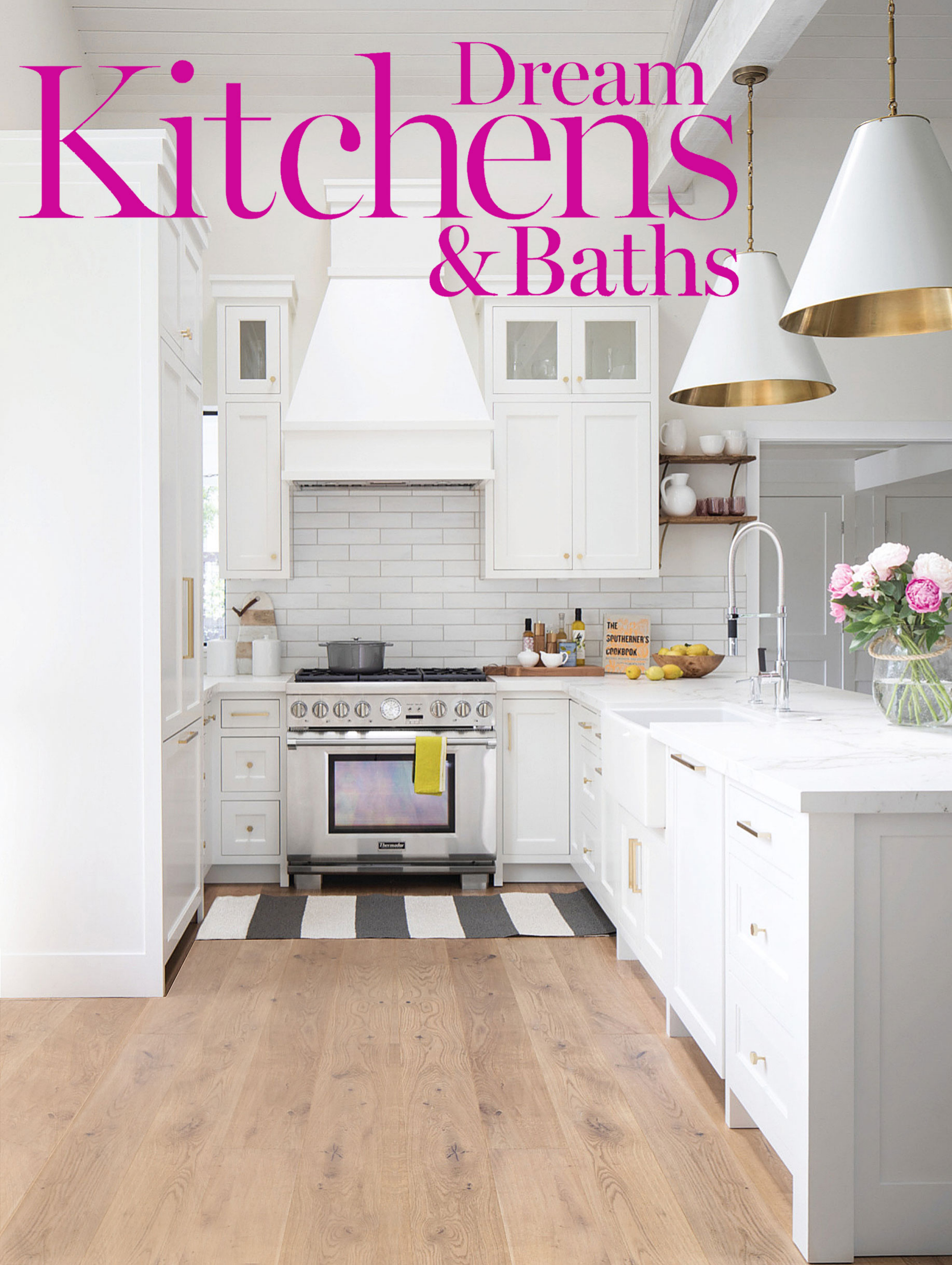


Dream Kitchens & Baths





THIS PHOTO A compact work triangle—sink, refrigerator, and range—reduces steps for the cook. **OPPOSITE** Designer Laura Ulam likes to mix metals in her designs, but for her own kitchen, she chose a polished-nickel faucet for practical reasons. She was told brass wouldn't fare well against her town's hard water.



CLEAN & SIMPLE

Subtle variations in color and texture add interest and energy to a classic white kitchen.

Writer Stacey Freed Photographer Paul Dyer Field Editor Sarah Alba



YES, WHITE KITCHENS ARE CLASSIC. But sometimes they can feel cold or just plain boring. Designer Laura Ulam's white kitchen is decidedly neither. By layering color variations, textures, and a mix of metals, she deftly infused warmth and personality into her home's hub—without straying from her preferred less-is-more palette.

Laura, who works with Heaton + Williams, admits to being a serial remodeler who loves the excitement of the construction process. With three house flips under her belt, she wasn't intimidated by the lackluster finishes and dark, closed-off kitchen that greeted her when she first saw her 1980s-era home in the Napa Valley of Northern California. Rather, she was enthralled by the kitchen's large metal-grid windows and 15-foot ceiling. "We took down a central wall, and once we opened up the space, I visualized all white," she says. "I'd been drawn to white for so many years, and it just felt right in this house."

But which white? Like other colors, white comes in many varieties. To keep it interesting, Laura chose Benjamin Moore's

Cloud White for the cabinets and a more buttery hue—Dunn-Edwards' Pearl Necklace—for the walls. Then she focused on texture—white faux fur for the chair covers, rough linen for the barstools, and a quartz countertop that's a dead ringer for marble but is considerably more durable. The backsplash is white marble tile with sand-color grout that picks up the veins in the countertops. The beams above the island are whitewashed for a softer look, and the floor is a light oak.

For shine and pop, Laura accented the room mostly with brass and gold—on the distressed stool legs, the cabinet hardware, the brackets of the open shelves on the range wall, and inside the large pendants over the peninsula. Every well-thought-out detail contributes to the room's airy design and stay-awhile feel. "I'm not so sure I'll flip this," Laura says. "I love it; it's simplified and calm and less cluttered than my last house. With the kids grown and gone, the house fits this stage of my life."

RESOURCES BEGIN ON PAGE 124.



OPPOSITE Laura grabbed more light and space by replacing a central wall with a peninsula. **ABOVE LEFT** Sand-color grout between the polished marble backsplash tiles hides any dust that collects here and keeps the look clean. Brass hardware contrasts with the stainless-steel range. **ABOVE RIGHT** Rustic wood shelves, paired with brass shelf brackets, deliver just-right texture to the space. **BELOW LEFT** Mixing distressed-brass bases with upholstered seats, the barstools epitomize the kitchen's classic-meets-modern aesthetic. **BELOW RIGHT** Varying the shape of cabinet hardware adds visual interest.

