

DESIGNER SPOTLIGHT

9 Black-and-White Kitchen Ideas From AD PRO Directory Designers

These designs prove that the high-contrast look can work for transitional, contemporary, and rustic styles alike

By Alia Akkam

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Douglas Friedman

There is no combination more classic—or striking—than crisp white juxtaposed with velvety black. (Illustrating the point, an array of black-and-white kitchen ideas can be found in the pages of *AD*.) While injecting the food prep areas with a jolt of darkness can be intimidating, it's a bold yet streamlined move that pays off with a calming, uncluttered look. Here are nine stylish black-and-white kitchen ideas from designers in the AD PRO Directory, where contrasts unite for a powerful, timeless effect.



In the right hands, a mostly black kitchen can work in any location—including in a tropical St. Barts hideaway. Alexander Design did just that with this design, which incorporates jewel-toned accents and natural material textures. Courtesy Alexander Design

Alexander Design

Perched on a promontory, this St. Barts retreat by Los Angeles studio Alexander Design “looks in one direction toward the sophisticated beauty of Saint-Jean and the iconic Eden Roc hotel, and in the other to the rugged and peaceful Saline Beach area,” elaborates founder and principal Vanessa Alexander. “With this 240-degree view, it’s unique.” Outfitted with Gaggenau appliances, Dornbracht bronze fixtures, and custom brass and millwork courtesy of Eggersman, the kitchen shies away from a typical beachy palette. Instead, Alexander opted for deeper jewel tones and contrasting darks through materials like rich green marble and a charcoal plaster floor that convey luxury and drama, but she adds, “still feels at home on the island.”



In this prewar apartment renovation, interiors whiz Justin Charette opted for both black *and* white cabinets—and the results speak for themselves. Sean Litchfield

Justin Charette Design

On New York’s Riverside Drive, local designer Justin Charette collaborated with StudioLAB (the multidisciplinary practice handled the architecture) on the gut renovation of a four-bedroom residence in a prewar building. Eager to evoke an ambiance that was at once elegant and welcoming in the kitchen, Charette blended white and black cabinets and tied them together with a marble backsplash, white quartz countertops, and a trifecta of minimalist Lambert & Fils pendants that “add a subtle but impactful interest,” notes Charette. “The backsplash elevates the space and the countertops were chosen to be family-friendly. I wanted to make sure kids could freely play without the worry of any staining.”



Nubby brown upholstery and brass accents infuse this black-and-white kitchen by House Seven Design with warmth.

House Seven Design

Entertaining was a priority for Anissa Zajac's clients, so when remodeling their Indianapolis house, the founder and principal of the local studio gave special consideration to the white, bright kitchen. "I wanted to make sure it still felt inviting and warm, so I added in depth and texture with a dark stained island and woven roped stools," points out Zajac. The homeowners' love of brass spawned Zajac's use of the finish on plumbing fixtures, cabinet hardware, the JennAir range's knobs, and a duo of shimmering pendants from The Urban Electric Company that exude glamour.



Ike Baker Velten, the architect behind this home in California's wine country, opted for a hardy yet inviting material palette for the black-and-white kitchen. (Ken Fulk handled the house's interior design.) Douglas Friedman

Ike Baker Velten

Inside the kitchen of a revamped farmhouse in Healdsburg, California, Oakland firm Ike Baker Velten removed its flat ceiling to add more volume and shifted the windows to magnify focal points. Then the goal was to instill a cheerful atmosphere in this central room, one that accommodates “a family’s day-to-day living on a working vineyard—kids, dogs, the errant insect, and occasionally muddy boots,” says partner Carl Baker. Warm, comfortable materials were selected for their practicality too, from the durable tiled walls above the dark-stained oak cabinets to the easy-to-maintain reclaimed oak plank countertops to the reclaimed brick flooring, points out Baker, “that allows the outdoors to come inside without fear of staining or scratching.”



Light and bright kitchens have their place—but it isn't in this home, designed by Eddie Mickenberg. Instead, Mickenberg embraced a more sultry interior, deploying dark-hued cabinets and lighting fixtures. Andrew Bui

Eddie Mickenberg

Outdated fixtures, materials, and finishes defined the kitchen of a home sitting on the edge of Encino, a departure from the rest of its contemporary interiors, and Los Angeles designer Eddie Mickenberg was tasked with rectifying this discrepancy. His solution? Taking the moody route. “Personally, I love using high contrast in all of my work, pushing darker tones and different shades of black as the common thread,” says Mickenberg, “which is the opposite of the ‘light, bright, and airy’ look I see is trending, especially in California.” His starting point for the room, he adds, was Behr’s deep black-hued Carbon paint, because “everything around it felt more elevated and beautiful,” including black and brass lighting above the island and slabs of veined Florida Wave quartzite on the backsplash and countertops.



So long, '80s: Moore House Design's classic update of this 1920s home in Providence, Rhode Island, included removing the kitchen's laminate countertops and installing a dark wood and Italian marble island. Erin Little

Moore House Design

When a young family purchased their 1920s Colonial in Providence, Rhode Island, the kitchen was trapped in the '80s, complete with laminate countertops bubbling at the edges. Moore House Design pushed it into the future by embracing an efficient layout and filling the room with such modern, original touches as a custom island with legs flaunting a pop of Italian marble, a bespoke aged brass shelf installed over new casement windows, and white brick veneer on the walls heightened by moody, almost-black, sooty navy cabinetry and counters. "While many believe a white and blue/black kitchen can come across as cool, it's all in the undertones," explains Blair Moore, creative director for the Warren, Rhode Island-based practice. "We introduced deep chocolate in the island and flooring to warm the space and paired it with a rich blue/black soapstone, which ages perfectly."



The black-and-white marble floor of this client's Westchester County home had great potential, Esmond Rubinov felt. To help it shine, Rubinov selected pure, clean whites for walls, countertops, and the fireplace.

Esmond Rubinov Design

Before infusing a banker's Westchester County abode with a country-style aesthetic, New York designer Esmond Rubinov was taken by the kitchen's existing black-and-white checkered marble flooring. But this stunning holdover was marred by a clashing natural stone fireplace and shades of blue and brown that "fell short of its potential," as Rubinov puts it. To showcase the floor, he started fresh, enveloping the ceiling, walls, and cabinets in "pristine white tones" and incorporating a matching white quartz countertop. He also swapped the fireplace's stone for sheetrock, painted that white too, and buoyed it with a custom Nero Marquina marble mantel. Bringing a punch of warmth is the "charming nook ingeniously carved out by the window," adds Rubinov. "This cozy corner boasts custom upholstery in black and white, serving as a bright and playful spot perfect for enjoying breakfast with the kids."



How about a floating black-and-white kitchen? It isn't as far-fetched as it may sound: Just look to Spacecutter's ingenious outfit for this Chicago chef, which features a cooking and dining area surrounded by open railings to lower light wells. Michael Vahrenwald

Spacecutter Architects

There is ample light in the narrow yet deep 5,300-square-foot triplex that New York-based Spacecutter Architects crafted for a Chicago chef, and it shines especially bright in the kitchen. "Placed on the second floor and wrapped with open railings to light wells below, the kitchen literally floats in the middle of the house," says principal Alex Gil. "Seven hundred fifty square feet of windows amplify the airy and light-filled experience, a world apart from the city street one floor below." In the space, Ernestomeda cabinets and Bengala Negro tiles radiating a subtle sheen mingle with Absolute Black flamed granite countertops, Miele appliances, and the centerpiece, the client's indoor grill. A rare feature of urban living, points out Gil, it "replicates the traditional Korean hearth she grew up with in her mother's wooded home."



A statement range hood, rich waterfall-edge island, and rhythmic, geometric furniture help make Urbane Design's concept for this black-and-white kitchen a standout. Avery Nicole

Urbane Design

Two-toned cabinets, melding a sleek black matte finish and rift sawn white oak, are the arresting backdrop to Austin studio Urbane Design's kitchen in a more than 5,000-square-foot new-build in nearby Dripping Springs. Fully inset and accented with brass hardware, they are complemented by solid wood beams (a grounding element found in the rest of the house), a suite of integrated appliances, and an air of pleasing symmetry thanks to Urbane Design's decision to flank the range with the refrigerator and freezer. The highlight, according to principal Jessica Love, are the quartzite countertops that "boast a mesmerizing waterfall edge on the island, seamlessly flowing up to create a captivating backsplash that leads your gaze to the custom integrated vent hood, a true statement piece."

Looking for a design professional to help you create a black-and-white kitchen of your own? Browse hundreds of AD-approved designers on the [AD PRO Directory](#).

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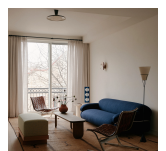
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