

KITCHEN + FOOD DESIGN

FOUND IN TRANSLATION

WHEN YOU THINK OF HIGH-END ITALIAN DESIGN, WHAT COMES TO MIND? FOR MANY, IT'S A CLEAN ELEGANCE: BOLD, CONFIDENT LINES THAT MARRY THE WARMTH OF FINISHED WOOD WITH SLEEK MODERN SURFACES. DIFFERENT INGREDIENTS COMMINGLE TO CREATE A COOL, COMPLEMENTARY CONCOCTION. ABOVE ALL ELSE, THOUGH, IS THE VISCERA—WHEN RUNNING YOUR FINGERS ALONG VARIEGATED COMPONENTS, YOU NEED TO FEEL THE FLOWING FUNCTIONALITY OF EACH PIECE LAID OUT EXACTLY AS IT SHOULD BE, WITH NOTHING LEFT OVER. IN OTHER WORDS, IT HAS TO FIT.

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CREATE A BEAUTIFUL KITCHEN
THAT FILLED THE SPACE AND WAS
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-MATT SMITH, STUDIO COMO

“COMO” COULD REFER TO THE CITY IN NORTHERN ITALY AT THE BASE OF THE ALPS AND LUXURY RESORT-LADEN LAKE COMO; IT CAN ALSO BE TRANSLATED TO ENGLISH TO MEAN “BUREAU” OR “DRAWERS.” SIMILARLY, QUALITY KITCHEN DESIGN—FROM DRAWERS TO DOORS AND BEYOND—HAS QUICKLY BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH THE ITALIAN BRAND POLIFORM, FOUND AT DENVER-BASED STUDIO COMO.

Fit is a function of Poliform, headquartered roughly 10 miles outside of Como in Inverigo, Italy. Tracing its roots back to 1942 as a small artisanal shop, the modern global luxury brand added CR&S Varenna kitchens in 1996. Throughout their growth, however, they’ve maintained the character and culture of a family-run business.

Clarity and shared vision proved integral when Denver’s Poliform experts connected with clients in Salt Lake City. According to Matt Smith, Studio Como Technical Systems Designer, they

specifically selected the Kyton line to meet the goal of an ultra-clean performance aesthetic. “The plain door style with handles routed into the front panels gets rid of ornamentation,” said Smith. And on a larger level, it integrated into the footprint and structural flow: “We had a simple goal: to create a beautiful kitchen that filled the space and was integral to the architecture.”

A defining feature of the project is the pocket door units, which are popular in European kitchen design, according to Smith. Two doors along the main run will open and push back into the cabinetry, creating a clear workflow runway. After use, the doors slide back, creating the clean surface plane, resulting in what the homeowner describes as a “functional disappearance.” The result is profound: sleek, unbroken lines that contain every culinary need close at hand, hidden from sight when not in use.

Functionality flows throughout the kitchen, broken into distinct cooking and cleaning sections. From the pullout worktop to the sealed aluminum sink cabinet, each component is designed to

Viewed from the courtyard, the dark Spessart oak cabinets form a contrasting background for the softer, tactile matte white glass lining the island’s backside. Up closer, the subtle variegated surface of the wood becomes apparent, complementing the clean, natural lines that are void of excess ornamentation. Opened, the pocketed doors push back into cabinetry to create a clear walkway, a highlight of contemporary European kitchen design. The Varenna hood was specifically selected to cover both the main cooktop and flat grill and extends over the circular marble cutting board. With distinctive prep/cook and cleaning/storage zones, the homeowners can move between the panel-fronted appliances to the pull-out worktop and auxiliary-lighting adorned shelving (which can be cleared out and opened into additional workspace).

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make optimal use of space within, below, and around. The island's built-in Sub-Zero refrigerated drawer can be used for beverages and to supplement the full-sized Gaggenau unit on the opposing wall; except for this and the Varenna hood over two cooktops, the kitchen is outfitted with a full Gaggenau appliance package. Ample sized internal drawers outfitted with blum Legrabox systems are functionally arranged, with the top two housing spices and silverware and a deeper bottom one for pots and pans. And pull-out trash bins with built-in lids keep odors out of the main area. Whether part of the frosted warm white matte glass-fronted island or hidden behind Spessart Oak perimeter panels, layout and aesthetics were tailored to—and often directed by—client specifications (as evidenced by the last-minute choice to create space and break lines by offsetting the seating area, a decision their architect confirmed). "The design process was heavy on collaboration," said Smith. "It was about getting exactly what they needed."

With remote component production overseas and remote installation, translating the vision into an executable reality was not without its challenges. As it was difficult to justify regular on-site travel to Utah (much less Europe), process became beholden to communication efficacy: every modification, no matter how minor, was subject to a possible time delay. Fortunately, the experienced team at Studio Como was able to relay client specifications in an efficient manner, resulting in a smooth install. "The challenge was really in discussing design," said Smith. "There's different terminology. The key was figuring out what we needed to talk about before beginning to solve the problem."

The resulting solution is a maximal-function, minimalist-appearance kitchen. And according to the homeowner, it's a perpetual topic of conversation—from the expansive counter to the uniform paneled components, guests marvel at the sleek integration (and have to be shown where the "hidden" refrigerator lies). As the satisfied client reiterated, it brings optimal performance that vanishes after task. What's left behind is visceral, clean, and modern. Or, as Smith said, "It looks more like furniture and less like a kitchen." And that, regardless of translation, is what we call bellissimo.

PROJECT CREDITS

Kitchen
Studio Como

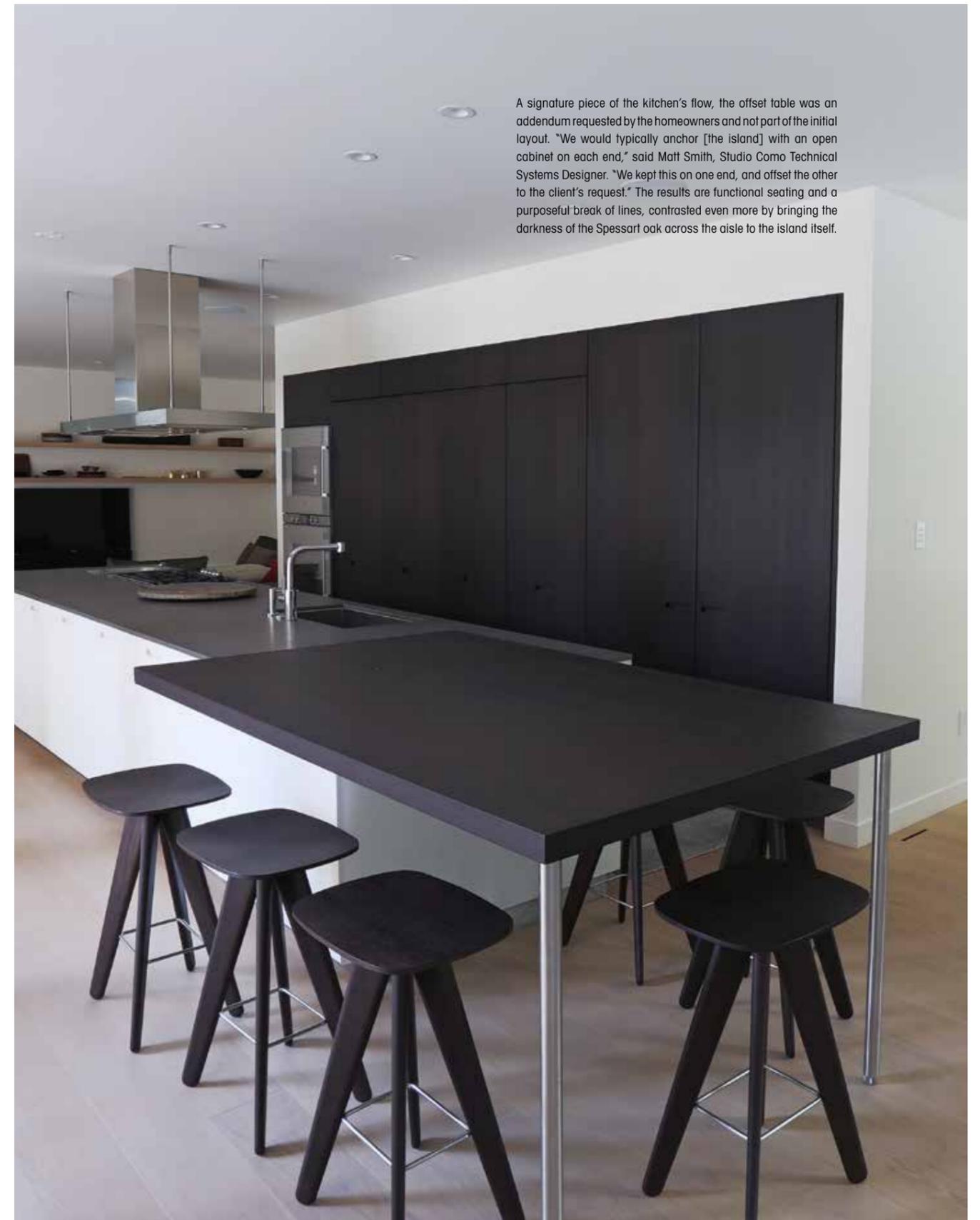
Architect
Lloyd Architects

Builder
Marsala & Company

Interior Design
Ann Tempest



Whether laboring in the adjacent workspace or unplugging for a bit of relaxation, flow is a fundamental factor in the open concept's design for life. And the key to anchoring the kitchen as a central component to this was finding the right fit in Studio Como. From Paola Lenti rugs to De La Espada dining room tables, the Denver design studio carried the right accents to ensure kitchen continuity extends throughout a residence.



A signature piece of the kitchen's flow, the offset table was an addendum requested by the homeowners and not part of the initial layout. "We would typically anchor [the island] with an open cabinet on each end," said Matt Smith, Studio Como Technical Systems Designer. "We kept this on one end, and offset the other to the client's request." The results are functional seating and a purposeful break of lines, contrasted even more by bringing the darkness of the Spessart oak across the aisle to the island itself.

