



This kitchen sports French flair with the sheer cafe curtains and steel vent hood. Colorful plates above the window act as a valance for the window treatment.



Want the secret recipe for a stylish kitchen? That's easy! Combine these ingredients, and you'll have all the fixings for a fantastic space.

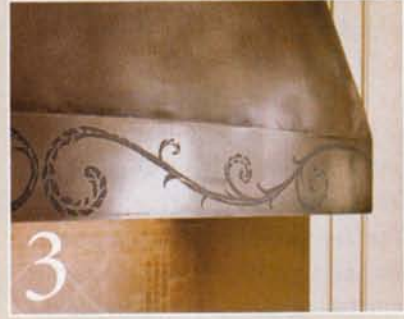
great for gathering

A kitchen ranks as one of the busiest places in a home. Add an active family and the upcoming holidays, and you may think looks would have to go right out the window. But rooms that work hard can be pretty.

This Knoxville, Tennessee, kitchen combines function with five-star design.

Open Spaces

Homeowners Leilah and Mike Hatcher took a dark, outdated kitchen and turned it into the ultimate multipurpose room. They opened up the existing kitchen and added breakfast and family rooms. That gave them a roomy, rectangular layout but also left them with a few challenges. The couple hired designer Todd Richesin, and his attention to detail made this a smart and beautiful spot to cook, dine, relax, and entertain.



Dynamic Details

1. Add personality to cabinets with details such as decorative feet at the toe kick and picture molding trim to doors and drawers.
2. Distressed to look like an old piece of furniture, this island boasts modern conveniences such as an electrical outlet strip (painted to blend in with the wood).
3. Artist Preston Farbow made the vent hood and hand-etched the scroll design.

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Calming Colors All Around

Because Leilah knew she wanted a softer color palette, creamy white cabinets were a must. Designer Esther Golightly helped her choose cabinetry and appliances. To avoid a stark look, Todd designed a large central island made from pine. A distressed finish makes the piece appear very old. The cabinets and island have furniture-like qualities, such as turned legs and antique pewter hardware.



above: A large round table breaks up the room's linear dimensions. *left:* The furniture adds color and pattern. Draperies hung below the molding complement the generous ceiling height.

Visual Divide

Todd designed faux ceiling beams using 1 x 6 boards. The ceiling and beams were painted to match the creamy trimwork in the house. Remember: A standard white ceiling does nothing to warm up a big space. A large round breakfast table placed in the center of the room also acts as a room divider. Pretty green toile cushions on ladder-back chairs give the space an extra zap of color.

Stunning Stone

Granite countertops are paired with a tumbled marble tile backsplash. The mix of materials layers various textures in the space, which helps avoid a bare look when designing a neutral room. The flooring is a natural stone: ivory travertine.

Tip: The secret to maintaining limestone and travertine is sealing it with a penetrating stone sealer. This should be done first after installation and then maintained depending on use. Don't use an abrasive cleanser as it will leave a film that can alter the natural color of the stone; instead use a solution designed for marble.

A Little Goes a Long Way

The custom vent hood is a showpiece. Made from steel, the classic French shape and aged finish give it a vintage



look. The hand-etched scroll design adds a pretty touch.

The room has great bones, so accessories and drapery treatments are clean and simple. Todd believes kitchen accessories should look like such, so plates and platters are a natural decorative element. "The platter above the dining room door is like a painting, only it's made from porcelain," he says.

Family-Style Fabrics

The gathering/relaxing end of the room is filled with plush furnishings covered in a variety of fabrics—all with French influence. The key to blending this much pattern is balance. Todd paired a large-scale toile with a smaller version on chairs. He also varied the color. For example, yellow is the dominant hue on the chairs, with accents of ivory, while the sofa is covered in a fabric that has a yellow background. Patterns aid in masking day-to-day wear and tear—perfect for young families.

The rug provides a punch of color that pulls together the whole scheme. Shades of yellow and green appear throughout the space, but it's the bright pink that defines the family room and adds pizzazz. And what kitchen couldn't use a little pizzazz—especially during a season when you'll be in it so often.