

THIS SMALL KITCHEN IS FABULOUS & FUNCTIONAL

*September 22, 2015 by Anna Marchetti*

Lending warmth to a modern space is no small task. But for Nashville, TN-based interior designer [Marcelle Guilbeau](#), it's a must! In order to make a house feel alive, she insists, there has to be a balance between form and function. A home — especially a kitchen — should feel inhabited and utilized. But, most importantly, it should reflect the lifestyle of its owners. In this charming new house in historic East Nashville, Marcelle blends the pastoral charm of the client's childhood home with a modern edge. Take a look at the stunning results in this warm yet industrial kitchen.



*Designed by [Marcelle Guilbeau](#), this contemporary kitchen in East Nashville blends modern and rustic materials poetically.*

Marcelle's design process for this particular home was unique. She drew inspiration from two specific requests from the homeowners: that the design incorporate a piece of salvaged wood from a fence at the client's family farm in Indiana and that it reflect the industrial, warehouse look of architecture on the west coast, where the couple spent the past several years. Drawing from these two seemingly discordant ideas, Marcelle came up with a design that plays with warm woods, concrete, mixed metals and exposed brick in striking combinations.



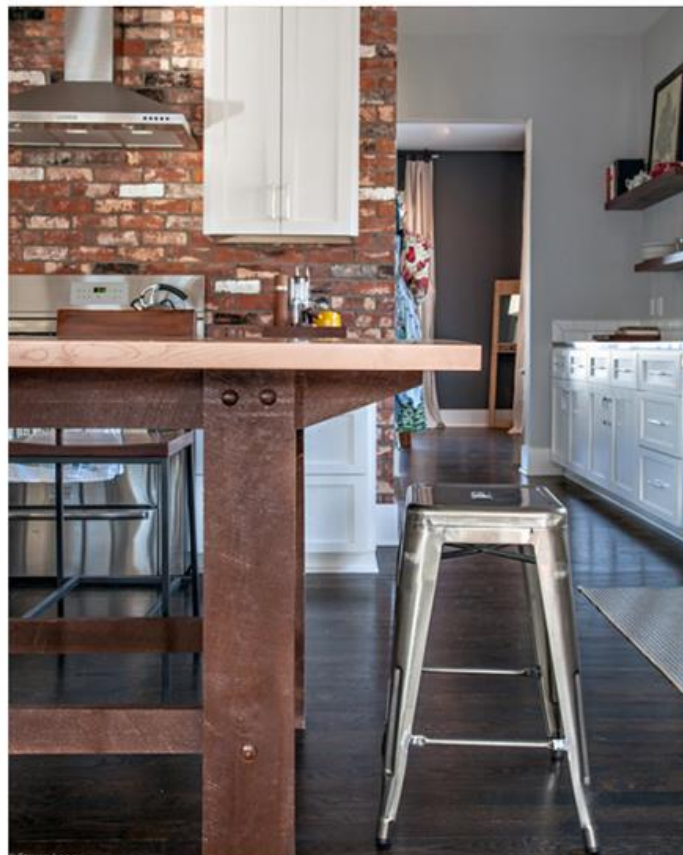
*There is little separation between the kitchen and den, encouraging both spaces to be used interchangeably for living, dining and entertaining.*

This house was a new build, but the homeowners wanted to customize it to make it more suited to their personal style. Having just moved from San Diego, CA, they liked the contemporary design of buildings in that area. To bring a modern aesthetic to this home, Marcelle capitalized on clean, straight lines. She also integrated exposed brick on the backsplash of the stove and introduced stainless steel fixtures and appliances, thereby balancing the distressed finishes with a contemporary material. She even mixed different types of woods and blended neutral paint colors to create a strikingly rich composition.



*Distressed wood frames the oversized doorway between the kitchen and den. Industrial light fixtures hang above the island, creating a poignant intersection between modern and traditional elements.*

Because Marcelle was designing this home for a family with children, she wanted the kitchen to be comfortable and versatile. She decided to make the tall, modern island serve as a surface for preparing and serving food, and a place where people can eat, converse, read and linger, almost like another dining room table. The kitchen opens into the encompassing den, creating a seamless transition between the two spaces.



*Marcelle isn't shy about mixing materials. She blends brick, painted and stained woods, and metals to create an industrial, but warm, interior.*

The wood that frames the doorway into the living room is echoed on the mantel above the concrete fireplace. In many ways, the fireplace articulates the entirety of the design; a perfect juncture between natural and industrial materials; a harmonious balance between hard and soft, textured and smooth, warm and cool finishes.



*The versatile island can be used as a breakfast table, a dinner table, a preparation surface and a place to entertain guests. Marcelle stresses the importance of integrating items that are multidimensional in their functionality.*



*Using floating shelves, Marcelle lets rustic dishware and jars serve as ornamentation. This makes the kitchen feel like a cozy dwelling place.*



*Contemporary cabinetry and hardware align beautifully with the modern, rustic shelves.*

The color palette is also vital in expressing the concept of comfortable modernity. The tones of the cabinets and woods are cool, but not stark. Marcelle chose whites, grays and blues that complement the orange and chestnut hues of the wood and brick, making each surface really come to life. Without a doubt, every element of this interior was carefully considered. From the arrangement of each stool to the specificity of each material, this design reflects the undeniable beauty of a finely curated space that is, more importantly, practical.

*A special thanks to Marcelle for sharing her exceptional designs with us today. To see more of her work, click [here](#).*

*Today's beautiful photography was provided by [Steven Long](#).*