

# Creating Sanctuary

ARCHITECT GERALD MOROSCO  
FOLLOWS HIS QUEST FOR BEAUTY WITH  
THE MODERN KITCHEN OF A TURN-OF-  
THE-CENTURY SHADYSIDE MANSE.

Story by Susan Fleming Morgans  
Photography by Dave Bryce  
Styling by Keith Recker



*“THIS IS  
BARBARA’S  
KITCHEN...  
IT’S A CLEAR  
EXPRESSION  
OF HER.”*

**“Today, clients come to us with ideas from Pinterest and say, ‘Well, this seems to be the *thing*,’” says Architect Gerald Morosco. “And I say ‘Well, is it the thing for you?’ Morosco’s thing is designing spaces — sanctuaries, as he calls them, that will be in style not just this season, but 20 years from now.**

Forty years of helping his own architectural practice has taught him that active listening builds trusting relationships with clients like Barbara Shapira. Her renovated kitchen is one of several projects Morosco has designed in the stately, turn-of-the-century home where she and her husband, Dan, raised their family.

Good communication is key. Even so, clients take a leap of faith, hoping that the architect will truly grasp their vision. Ultimately, after a successful project is completed, the client might, according to Morosco, say, “Oh, this is not what I thought it would be, but it is exactly what I wanted.”

Morosco achieved Barbara’s vision by rearranging rather than adding square footage. “[Jerry] was able to capture the feel I wanted for the kitchen without needing a single change,” says the mother of three adult children and grandmother of three. “The room became the central gathering place for our family the moment it was completed.”

“This is Barbara’s kitchen; this is not my kitchen,” Morosco says emphatically. “It’s a clear expression of her.” The pale gray-green palette, for instance, is not a signature for Morosco, who usually leans towards deeper, more heavily saturated hues. But the serene colors align with his guiding philosophy. Trained as a fellow at Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin West, Morosco is “inculcated with the idea of creating beauty, and that’s not something taught in architecture; it’s a very Taliesin perspective.”

Beautiful kitchens have become a priority for many families over the past two years, says Morosco: “Home used to be a place where people came to recharge. Now they’re *staying* home.”

Barbara’s 15 x 22 ½-foot kitchen, which includes a casual dining area flanked by a porch and a powder room, is more open concept than the rest of the 6,000-square-foot house. To create more space, a wall was taken down between the kitchen and a hallway, and two doors and a fireplace were removed, allowing for an island, corner cabinets and a coat closet. The ginger spice-colored ceramic tile backsplash and grayish green Caesarstone quartz countertops form a horizontal line, creating the illusion of more space. Repeating those colors and materials in the island enhances the illusion.



Thoughtfully positioned appliances make for easy cooking, from prep to oven to table. There is good circulation from the kitchen to the formal dining room, front door and patio. Custom planters have transformed a narrow lawn between the house and carriage house into “a space to participate in, not to pass through, connecting the indoors and outdoors,” Morosco says.

Among Barbara’s favorite features are a cozy upholstered bench, where her grandchildren can sit and chat while she cooks, and the custom stained open maple cabinets that contain books and small treasures as well as dinnerware.

Details such as the door and window trim, baseboards, and dark wood flooring, echo the historic character of the house. The custom white plaster crown in the ceiling provides continuity, creating the effect of a room within a room. “The ceiling detail really sets you up,” Morosco says, “Without the ceiling gesture it’s an entirely different room.”

The kitchen brings a contemporary vibe to the Shapira family’s venerable home, with Morosco’s eye ensuring continuity. “It is like timeless pieces of clothing. Reweaving threads already in the house creates a new cloth.”

*glm-architects.com*





## Appliances

ASKO Encore Tall-Tank Stainless Steel Dishwasher with Straight Tubular Handle

General Electric Profile Convection Microwave

Sub-Zero Integrated 27" Refrigerator with Double Doors

Sub-Zero Integrated 27" Freezer with Double Doors and Ice Maker

Wolf Dual Fuel 36" Cooktop Range with 6 Burners

Wolf Classic Unframed Built-In Single Wall Oven

Wolf Stainless Steel Metal Liner Hood with Sloped Sides

Wolf Blower 1500 CFM Ventilator