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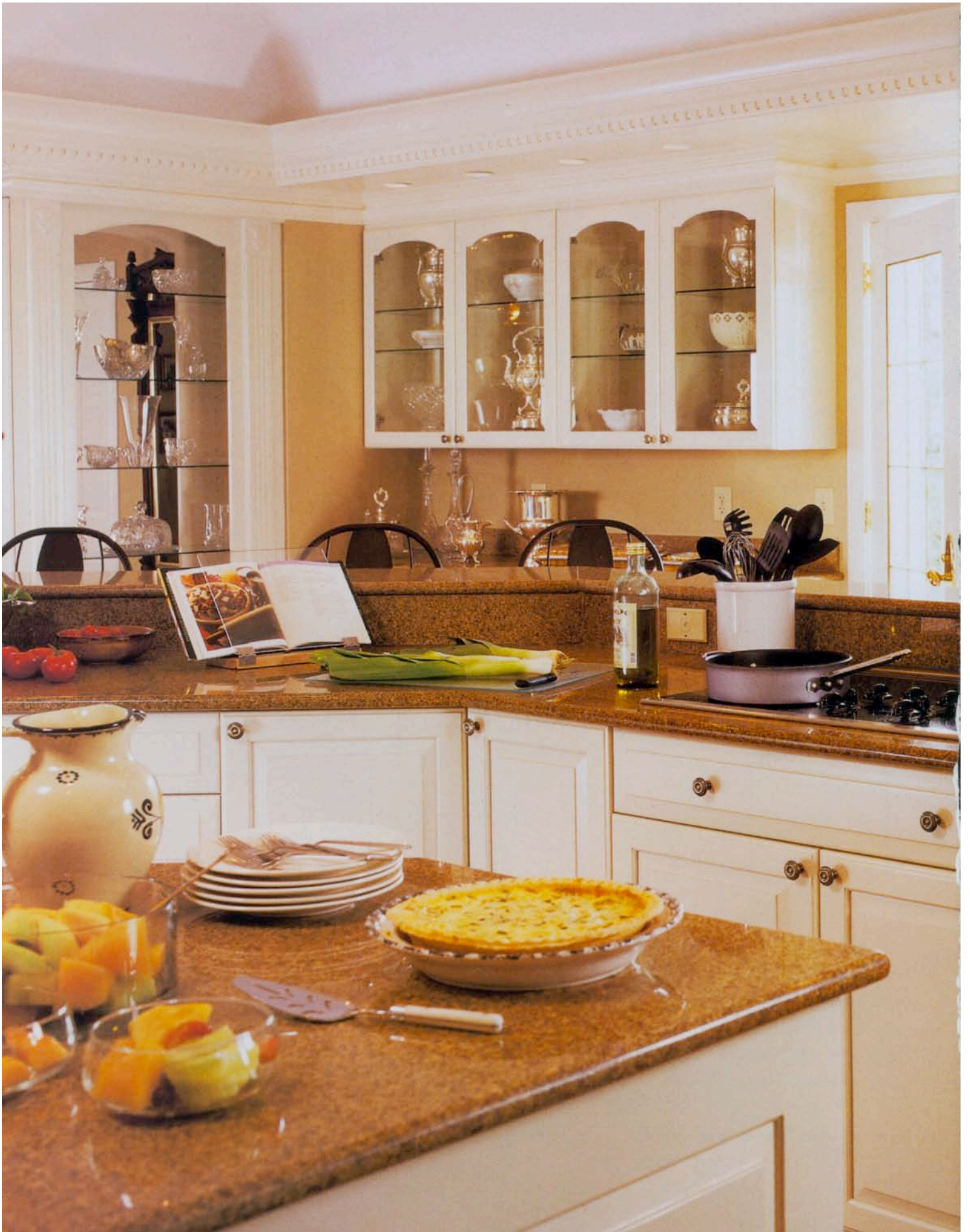
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classic character

Anchored to the past with elegant cabinetry and classical detailing, this newly added kitchen packs plenty of function along with its hospitality.

BY ANN WILSON

After more than a year of cooking and entertaining in the kitchen they added to their Maryland home, Linda Rabbitt and John Whalen still swear loyalty to the project, down to the last detail. They wouldn't move an appliance, rethink the cabinet hardware, or add a piece of molding. The 21×22-foot room offers classic character and stay-awhile amenities, and has satisfied the homeowners' desire for a kitchen that's formal and functional but still offers plenty of warmth and hospitality.

That's just how it should be, says Linda, president of a commercial construction firm. For six years, before the kitchen's foundation was even poured, design ideas percolated in her and her

husband's collective imagination, so they had definite goals in mind.

With an ambitious remodeling plan in hand, the couple began overhauling their 1950s colonial home in 1992 by expanding the postage-stamp-size entry and

ABOVE The first of many remodeling projects that would take place over eight years, the front portico was bumped out to create a roomier and more inviting foyer in Linda Rabbitt and John Whalen's 1950s home.

LEFT A small secondary island (foreground), near the main sink and refrigerator, offers a central work area to organize meals or begin cleanup efforts in the new kitchen.



renovating the master bedroom and library. While carpenters built a front portico and pulled down walls inside the home, Linda and John toured kitchen showrooms and flipped through shelter magazines. They spent months laying the groundwork for a kitchen that would artfully marry elegance with convenience.

"We did a lot of research and took a lot of field trips," Linda says. "We needed a kitchen that would become the center of the house, that shifted to how we live today, to become a gathering place."

John, a real estate consultant, acted as general contractor, hiring and scheduling subcontractors from plumbers to carpenters. Architect Robert B. Smith drew the master plan, converting the existing kitchen into a hallway that directs traffic from the entryway to the new kitchen, bar area, and family room, which were added on to the rear of the home. Interior designer Terry Noak gave the room its final polish, selecting oak flooring, earth-tone granite countertops, antique brass

cabinet hardware and fixtures, and a serene color scheme that segues from cream cabinets to wheat walls to the white cove ceiling.

Kitchen designer Lois Kennedy incorporated an easy-to-traverse work core for Linda, who loves to cook and bake, and an island fitted with an octagonal pedestal table. On one wall, Kennedy tucked a breakfast prep area between the

RIGHT Stepped up to overlap the main island, a pedestal table detailed with decorative trim adds informal dining space and contributes to the room's classic style and modern-day convenience.

BELOW A prep station between the freezer and refrigerator contains a microwave oven, coffeemaker, blender, and toaster oven. There's a warming drawer below the counter. "It gives [Linda and John] a space for fixing a breakfast or a sandwich without doing loops around the kitchen gathering the things they need," kitchen designer Lois Kennedy says.



CLASSIC CHARACTER



CLASSIC CHARACTER



*Glass-panel display cabinets
flank the entrance to the kitchen, lending
a formal look that's repeated in the cabinetry,
dentil molding, and other trim details.*

freezer and the refrigerator and installed a double oven, as well as cabinets for storing nonperishable foods. Across the room, runs of base cabinets, countertops, and glass-door wall cabinets form a butler's pantry that's convenient to the deck, dining room, and cooktop. The cabinets store entertainment essentials such as platters and glassware, and the counters provide a staging area for serving pieces that are waiting to be filled. There's plenty of room for setting up lavish buffets.

In collaboration with Linda, Kennedy devised the profiles of the cornices, detailed the island with decorative trim, and designed two china display cabinets that define the entrance to the kitchen.

"The moldings add a lot of substance and architectural weight to the simple cabinets," Kennedy says. "The display cabinets at the doorway bring a sense of

graciousness and create a framework that says, 'This is not your ordinary kitchen.'"

The octagonal table, which functions as a breakfast bar and serving center, is one of Linda's favorite features in the kitchen. So is the main island, which houses the cooktop, a prep sink, and storage for pots, pans, and other essentials. Encasing the chef in wraparound utility, it is augmented by a smaller island near the main sink, which is especially handy when caterers help out with large parties.

TOP RIGHT Following Kennedy's and Linda's designs, carpenters combined stock trim profiles and dentil molding to build up hefty cornices, similar to those found in palatial 18th- and 19th-century homes. Linda says the cabinets' crowns link the kitchen to architectural details throughout the home.

BOTTOM RIGHT Although they were not made from the same trim, moldings on the island reflect the cornices ringing the top of the room. Installed vertically, fluted trim topped with wood ornaments adds sculptural interest.

LEFT Display cabinets, outfitted with beveled-glass doors and Linda's antique crystal collection, provide a see-through border between the kitchen and hallway. The hall not only accommodates guest overflow from the kitchen, but also allows for setting up extra tables for large sit-down dinners.





ABOVE To keep the remodeled home in proportion, Linda and John added a wraparound deck and a pergola to counterbalance the visual weight of the kitchen and family room addition.

“The larger island is command central. It’s the Maginot Line between entertaining and function,” Linda says with a laugh. “It’s designed so that it’s clear that guests should stay outside the island, but that they are still welcome in the kitchen.”

Built for socializing, the kitchen is indeed timeless in its welcome, but it doesn’t sacrifice anything in the way of function to achieve that hospitality. “When you take human nature and design around it, you get a kitchen that fits how

you live,” Linda says. “That’s what people like most about the kitchen. It’s warm, elegant, inviting, and functional. We hit every one of our goals.” □

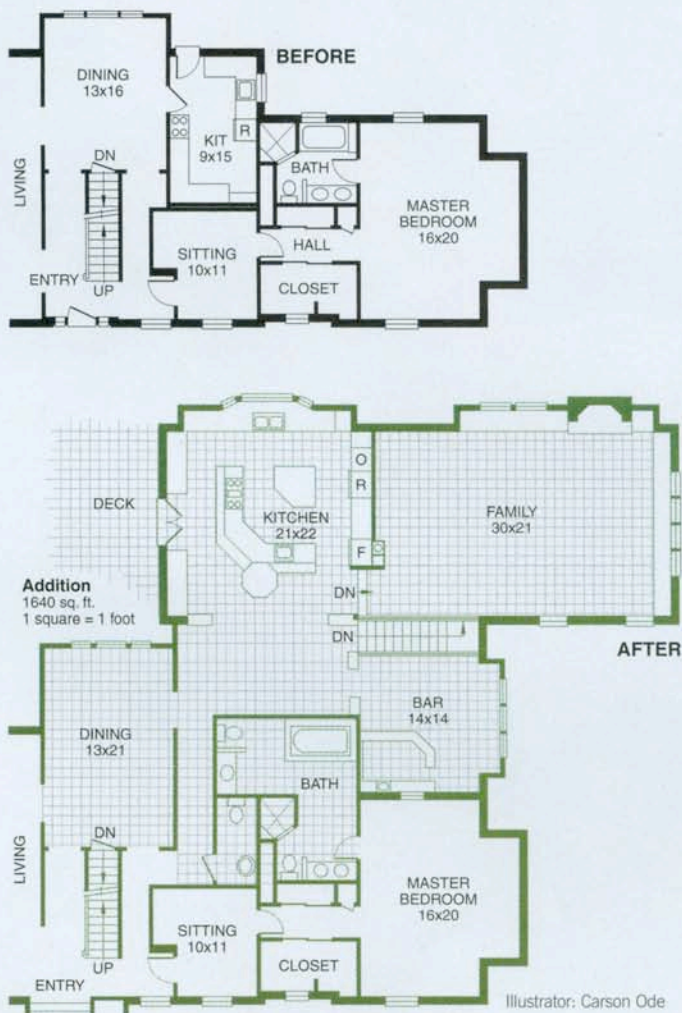
FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 114.

Photographer: Ross Chapple
 Architect: Robert B. Smith, Studio One Architects
 Kitchen designer: Lois Kennedy, CKD, Portfolio Kitchens
 Interior designer: Terry Noak
 Field editor: Eileen Deymier

PROJECT SUMMARY

KITCHEN AND FAMILY ROOM ADDITION

This design aims toward hospitality and functionality—creating a venue that invites guests in but directs them out of the chef's path.



Lessons to Learn

Rely on nonfunctional detailing.

Use cabinet trim and color schemes to reinforce the style of the room without compromising what you can do in it.

Emphasize borders rather than barricades. Try to divide the space gently. With its glassed-in display cabinets and tiered island counters creating soft buffers that don't block sight lines, this kitchen has comfortable subspaces that don't fragment the room.

Blend functional and aesthetic elements. The pedestal table at the island and the food prep station against the wall contribute to the overall design scheme.

What Was Done

- **An efficient work triangle**, anchored by the larger island, lets Linda Rabbitt pull food from the fridge, freezer, or cabinets and carry it to the island counter or prep sink.
- **A small adjunct island** supplies an additional preparation and staging area. When caterers help with large parties, the extra counter space gives them room to work.
- **Glass-enclosed display cabinets** gracefully define the border between the kitchen and adjoining hall. The lower cabinets, fitted with wood frame-and-panel doors, hold table linens for the dining room, plus picnic and barbecue gear for the deck.
- **A handy food prep station**, featuring a toaster oven, coffeemaker, and microwave oven, consolidates the items needed for a quick breakfast or a lunchtime sandwich.

