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## **Snell Island Residence**

Lush RAUVISIO noir matte surface brings timeless elegance and durability to this gourmet kitchen.

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# Minimalist kitchen boasts soothing appearance, maximum functionality

"Absolute minimalism" was at the top of the clients' wish list for the kitchen of their mid-century modern home in St. Petersburg, Fla., where the designers were challenged to create "a kitchen that doesn't read like a kitchen."

"They wanted a gourmet kitchen that would function flawlessly," one where they could entertain frequently and host a caterer for their events, explained Michael Bright of Bright Wood Works, a custom cabinet shop specializing in high-end kitchens.

Bright collaborated with a design team that included Urban Innovations' Bruce Laughridge and Ron Haynes, along with Eva Zwack of Capital Management Investment Group, to bring the clients' vision to life. Bright Bay Builders, which acted as general contractor for the project, was also a key team member on the project.

"The client was living in the house he grew up in and he wanted to make it true to the original architectural design," said Laughridge, who noted, "They really wanted something very minimal. They didn't want to see any appliances or any electrical outlets. They wanted as clean and uncluttered a look as they could possibly get, with everything hidden."



With three children and two dogs, that definitely presented some challenges. But REHAU RAUVISIO noir Silver Lake provided the perfect backdrop for hiding the inner workings of the kitchen, while offering that clean and bright ambiance the clients desired. The original design had actually called for a painted finish, but when the clients met with Bright and he showed them RAUVISIO noir, "they made up their minds immediately."

Bright had been using REHAU matte surfaces for several years and loved their durability and 'wow factor,' as well as the touchability of the product, so he was excited to share it with the clients. He selected RAUVISIO noir Silver Lake for its timeless beauty and durability. "Once they saw the material, they instantly fell in love with it," he said. "They referred to it as 'the touchy feely finish.'"



The former kitchen was small, dark and dysfunctional, so the first order of the day involved removing walls to open up the space and take advantage of the beautiful water views. Then they re-envisioned the space so it would function like a kitchen – without necessarily looking like one. The Miele appliances are now largely concealed, and the double ovens and auxiliary refrigerator were relocated into a dirty kitchen area that was originally the laundry room and pantry. The space even offers pet features, like the RAUVISIO noir Silver Lake integrated dog kennel that's practically hidden.

To achieve the desired minimalist look, the cabinetry was designed to have no handle detail, with the top drawers' detail color chosen to match the Silestone Iconic White countertops. An appliance garage helps to maintain the streamlined look.

With three young boys, "noise is definitely a thing," Haynes noted, so the entire cooktop wall is "a textured, tone-on-tone tile from Lunada Bay which acts as an acoustic baffle." The hex tile also provides a visual break from all the white, and appeals to the clients' love of texture.

**Project:** Snell Island Residence  
**Project type:** Kitchen remodel, completed November 2021  
**Cabinet Manufacturer:** Bright Wood Works  
**Designers:** Urban Innovations; Capital Management Investment Group  
**General contractor:** Bright Bay Builders  
**REHAU systems used:** RAUVISIO noir™ Silver Lake with perfectly matched REHAU LaserEdge™ technology  
**Photographer:** Julian Bright



Zwack, who came on later in the project, suggested removing the upper cabinets on the range wall and taking the three-dimensional hex tile from the countertop to the ceiling, as well as moving the double oven, built-in coffee machine and remaining cabinetry on the living/dining room wall into the 'dirty kitchen.' She explained that this helped, "to eliminate the kitchen feel in the open-concept space and to give the minimalistic look we were trying to achieve." She also worked with Bright to "build a white box in lieu of a stainless steel hood to keep it really clean," and to repaint the upper drawers to make the white flow better with the 24" marble tile flooring supplied by Custom Marble Works.

Indeed, entertaining was a high priority for both of the clients, so a huge island became a key part of the design. "The house has an angled side to it, and the island basically follows the shape of the house, so the island became this huge trapezoid-type shape," Laughridge explained. The island features two hidden dishwashers. There is also an area with a small cocktail table and chair arrangement that can double as a breakfast bar, he noted.

"There are no wall cabinets in the kitchen, but there's one storage wall that has some hidden compartments in it," Haynes added. However, behind drawers and doors, organizational features abound, from clever pull-out pantry drawers to a built-in paper towel holder.

"When you're trying to get rid of all of the clutter in the house, that can be a big challenge, and that drove all the detail in this," Laughridge said.

Bright believes that the "un-kitchen-like" appearance, gourmet functionality, beautiful views and the durable, touchable finish of RAUVISIO noir Silver Lake work together to give the kitchen a truly timeless appeal. He concluded, "I think they both love how the space is soothing to look at and how it functions just the way it was intended."



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