass cabinets. The bar itself accommodates seating for three and opens up on all sides for storage.



ABOVE The client loves to travel the world and has collected many decanters and stemware to display, so the designer provided ample cabinets and shelving.



Druschel said the biggest challenge with the project was coming up with the initial design and removal of the wall.

“That was a big task that required several renditions of the layout, which in the end needed to have a view of the television, kitchen and pool,” he explained.

SOURCES

DESIGNER: Chris Druschel, S&W Kitchens;
PHOTOGRAPHER: Rickie Agapito

BACKSPLASH: Crossville;
CABINETS: Omega Cabinetry; **COUNTERTOPS:** Bianco Carrara Marble & Satumia Granite; **FAUCET:** Moen; **FLOORING:** The Garrison Collection;
ICEMAKER: Perlick;
REFRIGERATOR: Liebherr;
SINK: Native Trails

RIGHT Dark-painted cherry wood cabinets, a beige-colored backsplash, an under-mount sink and wood-like vinyl tile plank flooring round out the design of this entertaining bar with seating for three.

SOURCES

DESIGNER: Michael Winn,
Winn Design + Build;

PHOTOGRAPHER:
Stacy Zarin Goldberg/
Winn Design

BACKSPLASH: Muretto

Purestone; CABINETS:
Wellborn Cabinet;

COUNTERTOPS: Giallo

Ornamental; FLOORING:
Mannington; **HARDWARE:**

Häfele; **SINK:** Blanco



The Basement Surprise

The bar in this house is located in what used to be unfinished basement storage space. Michael Winn, president of Winn Design + Build in Falls Church, Va., took out about a third of the existing rear concrete wall to accommodate the new addition and converted an adjoining laundry room into a bathroom.

“My client wanted a space to relax and spend time with his friends,” added Winn.

The challenges with this project included limited space for a full-sized fridge (a request on which the client insisted) and a low ceiling because of the existing conditions.

“He wanted to use his old refrigerator in a bar that typically wouldn’t include a full-sized model, and it was difficult to obtain the necessary clearances for the double swinging doors,” explained Winn. “We would have, for example, like to have included some pendant lighting above the bar, but there simply wasn’t enough room and our client wanted to be able to look out at the room while in the bar.”

Little Bar in a Big Package

The bar area in this house is an entertaining butler’s pantry that stores crystal stemware and serving pieces.

“The idea behind the design of the space was to make a ‘jewel box’ feel to the room as you pass through to the formal dining room and to create a very useful bar area and old-fashioned butler’s pantry out of a very small space,” said designer Cracraft.

She chose custom walnut cabinetry with a saddle-tan finish for added richness and crystal diamond knobs, polished chrome drawer pulls and a crystal light fixture for sparkle. She specified Calacatta macabus quartzite countertops, which are a natural stone, to balance the walnut cabinetry in richness and texture.

The challenge with this project was in maximizing the storage space for the client’s antique china and crystal collection, which the designer accomplished by using floor-to-ceiling custom cabinets that are only 11 inches deep.

“The space is so small that we were not able to use tall cabinets, so the floor-to-ceiling look was achieved by using a wall and a base that fit together like a puzzle,” explained Cracraft. “The band of molding running across the middle makes the connection look seamless, and the other side of the area uses a wall cabinet and a base cabinet with a countertop space in between for setting down dishes, mixing drinks, etc., before stepping into the formal dining room or back into the kitchen.”



SOURCES

DESIGNER: Susan
Cracraft, AKBD, Haddad
Hakansson Design Studio;

PHOTOGRAPHER:
Jared Kuzia

CABINETS: Pennville
Custom Cabinetry;

COUNTERTOPS: Calacatta

Macaubus Quartzite;

HARDWARE: Emtek;

LIGHT FIXTURE:

Crystorama Calypso;

MESH INSERTS: Klise
Manuf.; **REFRIGERATOR:**
Perlick

LEFT “Custom mesh inserts with a diamond pattern and buttons are something pretty and unexpected where you would expect to find glass,” explained the designer.