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Arc de Triomphe

The morphing, sweeping Arclinea kitchen

Kitchen + Bath

NEW APPLIANCES AND PRODUCTS



Antonio Citterio's Convivium kitchen for Arclinea separates the prep and entertaining areas from the cleanup. New additions to the design include an adjustable dining table and a downdraft system.

WHEN ANTONIO CITTERIO created his highly praised Convivium concept for Arclinea in 2002, the idea was to separate the conventional kitchen into two distinct spaces: one for food preparation and social gatherings; the other concealed behind closed doors for cleanup after the guests have gone. To accommodate the former, the Italian architect and designer created a center island with multiple burners and various under-counter cold-storage drawers—in place of one monolithic refrigerator—to facilitate effortless cooking. He also incorporated an attached table that allows guests to congregate around the chef and enjoy the finished meal without moving the cooking party to the dining room.

This year, Citterio revisited his five-year-old Convivium design and added several important new features, including an adjustable dining table and an integrated downdraft system to provide greater flexibility. “The new table has an electronic up-and-down switch to lift it to the same height as the countertop, 35.5 inches, for additional workspace when preparing food. Then it can be quickly lowered—to a table height of 30 inches—when you’re ready to dine,” says Philip Guarino, owner and president of Arclinea Boston.

Convivium’s state-of-the-art downdraft system for Arclinea is operated by a motor that pulls 583 cubic feet of air per minute, which, says Guarino, is also surprisingly noise-free. The integrated pop-up system is completely concealed under a sliding-glass cover until the cook manually accesses it. “It is probably the most sophisticated downdraft system I have ever seen,” notes Guarino, who explains how the system is designed to move up and slide over the cooking area. “It’s a great feature for people who don’t have the architectural ability to put a hood above the stove,” he says.

In addition to several new finishes, the latest Convivium is also more eco-friendly than its predecessor. The cabinets can be made of MDF or HDF (fiberboard) laminates from reconstituted woods and constructed using glues and paints containing no formaldehyde. Convivium’s stainless steel countertops are also completely seamless because the metal is wrapped around—rather than layered on top of—the surface. “So it’s really easy to clean up,” adds Guarino. **WILLIAM KISSEL**

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