

50 DREAM Kitchens



VOLUME II, No. 1
Display until August 16, 2005

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\$14.95 U.S. \$17.95



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Culinary Curves

Too many cooks may spoil the soup, but not too many kitchens spoil the cook the way this high-tech, high-touch version does. Restaurant-caliber space and amenities are given a warm and contemporary bistro style, pleasing the chef and guests alike.

Homeowner Grace Ortiz is a culinary school graduate, but instead of dabbling in dinners for two with husband Miguel, she prefers to launch frequent, out-of-this-world culinary affairs for 30–60 guests at a time. Space, therefore, is a necessity, both in terms of storage for appliances and cooking gear, and in accommodating so many people at once—most of whom usually wind up in the kitchen to help or watch Grace at work.

To meet the demands of that lifestyle, architect Blair Barry and kitchen designers Elaine Hall Murray and Christine Lopez collaborated on a kitchen that's bigger than a two-car garage and incorporates a full menu of appliances, including separate built-in refrigerator and freezers units, an additional built-in

RIGHT: A semicircular seating area at one end of the island has the feel of a chef's table at a gourmet restaurant, giving guests a front-row view of the action.

BELOW: Blue granite countertops and maple cabinetry elevate the chef-friendly island sink to elegance.





GOURMET DELIGHT

The kitchen has long been a hot spot for coffee, and now with the brew more popular than ever and once-gourmet-only varieties widely available, some type of coffee center is a kitchen must-have. It can be as simple as a niche with room for a coffeemaker and a bit of counter space, or as elaborate as a built-in system that handles lattes, cappuccino, and espresso—and warms the cups. Grace and Miguel Ortiz incorporated their coffeemaker into a breakfast station that includes a microwave oven, undercounter refrigerator, and storage for cups, ingredients, and utensils.



refrigerator-freezer combination unit, a microwave oven, a wall oven, two dishwashers, a trash compactor, and a French range. “She actually uses all those appliances, all those work surfaces, and all that storage all of the time,” Barry says. “What she wanted was the equivalent of a restaurant kitchen.”

But not the appearance of one. “We wanted it to look warm and friendly because we knew it would be where all of our family and friends would gather,” Grace says. Pot racks, open shelves, and utensil hooks were eighty-sixed in favor of closed storage. Wood flooring was chosen for its warmth and ease on the feet. And though stainless steel makes an appearance on appliances and hardware, its cool, contemporary look is countered by honey-tone maple cabinetry.

The architecture, too, is far from institutional. The primary cooking area is semicircular, with base cabinets and countertops curving to follow a bay window. The island is shaped like a wine goblet, with the range set in the “bowl,” a prep sink in the “stem,” and an integrated breakfast table at the “base.” There’s even an oval soffit in the ceiling.

Having given Grace such a big kitchen, Barry bet her that she would never run out of storage space. He lost. “I just bought one of those deli-style meat- and cheese-slicing machines,” Grace says laughing, “and had to put it in the garage.” **DK**

The homeowner, a culinary school graduate, wanted the size and power of a restaurant kitchen, but not the visual impact of one. Curves, warm wood tones, and natural light make it clear that this is part of an inviting home.



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Tailored Tudor

Form follows function in the remodeled kitchen of a 60-year-old English Tudor home. The space meets the ergonomic needs of homeowner Corki Recht, who stands 4 feet 9 inches tall, yet it is comfortable for cooks of all sizes. The accessible function integrates beautifully into a sunny room full of old-world style.

Corner cabinets extend from the ceiling to the countertops, providing better access to lower shelves while upper shelves are reserved for seldom-used items. Pullout cabinets position cooking essentials at Corki's fingertips. "For the first time," she says, "I can get to everything I need without straining to reach up."

Fluted pilasters, turned posts, and applied moldings give the cabinetry architectural detail worthy of a traditional Tudor mansion. Black countertops and an island with a black rubbed-through finish contrast with the room's softer yellow hues. "We have black accents throughout the rest of the house," Corki says, "and I was looking for harmony." DK

RIGHT: Some people might shy away from bold black cabinets, but when coupled with buttery yellow, the effect is stylish and sophisticated.

ABOVE: Lowering the cooktop to 34 inches high breaks up the line of the countertop, adding design interest and aiding the small-statured homeowner.

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