

# GREAT FOR **ENTERTAINING**

*Love to host a crowd? The right mix of features can help you create a kitchen that's as efficient as it is inviting and elegant.*



BAUER PUBLISHING/TRUNK ARCHIVE



**T**HERE'S A WELL-KNOWN phenomenon: At some point during any party, everyone ends up in the kitchen. If you've noted this habit you're probably like most prospective remodelers, who, according to the kitchen designers we spoke to, overwhelmingly crave amenities that make entertaining easier. Here's our panel of experts' best advice for doing just that.

**Start with a party-friendly layout.** "Kitchens that are open to adjacent dining or living spaces are really popular, and they're great for entertaining because everyone can be together without cramming into the kitchen," says Ruth Ann Taylor Long, a certified kitchen designer (CKD) in Raleigh, NC. "Of course, sometimes they'll end up there anyway, so make sure the aisles between counters are 48 inches wide," she adds.

**Plan plenty of seating.** "Guests will be more comfortable, and they won't get underfoot as much if there's room for them to sit," says Chicago-area CKD Gladys Schanstra. A combination of island and table seating is ideal. "Encourage conversation with stools on two sides of the island, in an L," says Candace Nordquist, a CKD based in Gig Harbor, WA. And, don't overscale the dining table. "Bring in a second table for big parties if you need to," says Schanstra. "You don't want seating for 12 on an everyday basis."

**Include specialized storage.** "Entertaining gear like large coffee machines, trays, and serving pieces take a lot of room," says Nordquist. Inventory your supplies before you order your cabinets, and consider factoring a pantry into the plan.