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# KITCHENS & BATHS

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## 142 Brilliant Kitchen Makeover Ideas



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## WISH LIST: FOODIE KITCHEN



### joy of cooking

For the food-obsessed, the kitchen is a lab

WRITTEN BY BILL PARTSCH

Kitchens with lots of space and plenty of tools, all smartly distributed, make foodies happy.

**F**or some people, a love of cooking develops into a passion and appreciation of everything food-related. They don't just like to eat, they hunger to learn the science behind cooking and the way to bring out the best flavor in, say, a cheeseburger. If their love of food were their profession, they'd be chefs, but instead, these enthusiasts are called foodies, and their kitchens are their culinary playgrounds.

In a foodie kitchen, "the single most important thing is the quality of the appliances," says Paula Wlaznak, of Adaptations, a design studio located in Bellingham, Washington. "Convection ovens are standard, and they might have warming drawers that a typical kitchen wouldn't have."

A lot of foodies prefer a gas cooktop for its easy adjustability. They know that electric ovens provide a more even

heat, but they also know that natural gas produces a moist heat. Consequently, foodies might want two ovens: one gas, one electric. "If you're doing long-time cooking of meat, like a brisket, you want a low, moist heat," Wlaznak says. "But many people prefer electric ovens for baked goods. Crisp crusts and browning tend to be better in electric ovens."

Because foodie kitchens involve intensive cooking, the vent hood is very



..... **must-have** .....

A wall oven can supplement the main stove, providing a bonus baking zone and an alternate cooking fuel.

Dacor Epicure Discovery single wall oven, \$3,795. 800-793-0093; [dacor.com](http://dacor.com).





## WISH LIST: FOODIE KITCHEN



Rooms with multiple sinks and ovens and a powerful range hood make it easy to experiment with food.

important. "If you have four 15,000-Btu burners, you're going to need at least a 500 cfm [cubic feet per minute] hood—more if it's over an island," Wlaznak says.

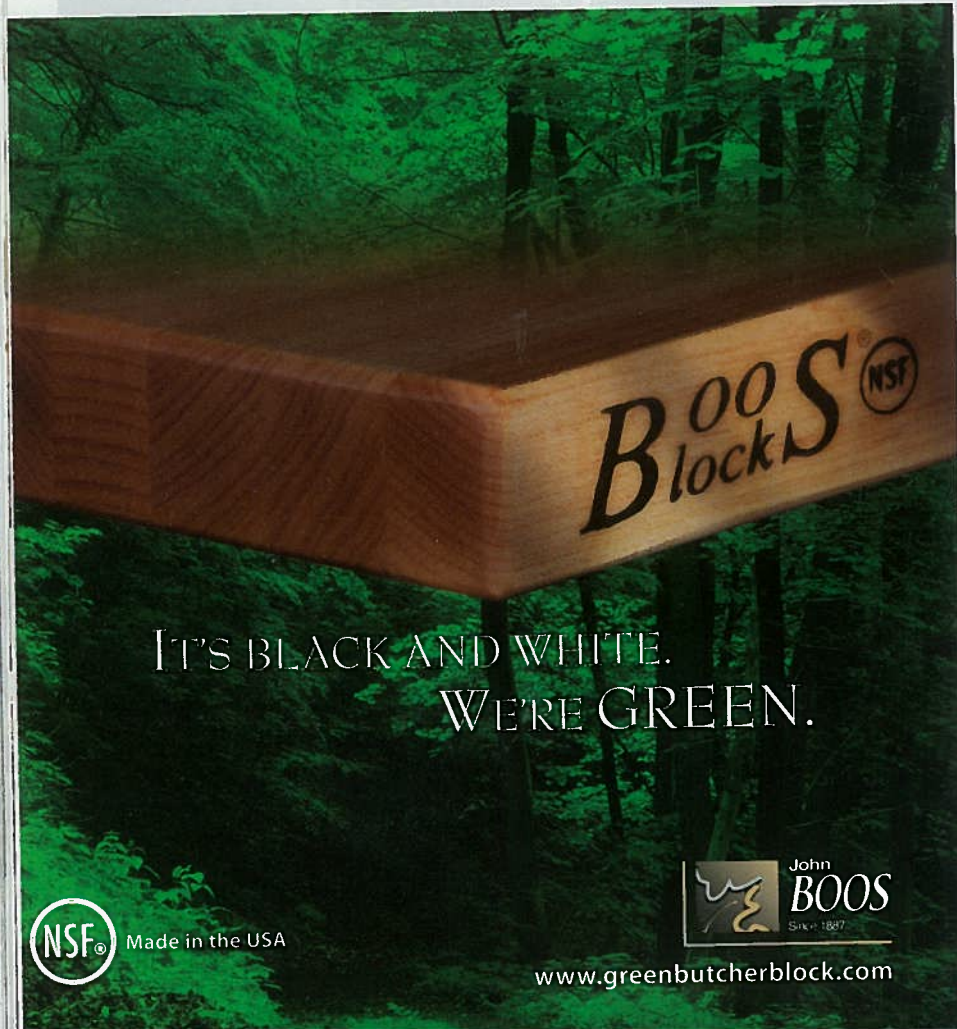
On the other hand, the refrigerator doesn't have to be the most expensive model out there, Wlaznak says, as long as it has the capacity and compartments to keep food fresh.

To store dry staples, open shelves can be just the ticket, says Randal Sisk, of Kitchens by Kleweno in Kansas City, Missouri. "I find that real foodies are sometimes not the neatest people," he says. "They don't want to be cleaning their hands to open a door every time they need an ingredient."

Complicating storage is the notion that "foodies need all the tools. They have all kinds of gadgets and knives," Sisk says. Necessities include a food processor and a stand mixer. "Foodies also like different kinds of cookware for different types of cooking," Wlaznak says. "Enameled cast iron for long, even heat, and a grill pan for indoor grilling."

Pot racks, drawers with dividers, open shelves below an island and plentiful counter space can help accommodate this galaxy of gadgets. "You should put a pot rack over the main work surface, usually an island or a work table," Sisk says. He stresses that a good pot rack should include

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### must-have

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Kuhn Rikon 6-inch santoku knife, \$60.  
800-662-5882; [kuhnriikon.com](http://kuhnriikon.com).



## WISH LIST: FOODIE KITCHEN

down lighting. “The rack itself usually blocks light from the ceiling.”

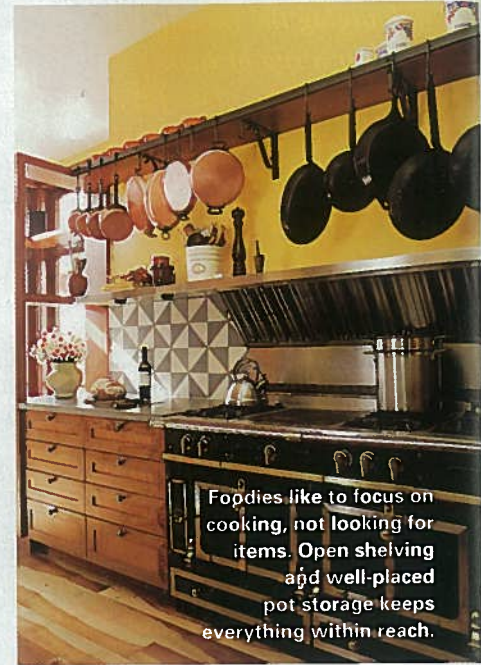
Another factor to consider when mapping out storage is garbage. A natural location for a waste receptacle would be where you generate the most kitchen trash, “which is usually between the cooktop and sink, or else near the sink,” says Sisk. He also recommends a second trash can on the perimeter of the kitchen, where people can get rid of trash without bothering the cook—especially important in a foodie kitchen.

Sisk is also a fan of having three sinks: one for prep, one for cleaning and one that he calls a beverage center. “It might be closer to the breakfast nook or family room so you can get to it easily.”

Wlznak recommends high-quality stainless steel sinks (18 gauge or, even better, 16), with a brushed finish that doesn't show scratches. “You need either one very large sink or what's known as a sink and three-quarters, to handle the big cookware.” An undermount installation is always smart, she says, “because scraps and spills can be swiped off the countertop into the sink.”

No matter how many sinks a kitchen can comfortably handle, Sisk says, “a typical foodie kitchen has a disposer in every sink. I would say that's mandatory.” Multiple disposers make every sink a prep sink—and make the kitchen more accommodating to multiple cooks.

Sisk even goes so far as



to recommend that a sink with more than one drain have disposers on both sides.

Foodies are busy cooking and learning (and eating); they don't want to spend a lot of time taking care of the countertop. That leaves out natural stone, which is prone to staining, but engineered stone such as quartz composite is fine, Wlznak says. “Often, we put in two or three countertop materials,” she says. “The only surface anyone should ever cut on is butcher-block.”

Less expensive countertop materials can work well, too. Laminate is a low-cost option, though more prone to scratching and scorching. Solid surface is easy to care for and easy to repair.

The priority in a foodie kitchen—small or large, traditional or contemporary, top-of-the-line or bargain-conscious—is the cooking, not the decor. ♦

### must-have

Foodies love gadgets. A good stick blender handles loads of tasks, and it's portable.


KitchenAid immersion blender, \$129.  
800-334-6889; [kitchenaid.com](http://kitchenaid.com).



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