



AT HOME WITH MATTHEW CURTIS

THE RESTAURATEUR KEEPS IT SIMPLE — AND STYLISH — IN HIS HOME KITCHEN

If you've been inside one of his restaurants, you already have a good sense of Matthew Curtis's taste in interiors. Middlesex Lounge, Tory Row, Cambridge 1, Miracle of Science, and Audubon Circle all share a minimalist look that juxtaposes naturalistic materials (think unstained wood walls and slate tabletops) with industrial elements like exposed ductwork and metallic pendant lights. They're sleek, simple, and unfussy. So it should come as no surprise that co-owner Curtis's home kitchen is an extension of that aesthetic. His Cambridge pad has a "simple, clean" style, says the restaurateur. While some of us tend to take a more-is-more approach to décor, Curtis sees value in negative space and the "absence of information." We stopped by to learn how smart things can look when you don't overthink.

— Scott Keenan

A. Before heeding the call of the hospitality industry, Curtis once considered pursuing a career as an architect. But he left his home renovations to the pros, turning to South End firm Stern McCafferty soon after he moved in five years ago. "It started with the fact that the kitchen seemed old-fashioned," says Curtis, who eventually gave the entire house an overhaul. The idea was to keep the space from ever feeling dated again. "I avoid trends," says Curtis. "That's why a space like Miracle of Science, which opened 20 years ago, still looks relevant today." These **simple stools**, of the same style as those found at the restaurant, exemplify that timeless vibe.

B. The kitchen gleams with lots of stainless steel: "I like equipment to read like equipment, hardware to look like hardware," says Curtis. No wood veneers over the refrigerator door here. And who'd want to cover up top-notch appliances like this **Miele steam oven**, where Curtis loves to cook fish, or the warming drawer below it, where he tends to reheat his morning coffee? But his well-equipped kitchen lacks one common gadget: a microwave. Curtis doesn't keep one, preferring to cook with traditional methods.

C. When your style is on the Spartan side, every piece of décor counts. So make sure the main fixtures are of unmistakable quality — and unmistakably yours. The **kitchen island** is one of several custom pieces by Brighton's Bill Bancroft Furniture Design. The warm tone of the European beech wood nicely complements the hickory floors. And Curtis always keeps it topped with a simple vessel of fresh flowers. (Notice he sticks to a single variety and color.)

D. The clean lines and lack of clutter make the room feel airy. (So do the glass doors, which lead to a furnished patio.) But Curtis still finds space for some (neatly arranged!) personal effects, like this **collection of cookbooks** reflecting many types of cuisine. It could be a challenge to stow away all the necessary ingredients, but he got creative with his cabinet space. Inspired by his sailing experience, he commissioned a shallow, four-inch-deep pantry closet, similar to those found in the hull of a ship. "Even smaller spaces can be comfortable when used efficiently," says Curtis. Smart, simple, and to the point. We like his style.