

Eclectic Kitchen

Arts and crafts style
with a 'twist'

What do dot-comers want in a kitchen? The married owners of this craftsman home in the historic Arroyo neighborhood of Pasadena, Calif., work 18-hour days in a high-tech industry and had very specific ideas for their remodel. Not only did they not want a contemporary look, they wanted a blending of French bistro and craftsman styles with a Japanese-inspired relaxation room opening to the outdoors.

At first, designer Cynthia Bennett was hesitant to blend the seemingly opposite styles of pared-down arts and crafts design with the more decorative French '20s look. Interestingly enough, however, the French bistro period was going on in Europe at the same time craftsman homes were popular in the U.S. during the '20s and '30s.

"My main challenge was in trying to combine all the elements," says Bennett. She accomplished this by using luxury materials and decorative accents.

Enhancing the view

The existing kitchen and family room area didn't reflect the homeowners' appreciation of an indoor/outdoor lifestyle. The kitchen had a limited view of the backyard and the only access to the yard was through the laundry area. The adjacent

In a break with tradition, the homeowners requested that a bar replace the original breakfast nook area.

family room had earlier been poorly converted from a porch and was not well finished or properly integrated into the craftsman style of the house.

Bennett removed the walls from the existing laundry and powder rooms to create one large kitchen. The laundry room was moved to the basement and the powder room was discretely tucked into the corner, allowing the central view wall to be opened up with combination French doors onto the back yard.



Global influences

Fine finishes abound in this kitchen with materials from around the world. The flooring is Brazilian Gonocolo Alves 4 in. wood plank. The countertop of Calcutta gold marble is from Italy. The custom cabinetry of alder in a dark walnut finish is decorated with a French-inspired diamond pattern.

In addition to its elegant appearance, the kitchen was designed to be highly functional with a number of high tech amenities. A 60 in. Dacor range with a pot filler faucet and a separate 20,000 BTU Viking wok burner are ventilated by a 3-blower Vent-a-Hood system faced in antiqued copper with steel accents. A brushed stainless steel rail for pots and utensils runs the length of the cooking area which features a glass-tiled backsplash. Two Fisher Paykel dishwasher drawers are installed adjacent to the large single basin sink which is undermounted in the countertop.

Bar option

In a break with tradition, the homeowners requested that a bar replace the original breakfast nook area.

"They love having friends over and sitting around a bar," explains Bennett who sees a growing interest in bars with people who are in their late '30s and early '40s.

The free-standing bar at one end of the kitchen seats six. It's very European-looking and features an antiqued copper top rimmed in dark wood.

It's equipped with an espresso machine for coffee, glass fronted bins for holding fruits and vegetables for making fresh juice and has cabinet space for storing alcohol. In addition, there's a refrigerator for chilling and storing wine, a refrigerator/icemaker and more glass fronted cabinets for storing cups and stemware. It's a favorite place for both entertaining and casual daily dining.

Relaxation room

In another departure from tradition, the homeowners decided to do away with the old family room and create a

Photos: Martin Fine



“tatami” mat room as a sitting room for socializing and individual relaxation. The Japanese-inspired room has tatami mats on a raised platform with storage drawers beneath.

The doorway facing the backyard was expanded and now affords a larger view and greater accessibility to the yard via a set of four glass door panels that can retract completely into the walls.

The floor is concrete pavers and rocks set in concrete which continues from the interior to the newly-created covered porch and onto the exterior Japanese garden. Sheer metallic silk panels are suspended from the ceiling using custom-made ropes, iron hooks and bamboo poles. Bennett’s influence for the panels was Japanese shoji screens which define open spaces in traditional Japanese homes.

For the traditional craftsman dining room, which opens onto the tatami room, Bennett hung pleated window treatments made of striped silk organza. She selected a



Tatami mat room

Biedermeyer table as the room’s centerpiece.

Form and function

The craftsman home with its French bistro and Japanese influences provides a quiet retreat from the homeowners’ busy schedule. According to Bennett, the end result is a “rich twist on the arts and crafts style” so prevalent in this historic neighborhood near Old Town Pasadena. ♦

Specs

Kitchen Remodel
Pasadena, Calif.

Size of project:
778 sq. ft.

Cost of project:
\$256,000

Designer/Contractor:
Cynthia Bennett & Associates, Inc.

Specifications:

Refrigerator, freezer: Sub-Zero

Bar refrigerator, icemaker: Scotsman

Range, warming drawer: Dacor

Wok: Viking

Exhaust ventilation: Vent-a-Hood

Kitchen sink: Franke

Bar sink: Bates & Bates

Bathroom sink, toilet: St. Thomas

Dishwasher drawers: Fisher & Paykel

Garbage disposal: ISE

Water purifier, instant hot water: Everpure

Kitchen, bar faucets: Newport Brass

Stove pot filler faucet: Chicago

Bath faucet: Harrington Brass

Kitchen counter: Calcutta Gold marble

Kitchen tile splash: Walker Zanger, Oceanside glass tiles

Light fixtures: Halo, Alcko, Brass Light Gallery, Cherry

Tree

Flooring: Brazilian wood plank

Cabinet knobs: Alno

Doors, windows: Vent-Wue

Roller screens: Phantom Screens

Roller screens: Phantom Screens

Left: Before
Below: After

