

ORANGE COUNTY

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NEW MIXES
FOR BARS

ENTERTAINMENT SPACES EVOLVE

"Very often a bar serves as a transitional space between the dining room, kitchen and family room."

SANTA ANA DESIGNER BARBARA MCLANE



The two-tiered marble counter provides a prep and serving area. With a sink and under-the-counter refrigerator, it functions daily as a refreshment area, available whenever members of the family are relaxing in the cozy room.

"It works well in this house," she said.

"As designers, we think about how a space is going to function on a day-to-day basis and how it supports your lifestyle."

The concept of the changing bar is "similar to how the living room/great room concept has evolved," she said. In lieu of a large living room, many homeowners have opted for larger family rooms and kitchen spaces, because that's where they spend most of their time.

The same is true for the bar, she said. In homes where entertaining is not an emphasis, the bar generally receives a less prominent position.

The exception may be for those with grand estates.

In this case, the homeowners "always want a bar," said designer Barbara McLane. "It's



Toby Penney Photography

The bar in a contemporary-style estate in Three Arch Bay Laguna Beach, above, provides a transition between the kitchen and game room. Exotic wood enhances the room, which features a pool table and a stunning wall-to-wall salt-water aquarium. Tropical pilot jacks, far right, swim in the 19-foot-long aquarium.



Paul E. Rodriguez / Orange County Home



Kevin Sullivan / Orange County Home

definitely a required space for any home with enough square footage."

The Santa Ana-based designer has installed bars in game rooms, media rooms, home theaters and even outdoor spaces.

"Very often a bar serves as a transitional space between the dining room, kitchen and family room," McLane said. A double-sided bar sometimes conjoins two spaces, she said.

In homes without wine cellars, the designer has also converted traditional bars into wine-tasting areas. When next to the family room, this space can provide a good place for conversation, she said.

Out-of-state clients of designer Jeanette Kyser opted to keep the bar during the remodel of their vacation home in Laguna Beach. Attached to the family room, it's a practical space.

By day, the counter-height bar serves as the children's hangout. Part soda fountain, part computer station, the bar gets a lot of use.

In the evening, the bar transforms into a practical serving area for appetizers and drinks for the adults. Framed coral on the wall behind the bar added drama and anchored the space to the large wall, Kyser said. The stylish beach theme makes it a comfortable spot to relax.

"It's very functional for the family," she said.

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A traditional-style bar by designer Barbara McLane provides a welcoming space to entertain guests.

RESOURCES

- **Designer Cher Beall**, Cashmere & Co., Newport Beach (949) 718-6340
- **Designer Jeanette Kyser**, Kyser Interiors, Irvine (714) 731-2886
- **Designer Barbara McLane**, By Design Kitchens (714) 540-3360



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