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House Beautiful

the furniture *issue*

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COLORS
for
SMALL
ROOMS

WHO'S WHO, WHAT'S WHAT,
and HOW TO ARRANGE IT



KITCHEN OF THE MONTH

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

After collecting antiques for years, a homeowner designs a kitchen worthy of her 1905 house

Kitchen by SUSAN DOSSETTER *and* ANDREW SKURMAN

Interview by
CHRISTINE PITTEL

Photographs by
JAMES CARRIÈRE





The antique oak cabinet, originally made for a French store, is perfect for a collector. Susan Dossetter found the reproduction Windsor chairs in Nantucket and had the table made to work with the chairs and the cabinet. The floor is hand-rubbed wide-plank red oak.

CHRISTINE PITTEL: Which came first, the kitchen or the cabinet?

DESIGNER SUSAN DOSSETTER: The cabinet. I found it at the Paris flea market and we designed the kitchen around it. This is an Edwardian brick house, built in 1905, and the original kitchen was in the basement. That's where Andrew Skurman, the architect, came in. He's very gifted at building new additions that look old. He copied all the chunky moldings from the old house and had rippled restoration glass made for the cabinets. I supplied the vintage glass knobs, which I've been collecting for years. I wanted this to feel like an old English service kitchen.

A farmhouse sink conveys age, but why two right next to each other?

I like two sinks side by side. One becomes a receptacle for dirty pots and pans while you keep working in the other, and I love the fact that it's so deep you can't see the dirty dishes from across the room. I also wanted two dishwashers, one beside each sink. We do a lot of entertaining.

The old-fashioned faucets add to the old-world effect, but what really makes the sink special is that extra layer of marble in back.

That wasn't part of the plan, but somehow the slab we bought cracked in transport. When something goes wrong, you have to get creative, so I had them get another segment that matched and we put it on top to cover the crack. People think it's Carrara marble, but it's actually Calacatta Oro, which is softer and creamier and much less gray. It's a very impractical surface. Even a glass of water will leave a ring, but having said that, I would do it again. Nothing else has that old English country house look. It's honed, and you can have it rehoned if necessary.

What's the idea behind those big fat wooden legs that frame the sinks?

It's a turned baluster that looks like a leg on a farmhouse table. Andrew wanted to make the cabinets look more like furniture, with a reveal at the bottom—instead of going all the way down to the floor—and legs at the ends. The island is an antique English baker's table. We cut a hole in it and added a prep sink, right opposite the produce refrigerator.

You have a whole refrigerator devoted to vegetables?

I have four children and I buy a lot of fresh, seasonal produce. I hate to have it mashed into little drawers. You forget about the lettuce down at the bottom, wilting away. Now I throw everything into colanders and put them in the Traulsen, which has glass doors. When you can see the artichokes, you want to eat the artichokes.

What's that incredible-looking range?

It's a La Cornue—they're handmade in France to your specifications. It comes with a high learning curve, but once you master it, it's fabulous. The people who sold it to us showed up with a chicken and cookie dough, to give us a lesson. I love the plaque, which is this whole section on top that heats up. And it's so beautiful, almost like jewelry for the kitchen.

What is that quilted design on the Sub-Zero's doors?

A friend jokes about my Chanel refrigerator, but that metal is probably the cheapest thing in the kitchen. It's the same diamond-patterned stainless steel you see on refrigerated trucks on the highway. Nothing custom about it. I love all the different textures—the cool stainless, the warm oak, and then all the soft shades of white in the marble, the tile, the cabinetry, and the lovely cast-plaster ceiling. I'm very proud of this kitchen. I dreamed about it for so many years, and then Andrew understood what I wanted and executed it for me. People cannot believe that it wasn't always here. It just flows right into the rest of the house. >>



The Farmhouse sinks and Julia faucets are from Waterworks. The countertop is made of two $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch slabs of Calacatta Oro marble put together, for extra thickness, then topped with a third layer in back. OPPOSITE: The cast-plaster motif on the ceiling is from Decorator's Supply. The hood over the range was part of the original kitchen. Quilted steel insulation panels, covering the Sub-Zero refrigerator, should be available at any sheet metal shop. The antique butcher block by the island is on casters, so it can go anywhere it's needed. Pot racks from Williams-Sonoma were powder-coated in white.

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ABOVE: Archive beveled tile by Waterworks provides a clean backdrop for the La Cornue Château range, made to order in burnished stainless steel and brass. The floor surrounding the range is covered with hexagon tiles from

Waterworks. ABOVE RIGHT: Spices are kept in French apothecary jars on a built-in rack near the range. Beadboard, painted Benjamin Moore's Cloud White, adds a touch of history to a new room.



GET THE LOOK...

La Cornue Château range from Purcell Murray: 800-892-4040.

Glass-door refrigerator by Traulsen: 800-825-8220.

Calacatta Oro marble from Fox Marble & Granite: 415-671-1149.

Farmhouse sinks, faucets, and decorative tile from Waterworks: 800-899-6757.

Cast-plaster Old English #25001 ceiling motif from Decorator's Supply: 800-792-2093.