



ENTERTAINING DESIGN DETAILS KITCHEN DESIGN APPLIANCES

“The most important details are the ones that make guests feel special.”

Designer Matthew Patrick Smyth creates unforgettable parties, inspired by travel, art and the guests themselves.

Matthew Patrick Smyth is an award-winning designer known for his distinctive mix of details, styles and periods—and his wonderfully thoughtful parties. Based in New York, he also lives in Paris and travels extensively, finding inspiration everywhere he goes. He’s also written a book, *Living Traditions: Interiors by Matthew Patrick Smyth*.

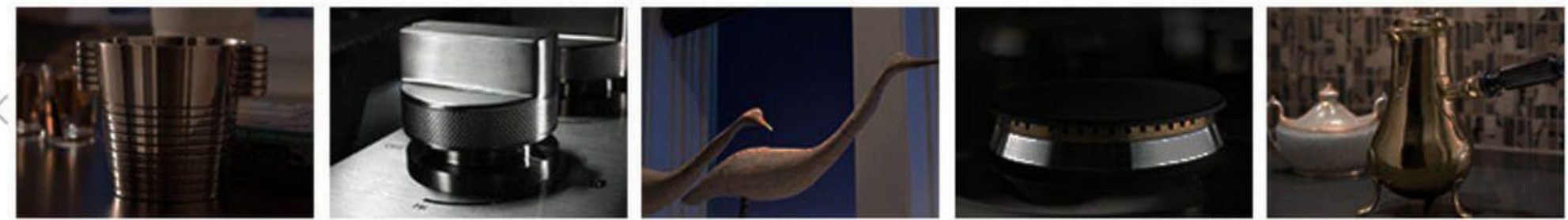
- Enjoy the evening and your guests will, too. | v
- Use lighting to build the mood. | v
- Serve drinks with style. | v
- Start the party with invitations. | v
- Design interesting table settings. | v
- Make the details personal. | v



Matthew designed this kitchen, in a rowhouse in San Francisco’s Castro District, to set the stage for sophisticated entertaining.

“The kitchen is such a social hub now. Incorporate it into the flow of your entertaining; people always end up there at some point.”

Matthew likes to mix objects, found during his travels around the world, in unexpected ways.



Refined Knobs

The new gas cooktop offers powerful heat, impressive control—and gorgeously streamlined design. Distinctive barrel-shaped knobs complement the cooktop’s nearly flush profile, just 3 centimeters high.

With its sleek lines and subtle details, the new cooktop is a powerful statement in understatement.

See the new cooktop >

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“Stay relaxed, have fun and be a charming host. The key: being organized and not trying to do too much so you have more time to mix with guests.

Keep things simple for yourself and prep in advance — which also leaves your kitchen tidier for those inevitable moments when everyone gathers there at the start or end of the night.

I have a set of special go-to accessories: glassware, platters and cutlery just for parties that I keep behind a folding screen. It saves having to dig for them every time.”

Use lighting to build the mood.



Serve drinks with style.



Start the party with invitations.



Design interesting table settings.



Make the details count.





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“Lighting can make or break an evening. It should never be glaring, but low enough to set the mood, be relaxing—and flattering — to everyone.

I like candlelight on the table and a few lights around the room so it’s dramatic but people can still see their food. Try to balance it and avoid any bright bursts of light when you go in and out of the kitchen; it breaks the mood.

In general, kitchens need three levels of light: bright task lighting, mid-level for just before food is ready to go to the table, and low for the party.”

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“I like to serve coffee in antique cups on a striking tray. I present cream and sugar in antique serving pieces and plates of mini biscotti or chocolate-covered orange peel, something sweet and light that complements the coffee. Even if someone skips dessert, they can have a small bite. It’s not too decadent.”

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“Unusual invitations, sent in the mail, feel really special. These days, it’s such a rarity to get anything written by hand in the mail, and people pay more attention to it.

I put a great deal of thought into invitations, which I create to reflect the party theme. It might be a collage or a color that hints at the theme and piques excitement.

Also think carefully about the guest list. If it’s a large party where most people don’t know each other well, email brief bios before the party: fun stories about your friendship, a guest’s interests, children, pets, anything that makes a connection between people. It helps break the ice right away and keeps the conversation flowing.”

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“Be creative and playful. It’s something you give your guests, the idea that they’re seeing something unusual. My rule: Never match; blend. Combine similar materials and styles in surprising ways—or go for contrast.

If you’re using fine china or silver, add a simple potted plant. Try candles of different heights. Add objects with a story, whether it’s a treasure you found while traveling or something at a local flea market. Do make sure you balance; you don’t want to overwhelm the food.”

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“Surprise guests with little personalized touches that show how much you care. Thoughtful details that speak to someone’s life really have an impact. For a birthday celebration, I try to pull in a common thread that runs through that person’s life: details inspired by books they’ve enjoyed, places they return to.

Recently I did a Mexican dinner, a going-away party for a friend who had just purchased a home in Mexico. I had a great time running with the theme—and didn’t tell anyone ahead of time, to keep it a wonderful surprise.”

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“The kitchen is such a social hub now. Incorporate it into the flow of your entertaining; people always end up there at some point.”

Matthew likes to mix objects, found during his travels around the world, in unexpected ways.



#### Refined Knobs

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#### Brass Burners

The new cooktop offers stunning design details, including brass burners meticulously crafted in Italy to the highest standards.

The brass beautifully accents the stainless surface. And the round holes offer a precise flame—for an impressive range of heat. Just as impressive: the ability to control the heat, as powerful or delicate as you need it to be.

[See the new cooktop >](#)

  
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#### Sleek display

With its clean lines, sleek touchscreen controls and LCD display, the new built-in coffee system looks dramatic in any setting. It can be placed in a kitchen, alcove, pantry, den or master suite—anywhere coffee can be created and enjoyed.



It goes beyond espresso and cappuccino, to offer an elevated level of customization. Now you can precisely control the grind of the beans, the water temperature and the strength and size of each cup, brewed to each guest's taste.

[See the new built-in coffee system >](#)



#### Coffee, brewed to taste

The new built-in coffee system doesn't simply make coffee; it allows you to tailor each cup precisely to each guest's preference.



Once you select the precise grind for the beans, water temperature, size and strength of each cup, you can steam and froth milk for lattes, cappuccinos and cortados, and even brew two cups at the same time. Cleaning is just as effortless, thanks to an automatic setting.

[See the new built-in coffee system >](#)



#### Art Deco Ice Bucket

This French silver-plated ice bucket was created in the 1930s for the SS *Normandie*, the largest and fastest passenger ship of its day—renowned for its elegant Art Deco interiors created by France’s leading designers.

Designed by Luc Lanel (a noted designer who worked for Christofle), its streamlined handles and details represent the glamorous aesthetic of that era.

“I was thrilled to find this in a Paris antiques shop. I was intrigued by its interesting pedigree and its stunning design. I’ve been fascinated with ocean liners and the *Normandie* was the best of them all. It makes a great conversation piece. If only it could talk! It sums up the ultimate French style for me.”



#### Wooden Decoys

This rare pair of 19th century American Snowy White Egret decoys are made of carved wood with white paint. It’s highly unusual to find a matching pair.

  
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“The stylized form is primitive, yet so elegant and modern at the same time. Though I found them in South Carolina, they’re perfect for this location, as the snowy white egret can be spotted in the San Francisco Bay area.”



#### Brass Coffee Pot

This striking English 18th-century brass pot is an excellent example of the “tavern” or “coffee house” coffee pot. They were also sometimes used for chocolate, though they were typically smaller.

  
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This piece, with its beautifully rounded shape and three feet, is noteworthy because of its hinged lid and spout. Its generously sized handle is nicely detailed as well.

“I like to mix antiques with contemporary pieces. It’s that interesting juxtaposition; one plays off the other and it makes each piece look more special.”

Matthew sourced this piece from Florian Papp Antiques, New York.



#### Brass Spiral Candleholder

This Tommi Parzinger-style spiral brass candlestick, circa 1950, features gracefully curving arms, taking cues from the willowy shapes that were his signature.

Parzinger was a celebrated furniture and home accessories designer, known for his distinctively streamlined mid-century design and custom hand-hammered metal craftsmanship. His work was collected by famous clients: Marilyn Monroe, the decorator Billy Baldwin and influential New Yorkers like the Rockefellers.

"I found this in Palm Springs and was taken by its elegant, fluid design. It's so very fifties!"



#### Antique Tea Caddy

This striking tea caddy box is made of Irish burl wood with ivory details and handles, circa 1810. With its simple design and detailing yet classic styling, it blends with any period or style. This caddy was originally used to store tea.

"I found this in a Dublin antiques store and moved on this fast when I saw it, as I knew I would regret not getting it. I carried it back in my hand luggage to make sure it would be safe. It sums up my trip and what I love about Ireland."



Matthew shares the details of his distinctive design choices.

**A kitchen created for world travelers who love to entertain.**



The kitchen reflects the owners' unique background and interests. The couple, who both travel extensively for work, wanted an open, airy kitchen in their San Francisco Victorian where they could host parties large and small. With enough space for guests to gather comfortably while they put the finishing touches on their dishes—usually exotic recipes they've discovered while traveling that fill the kitchen with tantalizing aromas.

They also wanted a space that would beautifully showcase various objects and artwork found during their travels.

"I felt that the owners' lifestyles and interests would lend themselves to this classic yet modern look. Something timeless yet up-to-the-minute in technology and style."

The clean lines and stainless finish of the appliances, in the Euro-Style series, act as a crisp counterpart to the soft color and timeless feel of the kitchen.



**The overall design started with the cabinetry choices.**



**Color makes a statement; here it adds nuance.**



**Think about the flow of a party when you design for entertaining.**



**Lighting is a design choice—and a dinner party element.**



"A well-designed, beautiful kitchen is so important. Kitchens today aren't tucked away in a corner of the house but are open and in full view."

These appliances offer clean lines and entertaining-friendly features.

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From the classic cabinetry to the distinctive backsplash, Matthew designed the kitchen to feel relaxed yet sophisticated and unique.

"I started with the cabinets and it evolved from there. The cabinets are traditional but not formal. They'll never look dated, and the overall look speaks to the San Francisco location, the space, the clients and their style.

Blending textures and finishes and popping in some items of contrast were key to the look, and I had to keep this in mind when looking for the right backsplash and furnishings. The hardware needed to be simple and functional, but handsome.

The slightly industrial stools work well with the cabinets as they play off the clean lines and look relaxed and appropriate.

The backsplash tile gives us a subtle play on texture and color that's timeless. I actually flipped the tile to go in vertically rather than horizontally. I thought it looked more interesting that way."

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"I felt that working with shades of grey and white would give the kitchen depth and character. The color is soothing, sophisticated, very much a palette that suits the space.

It's classic, a color story that has never gone out of style in fashion or interior design."

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"It's important to consider how you like to entertain, and about which moments during the evening the guests will be in the kitchen with you. Plan for how you can cook or plate and entertain at the same time, if that's what you enjoy."

The sleek new gas cooktop and hood, placed in the spacious island, allow the hosts to cook and add final touches as guests gather to sip wine and enjoy appetizers set out on the island.

The kitchen also has a nook area, complete with bay window and under counter wine cellars. "I like the idea that it can be used all day, for breakfast, lunch, cocktails and dessert or a light supper, even just for working on an iPad over coffee. The space has so many uses and will be enjoyed by the couple and their guests."

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Because the kitchen is where some, or even all of the entertaining might take place, think about lighting for each part of the evening and all the ways you'll use it.

"Creating different levels with dimmers and separate light controls can give you flexibility for all the different needs.

You'll want full, task lighting for the actual cooking and prep work. Then, slightly dimmed for when guests arrive and you want to set the mood for a relaxed evening. But with just enough light to work on the final touches, perhaps as guests gather nearby.

And then when it's time to serve, you'll want the next level down, leaving just enough light to carry out the trays and platters and return them to the kitchen without the lights breaking the mood of a candlelit dining table.

Adding candlelight in hurricane lamps around the kitchen is a nice touch, and helps make the transition between kitchen and dining area."

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The new gas cooktop: minimal design, maximum power.

Elegantly redesigned, the new gas cooktop features refined knobs, continuous grates and a profile that’s flush to the countertop at just 3 millimeters high.

It offers powerful heat and impressive precision, with an 18,000 BTU burner that goes as low as 2,200 BTUs, and a simmer burner for an even more delicate flame. So whether you’re searing a steak, melting butter or warming a sauce, you can achieve the heat level you need.

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The new built-in coffee system: elevated in every way.

The new built-in coffee system makes a statement even before guests take the first sip. Stunningly designed, it allows you to create espresso, cappuccino and coffee customized to taste, with precision settings like 13 levels for grinding beans and control over the strength and size of every cup, even the water temperature and foam on top. Just as lovely: an automatic setting for effortless cleaning.

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The built-in steam oven: new options in cooking.

The built-in steam oven, at a compact 24” size, will have a dramatic impact on your cooking. Its steam cooking allows food to retain moisture, flavor and nutrients, while its convection cooking offers beautifully consistent heat. The result is exceptionally tender meat, vibrantly beautiful vegetables, flaky breads and delicate desserts.

[Get details >](#)

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