

# JET CITY KITCHEN

ONE MAN'S DREAM KITCHEN COMBINES RETRO CHIC WITH SPACE-SAVING INNOVATION BY SARA DASILVA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREGG KROGSTAD

as featured in  
**NORTHWEST HOME**



If you were a kid in the '60s, you assumed that the new millennium would find you stepping out the door each morning to strap on your jetpack and zoom to work over a cityscape of domes, spires and bubbles. ■ Alas, 2009 has dawned and we're still stuck in traffic, but Seattleite Robert Picardo has never forgotten the glamour of his cosmic childhood. "I loved *Jonny Quest* cartoons, NASA, the space needle," he remembers. So, when it came time to redo his 1963 kitchen, "it had to be jet-age design." ■ To Picardo, the essence of *Jetsons*-style swank was clear. It meant curves, lots of them; think a cross between a '57 Chevy and a cocktail shaker. What he didn't realize is that cartoon curves are easier to draw than they are to build. An initial remodeling attempt was so badly botched that Picardo cooked meals for his nine-year-old son, Kenji, on a camp stove for a long four years. ■ Undaunted, Picardo stuck to his laser-guns, bringing on a new team comprising Lewis|Gadsby Construction LLC and Jackson Remodeling. As a starting point, Picardo unrolled a vintage Disneyland print showing cable-strung passenger capsules soaring over the theme park's 1955 futuristic fantasy, "Tomorrowland." Retro colors and shapes from the poster informed fresh blueprints. "We pride ourselves on being able to execute any style," explains Jay Lewis of Lewis|Gadsby. "That's a big deal to us." ■ The next challenge was to fit such an ambitious design into a 300-square-foot kitchen, because it turns out that a curvilinear island and swoopy countertops take up more space than traditional square units. ■ Picardo was happy to nix a big fridge—"They're built and marketed like SUV's," he says—in favor of refrigerator drawers hidden behind sea foam-green

It's easy to see how Disneyland (note the vintage poster) and 1960s cartoon culture inspired this retro remodel. Sinuous cabinetry colorfully, and cleverly, conceals a lot of storage, including an entire Sub-Zero refrigerator tucked inside drawers sporting custom fronts (see one open drawer beneath blender). A tiny nook with a pull-up drawer serves as a wine house. Picardo loves the glow of adjustable under-counter puck lighting from DaSal ([dasalindustries.com](http://dasalindustries.com)). "At night, everything floats a couple of feet off the ground," he says. To save space, necessary low-voltage transformers were stashed in an adjoining storage room. A svelte office, complete with a reused kitchen table for a desk, is hidden behind opaque sliding doors.



The island's resin-blend countertop material Avonite ([lavonitesurfaces.com](http://lavonitesurfaces.com)) was born in the '80s, but comes in spot-on '60s shades, such as this speckled hue called Sky Blue.

- DESIGN/BUILD: JAY LEWIS AND JOSH GADSBY, LEWISGADSBY CONSTRUCTION LLC, EDMONDS; 866.930.9922; LEWISGADSBY.COM
- CO-BUILDERS: LEIF AND ERIK JACKSON, JACKSON REMODELING, SEATTLE; 206.352.5644; JACKSONREMODELING.COM
- CABINETRY BUILDING/CO-DESIGN: WHIDBEY DESIGNWORKS, INC.; CLINTON; 360.341.4849; WHIDBEYDESIGN.WORDPRESS.COM
- COMPLETED: OCTOBER 2008

custom cabinetry. An intriguing little door flush with the wall glides up to reveal an old-fashioned cold box that borrows space and shade from outside to keep fruits and veggies cool year round. The surprises keep on coming in what has been dubbed "Kenji's corner," where a flip-up cafe table transforms the window seat into a homework station and much-loved breakfast nook. ■ Mod '60s styling brings gloss to the project's 21st-century sustainability. Along with a cabinet and tabletop recycled from the earlier remodel, low-VOC paint was used and mildew-resistant SafeTcork

vinyl flooring containing recycled materials was chosen. ■ In what might be the prettiest space-age flourish of all, the interlocking curves of an oval dining table and its saucer-shaped docking station in the kitchen island were custom cut to maximize floor space. When Picardo's big Italian family comes calling, the table swings out on casters to seat six. It's this kind of clever engineering that makes this kitchen as truly modern in its functionality as it is gorgeously retro in its looks. "If you want the *Jonny Quest* kitchen," Picardo says, "you can't do it with paint, you have to do it with design."

Lewis | Gadsby  
CONSTRUCTION

LEWISGADSBY CONSTRUCTION LLC  
JAY LEWIS - JAY@LEWISGADSBY.COM  
[WWW.LEWISGADSBY.COM](http://WWW.LEWISGADSBY.COM)  
P.O BOX 248  
EDMONDS, WA 98020  
866.930.9922