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An Entertaining Retreat

He's the CEO of a technology investment firm, but a quick glance at the airy, sunlit rooms of his oceanside home confirm he's also a man of multiple passions that complement his multiple residences across the country.

At the core of this home, which offers both a quiet retreat and an ideal place to entertain, is a grand open kitchen. Here, good food—prepared by a professional chef who travels with the family—along with good wine (Sancerre is a favorite), is served to the multitude of friends, family, and colleagues who routinely converge on the house.

Although the kitchen can function like a commercial kitchen, it doesn't look like one. Its spacious, efficient design allows the chef to prepare food for several dozen people at once. The extra-wide counter areas, the two oversize sinks (each with its own dishwasher), the walk-in pantry, the comprehensive array of small appliances tucked between the gas range and the refrigerator, and the row of large storage closets in the adjacent hall provide all the necessary elements for staging and serving the perfect large-scale dinner party.

WRITTEN BY Kathi Lowe : PHOTOGRAPHY BY Darren Setlow



The owner had a hand in planning the kitchen. He asked the designer, Elaine Murdoch, CMKBD, to leave the center of the room open so that guests with culinary inclinations could participate in the cooking process—an activity made all the more pleasurable by the panoramic ocean view the room offers. Yes, the owner encourages his guests to add their flair to the cooking.

And mouthwatering dishes have been created here. When in Maine, the chef prepares as much fresh seafood as possible, relying on whatever local foods are in season. Scallops, which he buys at Bristol Seafood in Portland, are a specialty. But on any given evening, the chef says he might prepare “anything from a chilled lobster salad with grilled peaches [or] a locally sourced burrata and tarragon to a citrus scallop crudo with cilantro micro-shoots.”



Small gatherings can dine in the intimate seating area and bar, situated in an alcove just beyond the kitchen peninsula. The kitchen opens to a great-room dining space that seats 10 people and can be expanded to accommodate several dozen more. An adjoining screened porch seats another 10. Featuring a built-in grilling station and a freestanding lobster cooker, just outside the porch door, it's where some of the best dinner parties have taken place, according to Murdoch.

"The creative and innovative culinary scene in Maine is inspirational," says the chef. "I am always thrilled to spend time there and explore the vibrant food landscape."

Naturally, that's made all the better by having the consummate kitchen in which to prepare those fresh, delectable meals.

Credits:

Knickerbocker Group
Boothbay & Portland, Maine

Kitchen design:
Elaine Murdoch, CMKBD
Certified Master Kitchen and
Bath Designer

Project architect:
Rick Nelson, AIA