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JONATHAN GORDON
DESIGN BY THE JONATHANS

A KITCHEN REIMAGINED IN POST-AND-BEAM HARMONY

WRITTEN BY DANIELLE PORTER



The elevated material palette transform the once-segmented space into a bright, open kitchen where post-and-beam charm meets modern-day functionality and flow.



What began as a closed-off kitchen in a traditional post-and-beam home has been reimagined as a light-filled heart of the home, one that effortlessly bridges form, function and structural ingenuity. For the homeowners in Durham, CT, the goal was to create a space where people can gather, flow and connect. To bring their vision to life, they turned to Jonathan Gordon, owner and lead designer at Design by the Jonathans.

“The kitchen felt isolated,” says Jonathan. “When the homeowners entertained, guests would end up at opposite ends of the house.” Opening up the floor plan, however, meant grappling with the structural realities of a post-and-beam framework—in particular, a load-bearing post that stood right where a spacious island needed to go. The solution? A nearly invisible steel beam installed above the ceiling line to carry the load and eliminate the post altogether. It was a bold idea, executed in collaboration with the contractor, Ross Con LLC, and the engineers. “The whole design hinged on removing that post,” explains Jonathan. “It made the entire layout possible.” Ultimately, the solution works to accentuate the beauty of the post-and-beam structure, making something old feel new again. Once the structure was resolved, the design came into focus: layered textures, thought-





With the post removed and the layout reimagined, the kitchen now flows seamlessly into the living area, anchored by a bold island and light-filled symmetry that honors the home's original structure while redefining its potential.

The sculptural island and elevated layers of brass, quartzite and custom millwork celebrate both function and form.

ful finishes and a palette that balances warmth with visual impact. Achieving this level of elegance would mean that every element plays a role and every detail makes a difference. It all ties together seamlessly, such as the mesh detailing on the upper cabinets and the shiplap ceiling that draws the eye upward.

A deep black island grounds the kitchen, topped with veined Taj Mahal quartzite for a soft contrast that bounces light throughout the space. The same quartzite wraps the perimeter counters and backsplash, reinforcing cohesion while subtly elevating the material story. Brass hardware and a black-and-brass induction range echo the island's presence and create a throughline that carries across the room.

Daylight was another design priority. The existing skylights were slightly shifted to optimize symmetry and flow, while new side windows and a sliding glass door were added to increase connection to the outdoors, giving the kitchen direct access onto the deck, and making circulation easier and outdoor entertaining second nature.

Storage and functionality were equally considered. Every inch was utilized, including the two-drawer dishwasher, integrated beverage fridge and custom cabinetry precisely notched around posts. Even the vent hood, though visually understated, was carefully engineered to meet the sloped ceiling without encroaching on light or sight lines.

These subtle decisions, combined with bold structural moves, define the project's success. The new kitchen doesn't just look beautiful—it works beautifully, too. "The clients entertained recently, and told me everything just flowed," Jonathan says. "It felt effortless. And that's the magic of good design." ♦

Resource: **Designer:** Design by the Jonathans; Jonathan Gordon, Founder, Owner & Lead Designer; New Haven, CT ; 203.557.3205; thejonathans.com. **Designer:** Ross Con LLC. **Photographer:** Robert Norman Photography.