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TAMPA BAY

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## By the Bay

*Designers' Showcase  
Accentuates Home's  
Flawless Views*

## Tradition with a Twist

*Mediterranean-style Villa  
Captures Luxury with Color*

# Out of this World

By Nichole L. Reber  
Photos by Johan Roetz/  
Vision Photography

Their highly contemporary, minimalist kitchen conjures images of Jetsons cartoons, but what keeps John and Michelle Martin's kitchen from seeming cold and industrial is the warmth they've carefully cultivated within it. This eccentric blend of cool and warm seems like a metaphor for the newlyweds' views toward the future and their recognition of the present.

Before they met, John and Michelle were remodeling their own respective houses, but now after a year of marriage, their tastes have synchronized in the house they purchased and remodeled together.

"We had different styles but surprisingly agreed on just about everything," says John. "Our styles came together to create what this is. We're really happy about it."

The kitchen serves as a focal point of the house, illustrating the couple's enjoyment of casual entertaining. It is designed with a minimalist flair yet shows an appreciation for detail. Lighting, art and playful geometry were all significant details that brought the

entire picture together to create an arresting study in aesthetics.

"We try to take people all through the house because we have really cool lighting, but they're like, 'Wait! Wait! I'm still not done looking at all the details of the kitchen,'" says John.

## Creating the sci-fi kitchen

Over the course of seven months, the Martins propelled their 1962 kitchen of 195 square-feet into a work of art. Michelle, who has the eye for detail, and John, who "likes eye candy," started with the idea of wood floors. "We ripped the old one out, completely gutted it and started with a fresh slate," says John.

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"...Yeah,  
we can do that."

— Fred Craig,  
owner of Profusion Design and Decor



Opposite: Sleek and oh so stylish, the Martins looked to the future for inspiration in designing their new kitchen.

Above: Patagonian rosewood flooring complements and balances the abundance of stainless steel cabinetry and appliances.

The main visual element of their new slate is stainless steel. It's in the cabinetry with doors inlaid with translucent glass, the facade on the island bar, the stove's hood and the brushed stainless steel handles on drawers. The energy efficient appliances, from the Architect series by KitchenAid, are of stainless steel as is the rounded backsplash that emphasizes the kitchen's rectilinear elements and creates a sense of "movement," according to John.

The angled cabinet space at the end of the cabinetry is also a moving piece. It came together with the design/contracting services of Fred Craig, owner of Profusion, a stainless steel fabrication company in St. Petersburg.

John explains its origin. "When we were working with (him) and we were

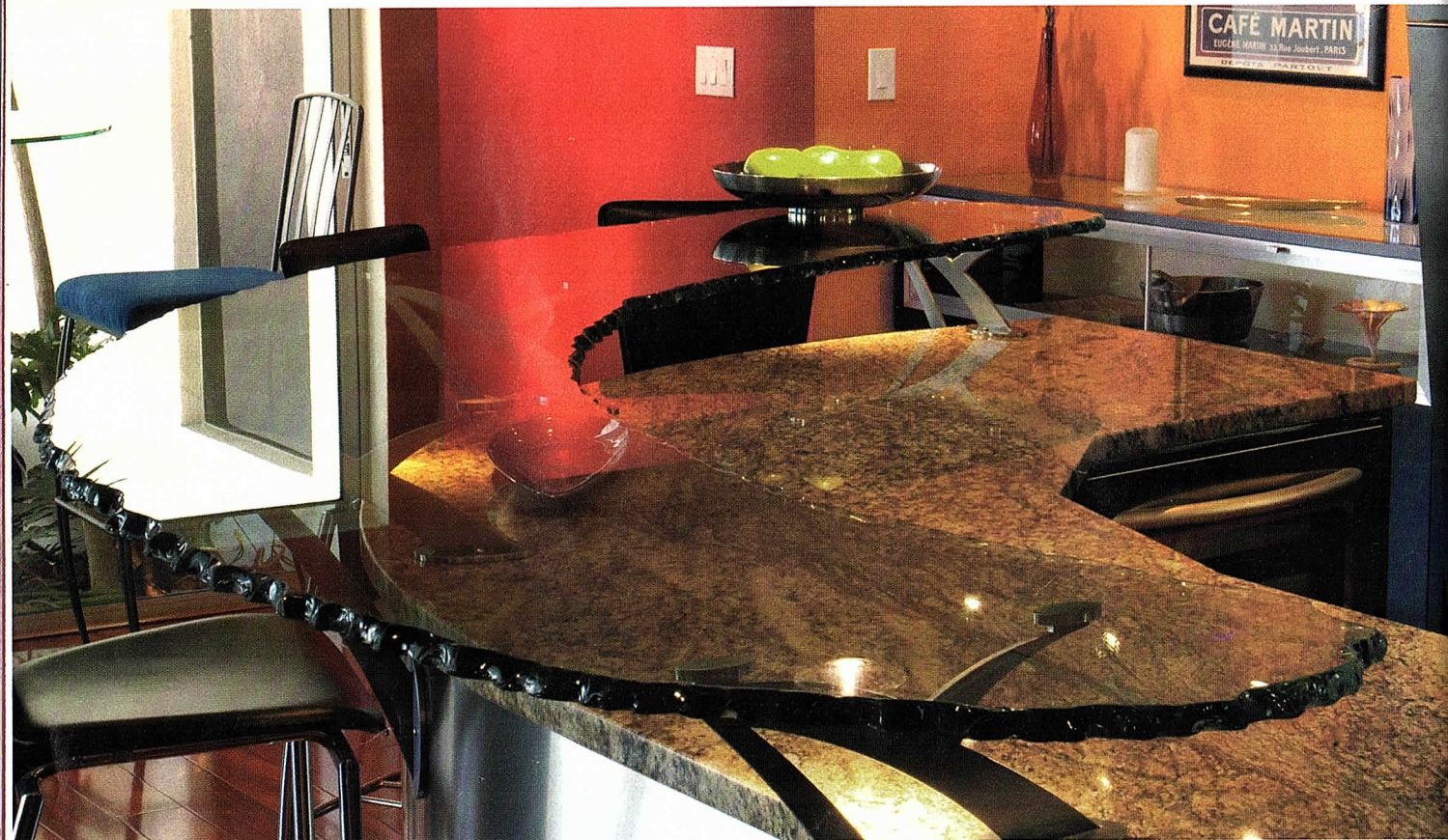
**“We’re not a ‘sit down dinner party’ kind of a couple but more of the ‘hang-out-and-have-at-it’ kind.”**

— John Martin,  
homeowner

drawing out a plan to make this really unique, he was starting to draw that cabinet upside down for me. He was drawing it crooked (just for sketching's sake) but he said it would be straight. I said, 'I like it angled like that.' His eyes lit up and he said, 'Yeah, we can do that.'"

The resulting cabinetry looks more like a piece of math art than traditional kitchen cabinetry, yet it's fully functional. It resembles a pyramid turned upside down and sliced vertically in half. The top cabinet is made of stainless steel and is much wider than the bottom cabinet. The bottom is made of wenge wood, an extremely dark brown, exotic wood, and ends narrowly just above hardwood floor.

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Above: A scalloped edge on the glass bar top helps bring out the curve of the island.

Opposite: Yellow River granite countertops bring an element of color to the dark wood and stainless steel cabinetry.





The angled cabinetry unit resembles a pyramid turned upside down and sliced vertically in half.



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# kitchen TRENDS

## Warming it up

Designing a science-fiction-like kitchen was fun, but the couple wanted to make it inviting too.

"The kitchen was designed more than partially for entertaining," John says. "We're not a sit down dinner party kind of a couple but more of the hang-out-and-have-at-it kind." Therefore, the Martins infused their science-fiction-like kitchen of stainless steel with soothing lighting and sensual natural materials.

The other top cabinets are faced with translucent glass and softly lighted from within. Michelle strategically placed female figurines inside some of them to create soft, warm silhouettes. Granite countertops and Patagonian rosewood flooring further soften the stainless steel's otherwise stark appearance.

The Martins added still more personalized measures to generate a soothing appearance. For instance, they brought out the rounded edges of the island bar's countertops by curving their stainless steel backsplash and the scalloped edge on the glass bar atop the island. Then they installed layers of lighting to provide delicate sensuality. In addition, the subtle lighting within the cabinetry, triangular, stainless steel lights mounted under the cabinets provide subtle luminescent ambiance. Stainless steel canned lights add another layer of indirectly soft lighting. The final layers include a helix-shaped torchiere and hanging lights over the bar. Ironically in keeping with the kitchen's sci-fi feel, five small cracked crystal and inlaid crystal lamps hung above the island bar are called UFO saucers.

"They're of Swarovski crystal. They look like the yellow diamonds, like my wife's wedding ring," John says.

The 44-year-old house offers its own idea of luminescence as well. Above the sink, a window lets in sunlight during just the right times of day, and behind the island bar, sliding glass doors leading to the lanai and pool further brighten the room.

## Maximizing the minimalism

Because the kitchen was designed with entertainment in mind, Michelle came up with the idea of his and hers pullout liquor drawers. The drawers were built into the island bar, beside the convection oven, microwave and wine chiller.

"You can pull it out and look down and see all the bottles right there instead of moving bottles around to get to the one you want," says Michelle.

Michelle and John enjoy demonstrating that even divergent tastes can combine to create something with awesome aesthetic appeal. Having turned their 1962 kitchen into an image from a futuristic novel, they have balanced the sci-fi feel with something warmer, personal and quite entertaining. 🍷

Right: Thanks to a deep sink and spray-head faucet, cleanup after entertaining is made simple.

Opposite: The 44-year-old home's kitchen will remain chic well into the future.

## RESOURCES:

### Designer:

John and Michelle Martin

### Kitchen design and installation:

Profusion Design and Decor

### Flooring:

Patagonian rosewood,  
Yeager Flooring

### Countertops:

Yellow River granite,  
Fincher Rocks

### Stainless steel cabinets, curved island and backsplash:

Profusion Design and Decor

### Wood cabinets:

Unique Cabinetry

### Refrigerator, cooktop, oven, dishwasher:

KitchenAid

### Sink:

Elkay

### Lighting:

Swarovski crystal lights,  
The Electric Co.

### Glass breakfast bar:

Coastal Glass & Mirror



sci-fi feel...  
...UFO saucers