

KITCHEN

AND BATH IDEAS.

Find the
Perfect
Range

p. 29

Love It? Get It!

17 Great Looks You Can Achieve

STORE MORE
in a Small Space p. 46

Soak in Style:
Which Tub is
Right for You? p. 15

Pretty Powder Room Updates p. 36

DECEMBER 2011
Display until December 13

\$5.99 U.S.







center of attention

The island is the hub of family life in a kitchen full of English charm.

written by JAN SOULTS WALKER
photographer ANDREAS TRAUTTMANSDORFF
field editor KRISTI S. ZIMMETH

The island is this home's most popular gathering spot for cooking, conversation, and more. Nearby, an angled section of cabinetry offers prep space and a pair of refrigerator drawers outside the work core.

On any given evening,

locating Matt and Kelly Shuert and their three children, ages 12 to 15, wouldn't require a GPS unit. You would, however, need an invitation into their suburban Detroit kitchen, where you'd likely find them, plus a few other family members and friends, gathered around the island—cooking, conversing, working on projects or homework, and just having a good time.

"Matt and I and the kids look forward to having dinner together most every evening," Kelly says. "We cook as a family, and if someone is late coming home, we all want to wait until everyone is present. We're Italian, and, for us, life happens in the kitchen."

This irresistible attraction was by design, thanks to the collaborative creative energies of architect Alexander Bogaerts and interior designer Lucy Keena Earl. "We talked at great length with the Shuerts to find out how they cook," Earl says. "It was important to have a big enough space where everyone could participate, with plenty of storage for cooking supplies."

A 10-foot-long island is central to the kitchen's success, providing space for a large group to gather around the perimeter to chop, stir, help with other cooking tasks, offer advice, or sample the results. Once the meal is ready, the long island countertop becomes



OPPOSITE: The sink was custom-crafted from the same granite as the countertop. Two faucets serve the sink; the one on the left provides filtered hot and cold water. **LEFT:** Homeowner Kelly Shuert says she loves all the light coming into this kitchen. "I never miss a beat when I'm standing at the island," she says. "I can see the yard, and the space is open to the family room, so everyone stays connected." **ABOVE:** A pair of full-size refrigerators with four freezer drawers organize cold storage according to meal times—the left side corrals lunch and dinner; the right side, breakfast items.



TAKEAWAYS

1

A 10-foot-long island offers plenty of space for helpers, as well as for buffet-style serving.

2

Fridge drawers outside the work core allow access without getting in the cooks' way.

3

A butler's pantry with counter space, a sink, and a dishwasher eases entertaining.

4

Running subway tile up to the ceiling adds historical charm.



the serving buffet. For a more formal occasion, an adjacent butler's pantry provides additional room for preparation as well as cleanup, augmented by a second sink and dishwasher.

As floor plan ideas for the kitchen took shape along with the rest of the new house, the design team looked to a venerable local school, borrowing inspiration from its century-old English-style architecture. "We didn't want the house to scream 'new,'" Kelly says. "We wanted everything to look like it had been a part of the property for 100 years."

To get the look, Earl finished white-painted cabinetry with a gray glaze. Complementary granite countertops feature smatterings of grays and blacks on ivory.

Subtle metallic-finish charcoal gray tiles on the backsplash and walls make a color connection with the countertops and provide dramatic contrast with the

cabinets. The tiles were selected to pay homage to the Pewabic tiles found in the school and used elsewhere throughout the house. "Continuing the backsplash tiles to the ceiling is indicative of European kitchens," Earl says. "But the cost of carrying Pewabic to the ceiling was prohibitive. These are reminiscent of the wonderful iridescent finish found on old Pewabic tiles."

Balancing the gray tile is dark oak flooring that serves as a gorgeous, warm counterpoint to the dramatic white-painted coffered ceiling—an element that keeps the kitchen feeling light and airy and always enticing to this family and their friends.

"I really love the kitchen when the sun is shining through the window over the sink in the morning," Kelly says. "No matter what we are all doing, this is where everyone comes together." **KBI**

RESOURCES BEGIN ON PAGE 134.



OPPOSITE: Interior designer Lucy Keena Earl worked with the cabinetmaker to design the shapely range hood "to be a focal point," she says, "but not overwhelm the space." **ABOVE:** Well-planned storage organizes the kitchen into zones. This section of cabinetry serves as a breakfast pantry, with a toaster and microwave oven. **RIGHT:** Located between the kitchen and formal dining room, the butler's pantry makes an ideal staging area for parties.

