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Detail

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The barrel-vaulted ceiling is the highlight of this Michigan kitchen. An arched doorway and furniturelike island enhance the formal appearance.

A kitchen featuring a brick-arched ceiling, a dark wood island with a white countertop, and white cabinetry. A vase of white lilies and a plate of watermelons are on the island. A pendant light hangs over the island. The background shows a doorway with a brick arch.

Overhead Drama

Like many people who longingly dream about the kitchen they might one day build, the owners of this home had saved a magazine photo for years. Theirs was of a brick-covered, barrel-vaulted ceiling. It would be the glittering topper to what they wanted: an earthy room with both a lived-in feel and an air of formality.

To achieve that been-there-for-generations look, the owners staggered cabinets in height and depth; now, they seem to have been pulled together over many years rather than recently crafted. Wood trim details many doors.

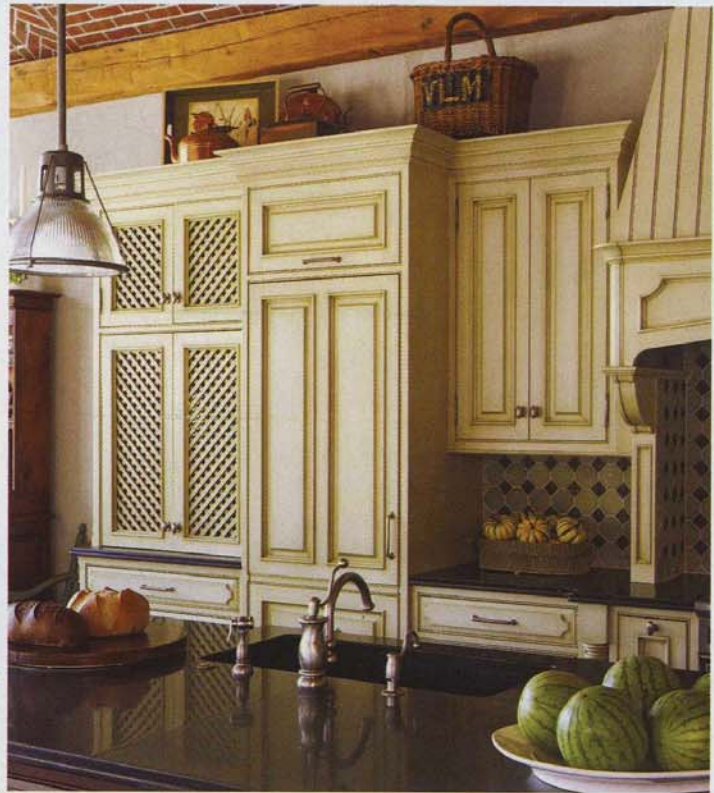
BELOW: A mix of green tiles forms a pleasing backdrop to the professional-grade range, which is capped by a carved roof-style hood.

RIGHT: Featuring varying door styles and depths, the cabinets look like furniture. Black granite counters bring weighty elegance to the room.

OPPOSITE: Hefty wooden beams salvaged from an old barn substitute for ceiling trim in the dining room.

while lattice adorns others. All the perimeter cabinets show off the same creamy ivory paint color, though a dark glaze rubbed into the crevices of the molding instantly aged the wood. Cabinet panels conceal the refrigerator, freezer, wine storage, and warming drawers to ensure the room doesn't look too modern; even countertop appliances sit behind doors for a seamless front.

An island, stained in a contrasting dark hue, adds regal storage and seating space in the center of the room. A dining room offers more formal seating at one side of the kitchen. The dining area takes its cues from the furniturelike feel of the kitchen; an antiqued round table and wide chairs form a comfortable spot



for dining, while a carved wooden hutch elegantly displays pretty dishware.

Above the cooking and dining space arcs the barrel-vaulted ceiling, truly the room's crowning glory. Half-inch-thick bricks are laid in a running bond pattern with herringbone "ribs" as accents. Although they look like conventional bricks, they are actually veneers, ideal for the ceiling application because they are lightweight and quick to install.

Underfoot is an equally dramatic surface. Hand-scraped walnut planks—some 13 feet long, some more than a foot wide—feature unique knots, splits, and hand-beveled edges for rich texture. The floor, like every other element in the kitchen and eating area, gives the new space a softly worn look that creates a comfortable and elegant atmosphere.

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