

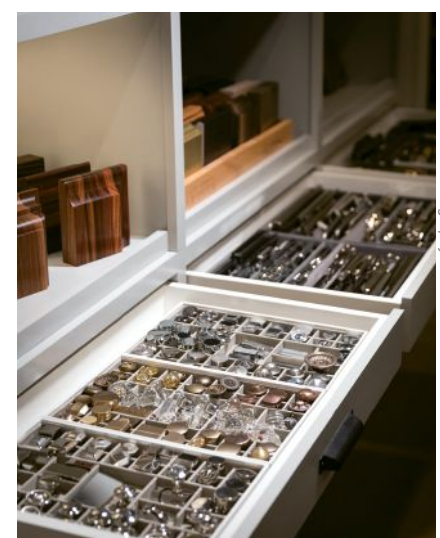


☑ Lauren Tolles blended custom and semi-custom cabinetry in this new kitchen display at the Maison Birmingham showroom as a way to show customers they can combine multiple products and finishes.

☑ This baking center crafted of custom cabinetry illustrates how 'morning bars' can be incorporated into clients' own kitchens.

☑ The new presentation room includes a frame-style television disguised as artwork.

☑ In the selection center, Tolles focused on showcasing the items that fit her market and her level of design, such as this hardware display.



Photos: Martin Vecchio Photography

"Everything we do is customer centric," Chapman continues. "We want our showrooms to be fun and interesting places to visit, places where we can guide our clients towards their goals while meeting their budget requirements."

MAISON BIRMINGHAM Birmingham, MI

Since opening Maison Birmingham in 2016, Lauren Tolles, founder, expanded her business in 2019 by purchasing KSI Kitchen & Bath, which added eight locations to her firm. As part of that growth, last summer she renovated portions of her original 2,400-square-foot showroom in Birmingham to highlight both brands.

For example, a new kitchen display in the front of her showroom blends custom Maison cabinetry with semi-custom Dura Supreme cabinetry offered by KSI Kitchen & Bath.

"It's a great opportunity to show customers they can combine multiple product offerings and finishes in one space," she says, adding that the 200-square-foot space also features a custom baking center that illustrates how clients can include a 'morning bar' with coffee makers, toasters, etc. "They don't necessarily have to do custom cabinetry throughout the entire kitchen. Instead, they can focus on one special custom piece, such as an island or paneled refrigerator armoire, and use less expensive cabinetry in the rest of the kitchen to optimize their budget and still meet functional needs."

The designer also included a focal-point display with subway tile, marble 'framing' and artwork – highlighted with a picture light – above the sink to show clients how they can personalize their space.

"People aren't always able to put a sink under a window, so I wanted to show how we can still create a focal point," she says.

"We also have a lot of clients who have great art collections, so I like to integrate them whenever I can. By showing them how to include some pieces in the kitchen, we can make it feel more like a living space rather than just a utilitarian place to cook."

Another new area within the showroom is a presentation room, which is an idea that grew from the purchase of KSI Kitchen & Bath.

"I believe that an open environment, in terms of showroom floors and workspaces, breeds collaboration and creativity, but I love that the presentation room is one room where we can close a door and talk with clients privately or have a small group meeting," she says.

The inclusion of a frame-style television, disguised as artwork, enhances presentations and adds to the 'wow' factor since clients love to see their spaces come to life on screen. The room's library vibe also doubles as display space.

"We try to maximize what we're showcasing in a limited footprint so every space becomes a display," she says. "Workspaces become displays, the presentation room becomes a display...we want all of those spaces to look beautiful while also being practical."

To that end, Tolles focuses on edited selections.

"When designing the showroom I thought a lot about how to showcase products without showcasing everything," she says. "We don't have a lot of doors hung all over the walls. Instead, I focus on curation, on showcasing the things that fit our market and our level of design. There is a lot available in our selection center, but it's edited and beautifully organized so clients understand there are a lot of choices, but it isn't overwhelming."

For example, hardware is displayed in drawers like jewelry and rail-mounted custom doors – reverently coined the 'wall of white' – are painted various shades of the 'blank' color so



☑ In his new, larger showroom, Rob Belville showcases several product lines he carries in full displays, including this kitchen, which features inset Shiloh cabinetry that combines flush inset and beaded inset cabinetry in two different door styles in both paint and stain finishes.

☑ (bottom left) Belville has customers come in and point to this display, indicating that its color palette of dark blue, white and wood is just what they are looking for.

☑ This display in the Brentwood Cabinets showroom features a frameless box construction by Eudora from Kith Kitchens. Cabinetry is complemented with a marble-look quartz countertop with a waterfall edge and floating shelves, both of which are common requests.

☑ Belville has seen increased interest in contemporary designs, such as those reflected in this Eclipse cabinetry display.



Photos: Visible Style, Leslie Brown

clients can focus on a door style rather than be influenced by a door style painted in their favorite color.

“I wanted to create a showroom that feels like you’re walking into the entryway of a home with different rooms,” she explains. “Instead of small vignettes, we have larger displays that show more features and detail. I love it when people say they feel at home here...like they could live here!”

BRENTWOOD CABINETS

Franklin, TN

When Rob Belville, owner, decided to relocate and open a new, larger showroom and warehouse just south of Nashville in 2019, one of his goals was to provide enough product and samples of cabinetry for his customers to feel confident about the product selections they make for their projects.

To that end, he showcases several product lines he carries in full displays, including Shiloh and Eclipse by W.W. Wood Products, Kith and Eudora by Kith Kitchens, and Mouser Custom Cabinetry. Each highlights a different design style within the 2,000-square-foot showroom, which also includes a selection room with additional door styles, finishes, hardware and countertop selections.

For example, the largest display, which features inset Shiloh cabinetry complemented with a graphic backsplash and quartz countertops in two contrasting colorways, embodies a modern farmhouse vibe that combines flush inset and beaded inset cabinetry in two different door styles in both paint and stain finishes.

“When you initially see it, it looks like a white painted/stained cabinetry display,” he remarks. “But when you analyze it closer, there is a lot more going on.”

That theme of disguised complexity is common within his displays, where he typically includes two different finishes – usually one painted and one stained – which reflects the two-tone trend he currently sees from customers.

“It can be difficult to make a display look attractive with so many different options,” he notes. “But we have designed the showroom so the displays don’t look mismatched with a dizzying array of colors and doors.”

Belville also wanted to include fresh and trending products that resonate with his clientele.

“We often have customers come in, point to a display and say, ‘that’s exactly what I am looking for,’” he says.

One display that often generates this response shows a trending color palette of dark blue, white and wood reflected in Kith Kitchens cabinets painted Midnight and Bright White and a Stanisci Design custom hood with a Kith Kitchens’ Ash stain color.

“White is still the most popular color for cabinetry,” he says. “But, in the past year, we’ve seen an increased desire for more blues and greens. Custom hoods are trending, too, because people like to be able to customize it as a focal point for the room.”

Directly across from this display is an example that features a frameless box construction by Eudora with bases painted in Iron and uppers stained in Storm with a vintage glaze. Cabinetry is complemented with a marble-look quartz countertop with a waterfall edge and floating shelves, both of which are common requests.

Belville has also seen increased interest in contemporary designs, such as those reflected in the Eclipse cabinetry display. It includes frameless, thermally fused laminate doors with Blum Aventos hinges that provide a vertical lift. Lighting, both within the upper cabinets and in the toe kick, generates interest.