



Interior landscape

Harmonizing colors and materials, many treated in novel ways, combine to create a peaceful ambiance in this open-plan kitchen

If you have an affinity with nature, it may be worth visiting your favorite beach or forest for inspiration at the start of your remodeling project.

The owner of this kitchen had a family background in landscape design, as well as an appreciation for natural materials and textures. That provided useful clues for designer Doug Durbin of nuHaus – especially as the owner had already selected an acid-washed stone for the flooring.

Durbin, who specializes in custom-designed cabinetry and fine woodworking,

selected rift-cut white oak for the perimeter cabinetry, maple in an opaque finish for the island, and gray-green granite for the countertops.

"It was important to the owner that the color, texture and character of the materials was harmonious with nature," he says. "The wood stains on the perimeter and refrigerator cabinet had to be transparent, yet enhance and accentuate the grain."

The design follows Durbin's signature style, which he describes as classic and enduring.

"I believe that fine kitchen design, and design in general, is rarely about a single ingredient, but more about the entire recipe," he says.

Several of the materials have been treated using techniques developed by Durbin. The translucent quality of the glass-fronted cabinetry is achieved by laminating delicate linen between layers of glass. The maple of the island has been treated with solvents, then overlaid with color to emulate the appearance and texture of leather.



A solid slab of quartz was installed behind the range hood, and thin grooves were machined into the surface. This suggests the look of narrow horizontal bricks, without the need for grouting or joints.

"The horizontal lines of the backsplash here, and over the sink, contrast with the strong verticality of the cabinetry, which has a very calming effect," he says.

For more information, contact nuHaus, 1665 Old Skokie Road, Highland Park, IL 60035. Email: info@nuhaus.com. Website: www.nuhau.com.



Facing page: The neutral tones of the stone floor were the starting point for this project. Several of the materials have been treated using techniques developed by the designer, Doug Durbin.

Above: The arched wood framing the range hood has been precision-made to sit slightly proud of the arched stainless steel inset canopy.

Left: The Sub-Zero refrigerator is encased in curved custom cabinetry. The cabinet is manufactured from three different cuts of American black walnut and recessed into the wall. This reduces the scale of the unit, and creates a clear sight line to the hall.