

Third-place kitchen: Stephen Spinelli, Home Traditions, Syracuse
Kitchen location: Owasco Lake
Kitchen size: 305 square feet



Designer Stephen Spinelli, of Home Traditions, had to work on dimension while the Owasco Lake home was in its framing stage.

For this new lakefront home on Owasco Lake, the challenge for designer Stephen Spinelli was to work on dimensions while the home was in its framing stage. Due to a commitment to an open floor plan and a lack of space, Spinelli decided against partitions of the entry foyer, kitchen and nearby living areas.

“We were able to attain a level of virtuosity, which satisfied these demands by using the casework to serve as an implicit perimeter for privacy and storage, as well as traffic and visual flow,” Spinelli says.

Integrated into one run of cabinets: a built-in seat, closet storage, footwear drawers, stemware/china display, two commercial wall ovens, pot and canning storage and a pet-feeding station. Spinelli calls the area the “food preparation niche.” It is highly functional, yet sleek and modern.

“This design is executed in what I think might best be described as a Millennium style. It incorporates a true sense of raw composition and contemporary massing but is never so sterile as to preclude the use of traditional elements such as the cabinetry’s rustic grade of maple ... the inset-door style and the more classical cornice treatments.”

Overall, the look is seamless, sculptural and, Spinelli says, unfitted.

“We also favored a zero-tolerance approach we frequently use, in which all of the cabinetry elements are seamlessly integrated into door and window jamb openings, open shelving is tied directly into window mullions and contains recessed display lighting. Natural stone countertops terrace, cascade and create enhanced ergonomics.” >



For this 145-square-foot bath in Cazenovia, designer Stephen Spinelli, of Home Traditions in Syracuse, had to balance a space that began as two rooms.



First place bath: Stephen Spinelli, Home Traditions, Syracuse

Bath location: Cazenovia

Bath size: 145 square feet

Before Stephen Spinelli begins a project, he takes into consideration that almost any remodeling decision can impact the daily lives of the home's inhabitants. Spinelli also considers the impact of change on other spaces within the house.

"The true beauty is that in good design, no one of these individual considerations demand focus more than any other, and no single element calls attention to itself. There is a balance or richness, which never becomes stale or uninteresting," Spinelli says.



In this 145-square-foot bathroom in a home in Cazenovia, the challenge was to balance a space originally separated into two smaller rooms. A skylight also hindered the room's potential.

"It was critical to re-establish balance between the suite's major elements — the window, the casework and the spa — by adding a second skylight — that was a 'given,'" he says.

For his part, Spinelli says there are no shortcuts when it comes to achieving goals like these. The accomplishment is always the result of listening, seeing, planning and developing relationships with clients and contractors.

"We had done their kitchen several years earlier, and knew that they had design sensibilities and an attraction toward materials which skew decidedly Scandinavian," he says. "In bathrooms, the trick is always how to synthesize interests like these into a space that is at once cohesive and sinuous — but also durable — and at the same time, be sure to pay attention to the budget." >

"Our clients were impressed with some of the more spacious his-and-hers shower environments they enjoyed on their travels abroad," Spinelli says.