



big on
blue



In this cozy coastal kitchen, moody hues add the wow—appearing as both easy background and bright accents.

A peninsula stretches prep space, adds seating, and serves as a boundary between the kitchen and living room. Wood flooring shifts to cork in the kitchen for softness.

Seeing is believing

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 go-to 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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above: Soft whites, rich woods (including rustic-looking beams), and dark bronze accents warm the cool blues. *right:* A granite ledge takes the place of a wood windowsill for continuity with the solid-surfacing countertop. *opposite:* Blue cabinets set a casual mood in this Massachusetts kitchen. "We wanted it to be playful," designer Elizabeth Swartz says. "The room gets fabulous natural light, so we could be bold with the cabinets."



A kitchen scene featuring bright blue cabinetry and a grey countertop. A window in the background is decorated with a vase of yellow flowers. On the countertop, there is a green toaster, a cutting board with bread, a sink with a silver faucet, a blue soap dispenser, a wire basket of lemons, and an orange bowl. Three blue pendant lights are mounted on the wall above the window. The overall atmosphere is bright and cheerful.

“Consider the lighting
when you’re choosing
a color. Even the type
of bulbs you choose
will change the look.”

—designer Elizabeth Swartz

"The room gets fabulous natural light, so we could be bold with the cabinets."
—designer Elizabeth Swartz



farm made
modern

*lesson
number*

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Shaker-style cabinetry—with simple lines, unadorned doors, and flat-front drawers and bin-pull hardware—can give you a classic, contemporary, or somewhere-in-between vibe.



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.