



**BEFORE:** Uninspired finishes and an inefficient layout were two of the major problems with the previous kitchen.  
**AFTER:** "The balance between the color scheme and the details keeps this kitchen from being too stark," says designer Deganit Albalak. Pull-out pantry cabinets help keep the counters clutter-free.

### 3 MODERN MIX

Ann-Marie Yamabayashi and her husband, Eric Chiao, of Belmont, California, were ready to improve the style of the 200-square-foot kitchen in their updated ranch home. "Everything was original to the house, which was built in 1960," says Ann-Marie. But they didn't want anything too traditional. "We wanted something modern and different." The couple hired designer Deganit Albalak, owner of ALNO|San Francisco European Kitchen Design, to transform the space. "The old kitchen was basic and ordinary, with poorly organized storage," says Albalak. They cut out traditional elements by removing a large credenza and covering a brick wall with drywall, then added vertical storage by eliminating a bulkhead and raising the ceiling. The mint-green stools inspired the color scheme, offset by the white lacquered cabinetry and oversize stainless steel pulls. "Painting the bottom of the peninsula that mint green gives it some weight and ties it directly to the existing chairs," says Albalak. "It makes our home so much more attractive," says Ann-Marie. "It's a very nice change."

### IN THE DETAILS

**APPLIANCES** The French-style double-door refrigerator and dishwasher were paneled in white lacquer to match the cabinetry, while the other stainless steel appliances complement the cabinetry's hardware and provide a contrast to the white and green finishes in the room.

**FLOOR** Silver grout between pearl-white tiles echoes the stainless steel accents, while a urethane coating gives the family a durable, easy-to-clean floor that resists scuffs and stands up to daily wear. "Having the tiles on a diagonal opens up the room," adds Ann-Marie.

**LIGHTING** Well-placed recessed fixtures, square white pendants over the peninsula and undercabinet fluorescent lights now illuminate the updated kitchen. "The undercabinet lights shine a pure light on the white quartz and create a clean feeling when they hit the counters and backsplash," notes Albalak. ♦