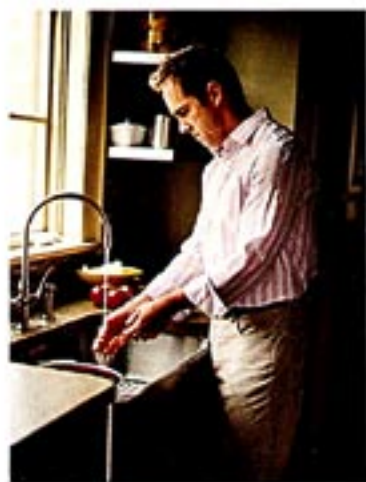


Food & Wine presents **The**
Ultimate
Entertaining
Home



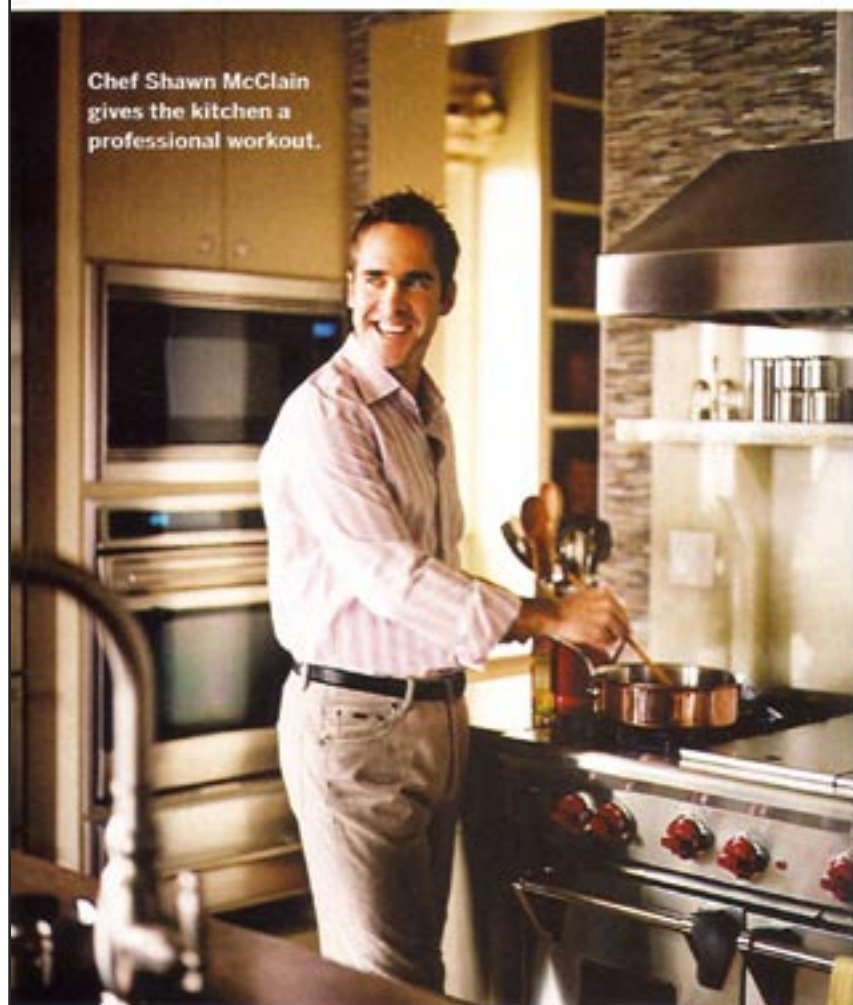
What would **Food & Wine's** dream house look like? It would need to have a truly amazing kitchen, of course. And it would have to be ideal for entertaining—everything from dinner with the neighbors to cocktail parties for 100. The Ultimate Entertaining Home, envisioned by F&W in partnership with Kohler, makes that fan-

tasy a reality. We asked architect **Stephen Fuller** and **Brian Gluckstein** of Gluckstein Design to create our dream house in Kohler, Wisconsin. Then we invited three pros from the Chicago area—chef **Shawn McClain** (below) of Spring and Green Zebra, Master Sommelier **Alpana Singh** of Everest and event planner **Kim Merlin** of Ex Floreus—to put the house through its paces, testing the party readiness of the great room, kitchen, porch, wine cellar and media room. Turn the page to start your own tour. For buying information, see Sources, page 18; to view every room in the house online, go to foodandwine.com/entertaininghome.



BY CHARLOTTE DRUCKMAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN KERNICK

Chef Shawn McClain gives the kitchen a professional workout.



Shawn McClain's Superfast Hors d'Oeuvres

Top store-bought fennel crackers with fig jam and crumbled blue cheese.
Slice a sourdough baguette, brush with olive oil and toast until crisp. Spread with green-olive tapenade and top with marinated white anchovies.
Toss freshly popped popcorn with a mix of melted butter, garam masala and sea salt.

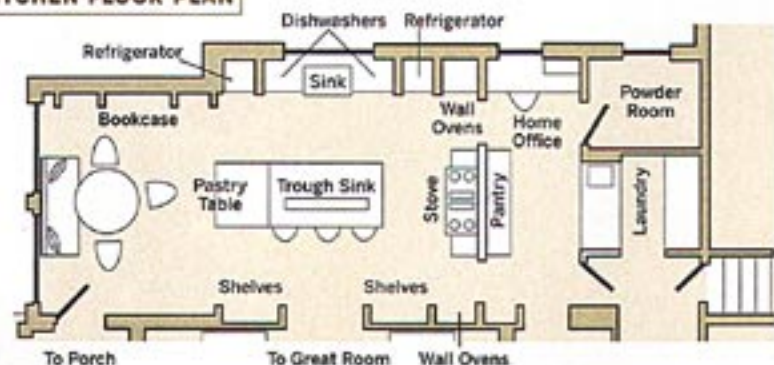
Cooking with Friends

Because party guests always hang out in the kitchen, this one is built to keep them comfortable—and encourage them to help out. The symmetry of the space makes it easy for multiple cooks to work at the same time. On each side of the sink is a Fisher & Paykel dishwasher drawer, so two people can load the machines simultaneously. Two Sub-Zero refrigerators flank the counter; Shawn McClain suggests storing different types of ingredients in each—the fridge near the 48-inch Wolf stove could hold everyday items, while the one near the pastry table could hold specialty and pastry-related ingredients. The cooks can use the four Wolf ovens at the same time—two in the stove and two in the wall, including one that's a combination microwave-convection. A Wolf warming drawer under the wall ovens keeps finished dishes hot without drying them out. There's even a fifth oven, a Miele steam oven—great for baking bread and low-fat cooking—and a Miele plate warmer.

"If I could steal one thing from this house, it would be the commercial-grade range and hood. A gas range like this has a lot of power, which is what you really want."

Shawn McClain, chef

KITCHEN FLOOR PLAN



7 Things We Love About This Kitchen

Pastry table The onyx-topped square extends the central island and matches the stove backsplash. "I'd roll out pasta or pastry dough on it," says Shawn McClain. "It's great

for kneading bread and doing chocolate work, too." The lower height makes it well-suited to shorter cooks, and the open shelf below provides extra storage space.

Countertops The concrete countertops are stained a golden hue, which gives the industrial material a softer style. "It makes the kitchen look modern, but not cold," McClain says.

Floor The flooring looks like brick, but it is actually brick-shaped tiles made from reclaimed elm by Vitruvius. The wood feels smooth under bare feet.

Backsplash A single piece of polished onyx carved into a bell shape serves as a backsplash behind the professional-style Wolf stove. On the walls, the Ann Sacks glass mosaic tiles have a luminous quality.

Trough sink Kohler's narrow 60-inch-long basin has a "Vinnata" faucet on both ends, so two people can use the sink at the same time from either side of the island.

Cabinets The combination of painted and stained cabinets from Canac is refreshingly modern. The Mission-style cherry drawers are stained mocha, while the panels on the dishwasher drawers and cabinets above the refrigerator are painted the same putty color as the walls.

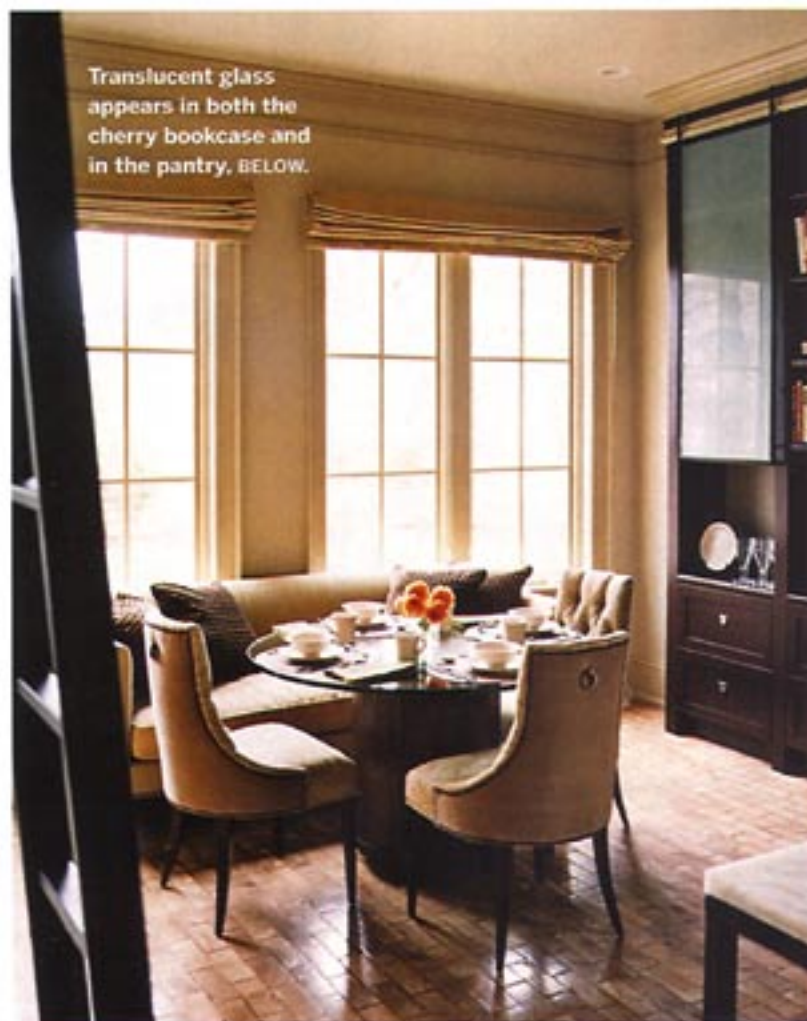
Wall vacuum The Electrolux central vacuum—you attach a hose to the wall instead of lugging around a heavy machine—includes an electric dustpan installed in the kick board under a dishwasher drawer. When you push open the dustpan cover, debris gets sucked in.

"I'd fill the trough sink with ice and use it as a raw bar, for caviar, to chill Champagne—or even to put in pints of ice cream so people can make their own sundaes."

Shawn McClain, chef

The Nook and the Cook

The kitchen's eat-in area is surprisingly elegant, thanks in part to a Dapha settee that looks like a built-in banquette. Add the three sable-colored upholstered dining chairs by Thomas Pheasant for Baker, and there's enough seating for at least five. The McGuire chestnut dining table has a glass top, which makes it easy to clean. "You could use the table as extra prep space or as a buffet station for a party," McClain says. Small details help this area blend in with the rest of the kitchen. Rings on the back of the dining chairs echo the drawer pulls on the cabinets; the bookcase, with a sliding frosted-glass panel that hides clutter, matches the cabinets as well. On the opposite wall, a built-in ladder helps put the top shelves of a dish cabinet within arm's reach.



Translucent glass appears in both the cherry bookcase and in the pantry, **BELOW**.



The Work Zone

The small room just off the kitchen serves several functions in a compact area.

PANTRY Behind frosted-glass doors are shelves that hold as much as a walk-in pantry, but are more accessible and take up less square footage.

OFFICE The desk, painted the same color as the kitchen wall,

gets plenty of beautiful natural light. You can do work or pay bills while the food cooks.

LAUNDRY A peninsula divides the pantry from the washer and the dryer. There's also a sink in the peninsula, so the space can double as a prep or clean-up zone for big parties. There's a powder room here, too.

"I like the frosted glass on the pantry, because you get a visual sense of things—I don't like doors that hide what's behind them."

Shawn McClain, chef

Inner Wine Sanctum

Equipped with wood shelves and a pair of leather chairs from Baker, the cellar feels like a library—but one full of bottles instead of books. There are three different types of storage in the room. Alpana Singh recommends using the four 6-foot-8-inch Sub-Zero wine refrigerators—two pairs sit on opposite sides of the room—for keeping special bottles at the optimal temperature for aging. Rows of Canac oak cubbies hold individual bottles ready to drink within a year. Shelves below the cubbies are large enough to hold cases.

"The earth tones evoke the spirit of nature," Singh says of the reclaimed-oak tiles on the floor, which echo the wooden cabinets and also subtly reference wine barrels. Oak is also used for the cabinets in the anteroom just outside the cellar. The "Constellation" mirror from Baker is a focal point; the copper sink and faucet from Ann Sacks rest on a travertine countertop above two custom-paneled Fisher & Paykel dishwasher drawers.



Just outside the oak-lined cellar, the anteroom has a sink for rinsing glasses, **BELOW**.



"Wine is the new coffee. People have professional-grade espresso machines in their houses now; why not have a professional cellar?"

Alpana Singh, Master Sommelier