

Family Affair

Tough materials and timeless style are the hallmarks of this Beacon Hill workhorse.

When you've got three kids, and each is still under four years old, it seems like most of the day is spent in the kitchen. That space had better work, or those kids will be learning curse words faster than you can say Teletubbies. This Beacon Hill family wanted a workhorse of a kitchen, but they wanted it to speak the language of good design. In fact, the inspiration for this kitchen – according to one of the owners – was New York's *Asia de Cuba* restaurant and its seemingly miles-long communal dining table of Carrara marble designed by Phillippe Starck.

The island worktop here – although nearly as long as that at *Asia de Cuba* at 21 feet – is made of a type of granite known as “white fantasy”, not marble, as marble is too soft and very easily damaged. This material, far more durable, is nearly impervious to grape juice spills and dried Play-Doh disasters.

Designed by Ruhl Walker Architects and built to exacting specifications by Holland Construction, this kitchen was finished with white lacquered Arclinea cabinetry with heavy stainless steel toe kicks. The front of the island is faced in oak and features a breakfast bar with three easy-clean bar stools for snack time.

The look on a strict budget: Abstrakt white cabinets from IKEA. Through IKEA in Stoughton, MA or online at IKEA.com

The owners chose a five-burner gas cooktop from Miele fitted into a stainless steel countertop. Under the Arclinea exhaust hood are shelves to keep pepper grinders and garlic press handy as well as a hanging space for cooking utensils. There is even a convenient cookbook holder to keep *The Joy of Cooking* spatter-free. Two wall ovens from Gaggenau were specified by the owners, as was a 3rd, smaller, steam oven, also from Gaggenau. There is a Sub-Zero under counter refrigerator, just at the right height for the little people as well as a full-sized unit integrated so well into the Arclinea cabinetry that it virtually disappears.

With proximity to a playroom and deck at one end and dining room at the other, this kitchen, as imagined, is now the center of family life, and this family wouldn't have it any other way.

