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PHOTOS BY
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PROJECT
Potrero Hill
Kitchen Renovation
ARCHITECT
Ryan Jang
BUILDER
Jeff King, jeffkingandco.com
LOCATION
San Francisco, California

Master Chefs

In a San Francisco kitchen, a sleek series of custom cabinets camouflages an armada of professional features.

At first glance, the renovated kitchen in a house on San Francisco's Potrero Hill looks like it belongs in a showroom. But behind the tall white cabinets lies a slew of professional features that allows the residents, two culinary hobbyists, to whip up gourmet meals for large groups of friends. "The residents wanted a functional kitchen with clean lines and a contemporary appearance," says architect Ryan Jang. Before the renovation, the kitchen looked off-the-shelf:

stained wood cabinets, a white tile backsplash, and a stone counter. The residents felt the space was lacking a modern sensibility, wasn't durable, and was poorly laid out for their cooking style. "A lot of kitchens you see in publications and online look good but don't seem very functional," says Jang. This was a unique challenge in that the owners wanted a kitchen that was functional while maintaining high aesthetic standards." >

Painters accomplished the high-gloss finish on the cabinets of a kitchen in San Francisco by applying a coat of paint, polishing it with very high-grit sandpaper, repeating the process for each layer, then topping it with three coats of clear varnish. "It's like an auto body," says builder Jeff King. "It's incredibly beautiful."



Integrating the 255-square-foot kitchen into the open-plan living and dining areas guided the design process. "Everything does a good job of disappearing," says builder Jeff King, who disguised the Miele refrigerator, drawers, shelves, and a custom speed rack (usually found in commercial kitchens, speed racks are about six feet tall, set on wheels, and used as intermediate storage to free up counter space) with uniform cabinet fronts. To maximize the space's usability, Jang specified an island that is large enough for people to gather around and that allows those preparing meals to face the rest of the great room. He considered placing the range on the island, too, but found that a hood would obscure sight lines—so he stationed it against the rear wall. The *pietra grigio* marble-topped island offers a natural counterpoint to the glossy white cabinets and stainless-steel appliances. "Instead of overdoing it with unnecessary finishes, we tried to visually refine and simplify the design as much as possible," says Jang. "It's minimal and an intentional contrast to the rest of the existing traditional space." □



**"This was a unique challenge in that the owners wanted a kitchen that was functional while maintaining high aesthetic standards."
—Architect Ryan Jang**

King installed dimmable fluorescent strips by Bartco in the alcoves above the cabinets for ambient lighting (top). The residents store perishable items that don't need refrigeration—like fruits, vegetables, onions, and garlic—in maple-lined pantry drawers (above). The coffee station features a professional-grade Rocket Espresso machine (right). Jang and King designed a stainless-steel pullout shelf for a cream and sugar station.

The residents incorporated speed racks (far right) into the cabinets. Typically found in restaurants, the racks offer chefs intermediate storage. In this case, the couple places food behind the cabinet until it's ready to serve. After the meal is over, they can stow dirty dishes out of sight instead of interrupting the party with cleanup. To ensure trays slide in and out without catching the cabinet, King used hinges that allow the door to rotate 270 degrees.

