



Seeing is belleving for designer Elizabeth Swartz. She's been

known to fashion crude chandeliers out of tuna cans and clothes hangers to help homeowners visualize the scale of light fixtures. She has mocked up peninsulas from card tables topped with milk crates and foam-core board to show how the real deal would alter traffic flow. But this kitchen project didn't require any visualization tricks; the homeowner was sold on nearly everything Swartz suggested, including color. "Beige is not one of my goto basics," says the designer, who heads her namesake Boston firm, Elizabeth Swartz Interiors. "I'm big on color."

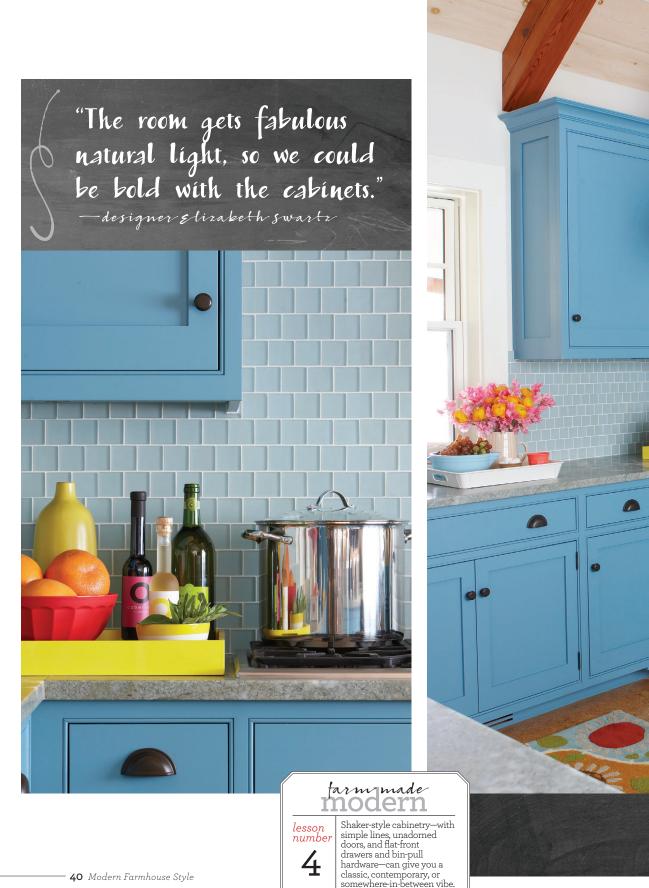
In this case, she was big on blue, the homeowner's favorite color, which nods to her Scandinavian heritage as well as the nearby ocean. Swartz ran with blues-some leaning gray; others, green-on cabinets, stone countertops, and the glass tile backsplash. She then shifted to more noticeably different shades with accessories, such as cobalt art glass pendants and turquoise sconces. "Variety is key," Swartz says. "I like to bring in different shades and textures for interest. If you're not afraid of color, I say go for it. Choose what you like and be confident."

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opposite: A glass tile backsplash brings a complementary, lighter blue to the cabinet's bold scheme. above: A porch converted into a pantry expands the kitchen's footprint, providing additional storage and counter space, plus it even houses the refrigerator. A transom window added above the pantry doorway draws light into the kitchen.