

kitchen PERFECT

The party is always in the kitchen, of course, and local designer Nadia Subaran reveals how to design a modern masterpiece.

*By Jennifer Barger
Photography by Greg Powers*



Homeowners seeking sizzling kitchen design across the region call on Silver Spring, Md., designer Nadia Subaran's Aidan Design

(aidandesign.com) for spaces that combine function and understated style. A prime example: a Chevy Chase space where exposed rock walls meet slate cabinets and a trophy six-burner. Subaran's own kitchen, which she shares with husband and business partner John Schmiedigen, is a cosmopolitan-yet-family-friendly mashup of gleaming Calacatta gold tile walls, reclaimed wood shelving and dark soapstone countertops. "I love to blend midcentury, natural materials with things that are glamorous and edgy," says Subaran.

Subaran and other kitchen pros have noticed (and spearheaded) a sea change in cooking spaces over the past few years. Out went too many wall cabinets and all-white kitchens; in came painted wood, open shelving and "a lot of ideas with personality and verve," she says. Still, Subaran counsels restraint. "When you introduce color or some new finish, it's often about pairing it with something classic, like a navy cabinet with a cream quartzite countertop."

Also on the front burner? Appliances with more power or specific functions. "People have their thing: For me, it's a really great stove," says Subaran. "And we're seeing a lot of devoted, stand-alone ice machines with special cubes or Sonic ice. And we're starting to see lots of smart technology, like fridges that read your grocery list while you're at the market."

Still, for Subaran, the process remains about the interplay between her expert eye and the client's vision. "Design should be a happy process," she says. Here are some of Subaran's favorite things for an au courant kitchen makeover.



"I love the idea of natural materials, and these Wood-Mode cabinets do that in a fresh way," says Subaran. Custom cabinetry in matte oak and espresso-brown oak, piece upon request, by Vanguard at Aidan Design, Silver Spring, Md., aidandesign.com



"I'm obsessed with good function," she says. "This Flos fixture gives a great spread of diffused light," she says. "It's not the star of the show, but it's a great complement." IC wall ceiling light, from \$545, by Flos at Ligne Roset, Friendship Heights, ligne-rosset.com



"Color stoves were big for a while, but I'm seeing a movement toward black-and-white kitchens," she says. Induction range, \$5,400, by Bertazzoni at Appliance Builders Wholesale, Silver Spring, Md., abwappliances.com

"A backsplash is an opportunity to do something that inspires you," she says. "This mix of scale and marbles feels fresh and timeless." Pembroke Waterjet mosaic tile, \$60 per square foot, by New Ravenna at Architectural Ceramics, Chevy Chase, Md., architecturalceramics.com



"I think a warm wood walnut stool, like this one from Cherner, is a nice addition to a black-and-white kitchen," says Subaran. \$829, Design Within Reach, Georgetown, dwr.com



"I love this painting by Virginia artist Lisa S. Tureson," says Subaran. "Expansion IV," \$650, by Lisa S. Tureson at studioartistica.com