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ON THE BACK

LIVING

AT HOME

A guide to your space —
indoors and out

Renovate How you use your kitchen should determine its design

MELISSA F. PHTERSON

Do you want your kitchen to be a gathering place? Are you a serious cook? Is your kitchen a gathering place for your family? Do you like to entertain?

All of these questions, along with what your personal style is, should be considered if you are renovating your kitchen.

Rustic and welcoming

For example, Helene Diederich and Duff Rund of Pittsford wanted a kitchen to fit their “lodge” design scheme. That meant knocking down a wall to double the size and make it casual enough to fit in with the rest of the rustic décor. Then they visited New Energy Works’ woodwork division in Shortsville, Ontario County, to find some salvaged wood for the cabinetry.

“I saw their conference table and had to have that look in my kitchen,” Diederich recalls.

Using salvaged wood from barns in upstate New York, the oak in the Diederich-Rund kitchen allows an individualized look, says Rob D’Alessandro, manager of New Energy’s fine woodworking group.

Rund and Diederich built their own stone columns to add to the look, and added a “faux plaster” wall treatment for a soft and creamy look. And because this is a true cook’s kitchen — Rund’s family owned many restaurants in Rochester — it has touches such as a pot-filler faucet above the stove.

Between them, Diederich and Rund have 14 grandchildren who spend time in the kitchen — there’s even a couch to lounge upon.

“With a kitchen like this,” says Diederich, “I can’t even think about moving.”

Modernizing the Tudor style

Lisa and Steve Ryan also considered room for their family (Mat, 14, and Lily, 10) when they remodeled the kitchen in the Brighton Tudor they bought in 2001.

It was a “cheap remodel,” and had safety concerns as well, says Lisa Ryan. The flow of the area from garage to kitchen made the Ryans claustrophobic and did not allow for kids.

“Even I tripped over her kids’ backpacks and saw the laundry piling up” says designer Jan Moyer of Brighton.

Renovations spanned eight weeks, leaving intact all outside walls and the original pantry — plus the oak floor. White, shaker-style cabinets and stainless steel appliances brightened the room immediately, with creamy countertops made of DuPont Zodiaq Quartz, which replicates the look of Carrera marble without the worry of stains or etching. The island is “Absolute Black granite,” a bold solid to balance the rich pattern of the Zodiaq.

“We went from ugly, dark and spooky to bright, cheery and modern,” says Moyer.

Also added was a pine breakfast table handcrafted from refurbished barn wood in Maryland, plus other fun details such as subway tile on the backsplash and crystal knobs on the cabinets.

Now, the family does everything in the kitchen, Lisa Ryan says. “The kids have breakfast and sit with homework. I have coffee with friends and cook more.”

Best of all, she says, the renovation preserves the floor plan of the Tudor that drew her to the house in the first place.

“I didn’t want a wide open kitchen where my Thanksgiving guests could see my turkey pans,” she says. “I like the coziness of an older house and didn’t want to change the character by knocking down walls. Now it feels warm and homey — just perfect.”

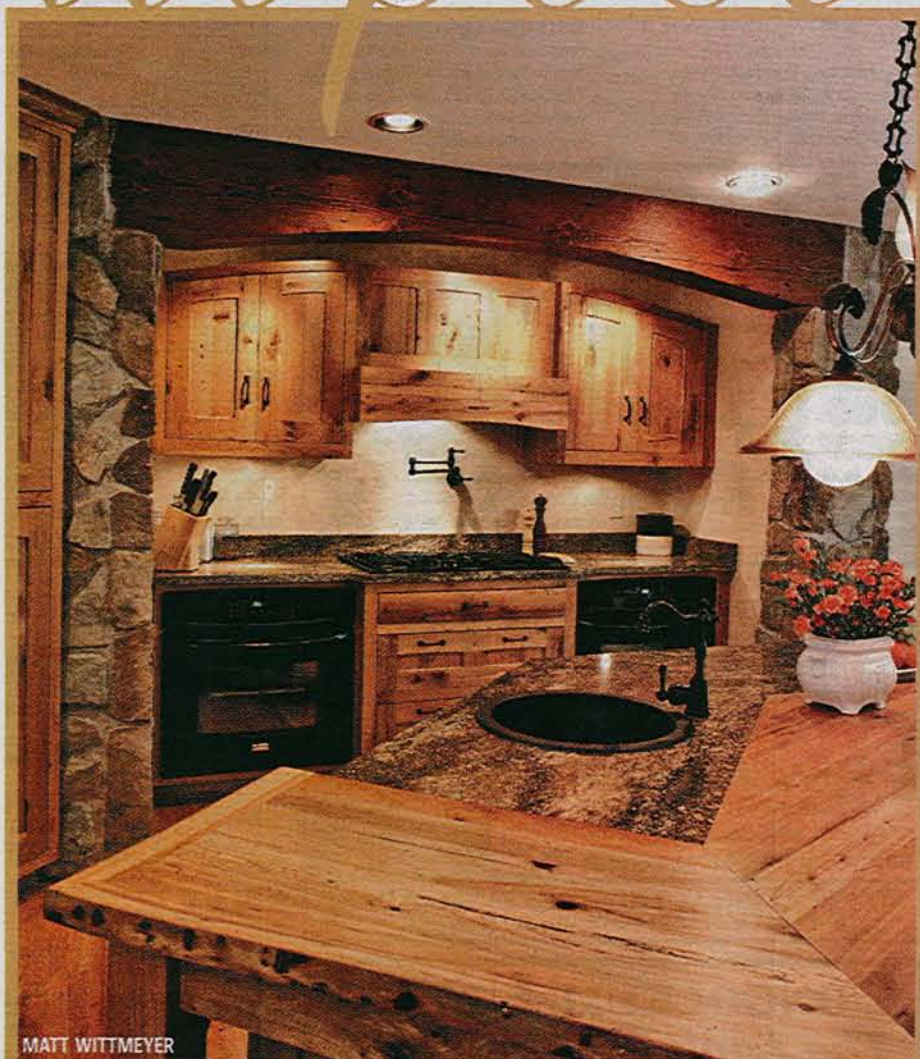
Tuscan entertaining

Mary Ellen Murray’s kitchen renovation sprung from a movie — and a cream-colored vase from Pier 1 Imports.

“I had seen *Under the Tuscan Sun* and loved that look,” she said.

She and her husband, Jerry, a vice president of marketing at Xerox, moved into their Victor home

with purpose



MATT WITTMAYER

Helene Diederich and Duff Rund of Pittsford turned their old kitchen into a rustic retreat, above, with salvaged wood.



Provided photo

Below, designer Jan Moyer changed Lisa and Steve Ryan’s old kitchen, left, in their Brighton Tudor with subtle differences in texture combined with high contrast colors.



MATT WITTMAYER

Tuscany was the design focus for Jerry and Mary Ellen Murray of Victor. Breissinger Interiors in Rochester repurposed the home’s existing cabinetry, below, with light paint and glaze to add a warm, weathered look, right.



Provided photo



MATT WITTMAYER

Kitchens

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in 1999.

"I'm short but I always felt I had to duck," says Murray of the old kitchen, which had thick soffits over the island and a desk that inevitably gathered clutter. "Summer didn't feel like summer."

The Murrays and Robert Breissinger of Breissinger Interiors in Rochester were able to use existing cabinetry, but paint it off-white and then glaze and sand it for a weathered look. For contrast, the island cabinetry received a brown-red crackle finish. In place of the desk stands a cabinet with pull-out drawers to hide clutter, plus a cooler for the Murrays' collection of white wines; a wine rack for reds is built into the island. The old soffits made way for dramatic light fixtures crafted in frosted Scavo glass and aged bronze shaped into a pineapple — the symbol of hospitality.

"This space is now flooded with light," says Murray. "It makes me happy every time I come down the stairs."

The Murrays found deals on accessories but still have top-of-the-line appliances such as a GE five-burner stove and



MATT WITTMAYER
Hansen + Hill
Interiors in
Rochester
transformed
a galley
kitchen into
a modern,
open space
for Grant and
Bette Gillette
in Fairport.

double oven (one of which also functions as a microwave) — necessary for the family's intentions to host friends and family in true Italian style.

Cooking mecca

When Grant and Bette Gillette bought their Fairport condo in 2006 (in the old Fairport High School), they wanted to turn a cramped '80s galley kitchen with linoleum floor and Formica cabinets into a design that would complement their Arts & Crafts oak furniture, including a dining set and wall unit.

"I didn't like feeling enclosed, and wanted to make the space more open," says Grant, who owns the Nifty-Bar metal factory in Penfield. Although they were downsizing from their home on Lake Ontario, they didn't want to feel cramped in the kitchen.

Bette, a retired teacher, wanted to extend the window opening above the sink so she could sit on a counter stool and grade papers while her husband cooked. The designers, Anita Hansen and Karen Hill of Hansen + Hill Interiors in Roch-

ester, suggested knocking down the corner walls to open the kitchen. For the cabinets, Grant Gillette selected richly grained quarter-sawn oak, a hallmark of Arts & Crafts design. The same wood was used in the load-bearing supports at each end of the countertop.

Because the oak was a splurge, the Gillettes needed a budget-friendly countertop that was easier to maintain than granite.

"My wife has a thing about granite being cold to the touch," says Grant.

The designers found the solution in a Wilsonart laminate with warm earth tones, a color scheme picked up in the slate tiles on the backsplash. The top cabinets have glass cutouts that display special pieces, like Bette's antique teapot and a pewter bowl.

"Building the cabinets up to the ceiling gives that crucial illusion of height, to minimize the difference in ceiling levels," says Hansen.

"We're elated," Grant says. "Even when I'm chopping and she's baking, the kitchen is wide and open enough that we're not bumping into each other." □

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