

NATURAL SELECTION

UTILIZING CLEAN LINES, EXPOSED BEAMS AND RUSTIC METALS, DESIGNERS SHARLA SETON AND DIANA BYRNE SPARK A COASTAL SPIRIT IN THIS FAMILY-FRIENDLY KITCHEN.

You stripped this dated space of its existing beadboard cabinetry and dark-paneled ceiling. What was the jumping-off point?

The existing space had more of a ski-chalet feel and we wanted it to better reflect the surrounding beach dunes of its true Westhampton setting. We freshened it up with a lighter paint color and countertops and chose a soft sandy-gray stain for the ceiling reminiscent of driftwood. Keeping with the natural, beach feel of the home, the goal was to imagine as if the owner was walking down the beach, discovering different elements to pick up: a rusty nail, symbolized in the hardware; sandy toes, illustrated on the linen-covered stools; and a collection of seashells, reimaged through the marble slabs.

What drew you to this particular marble?

We were walking the marble yard trying to find the perfect piece and hidden high up on a shelf was this small, dusty chunk of marble that spawned the entire kitchen. We had originally planned on a glass-tile backsplash, but once we caught sight of the big slabs weeks later, we knew we had to continue it up the back wall, as well. The deep veining is so funky and wild, perfectly capturing the beach colors and the way that the ocean leaves markings in the sand at low tide.

How did the cabinetry and hardware choices fit into the design?

The Shaker-style cabinetry is so beautiful in its simplicity. It was the perfect balance to the room's marble and rustic, oversize pendants. We exposed the butt hinge in an oil-rubbed bronze, but then added a modern angled cutter profile to keep the cabinets current. We then chose to panel the appliances so as to not break up the beautiful woodwork and to make the kitchen feel more like a furniture piece. Tying into the deep veining of the marble, the hardware also gives a nice weight to the clean, cotton white cabinetry, and we knew it would age beautifully as the years go by. This is a style of kitchen that will last for decades.



PHOTO: ANNE HEILES.

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