

A New Kitchen For Serving Two or Two Hundred

By Sarah Gleim

Ask any homeowner who has ever been without one and they would most certainly attest that a well-designed kitchen is essential to keeping a family functional. But that sentiment is doubly true for a family that relishes in the art of entertaining, even if the “family” is a couple of empty-nesters who are more often than not simply entertaining each other.

That was certainly the case for homeowners Debbie and Bryan, whose passion for entertaining was the driving force behind having their kitchen brought up to 21st century standards. “The kitchen was the original 1979 kitchen,” says Debbie. “We still had the original white Formica counters. It was very stark.”

The couple was already in the process of building on a master suite addition, so they decided it was the best time to go forward and remodel the kitchen as well. To achieve this goal, the homeowners called upon Clive Christian, a premier British kitchen company that recently opened a showroom in Atlanta. Heather Verta, Design Director

for Clive Christian, worked with the couple on redesigning the kitchen. “Their home felt like an English manor,” she says. “The kitchen was a complete misfit in this home.” Originally, Debbie wanted to replace only the kitchen cabinets, but she was eventu-

ally persuaded to change the layout of the kitchen, although the room’s main footprint essentially stayed the same. “The biggest difference is that we removed a counter peninsula that divided the room between the kitchen and the breakfast table area,” Verta says. By placing the breakfast table in an adjoining sunroom and eliminating the peninsula, the kitchen space doubled in size, allowing ample room for a large island.

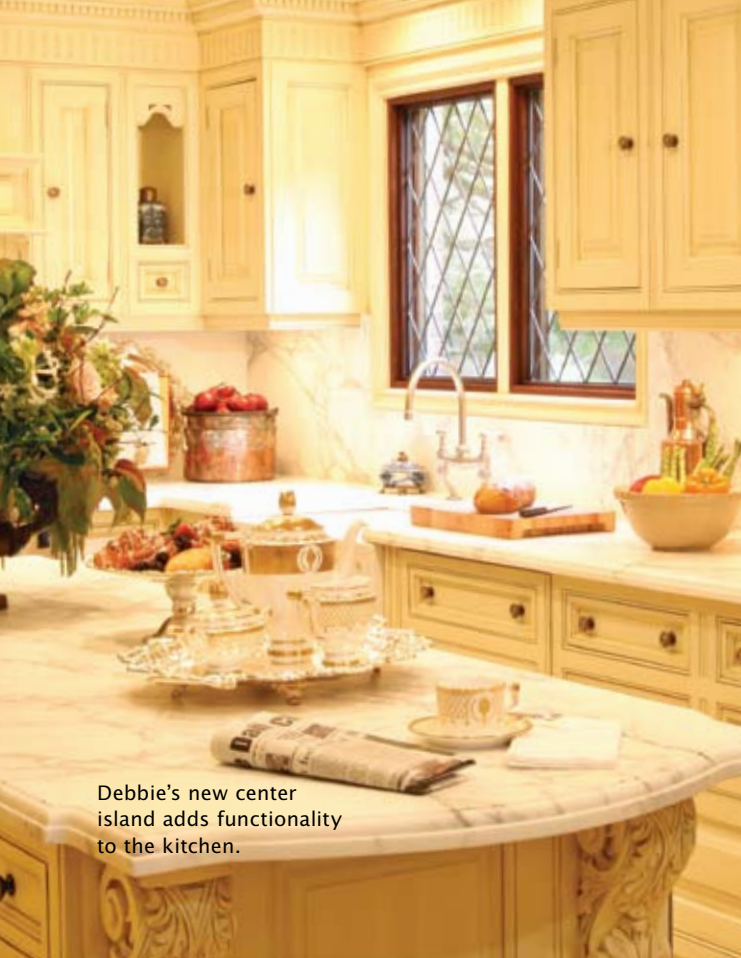
Debbie says, “I cook dinner for Bryan and myself regularly, and now the flow of the kitchen makes moving around a

lot easier. It also makes serving food much easier and the island is a great prep area. I really like having my tools at my finger tips.” Aside from ease of use, Debbie’s biggest priority was to have enough oven space for when she entertains large groups.



The Shaws farmhouse fireclay sink complements the Old World feel of this home.

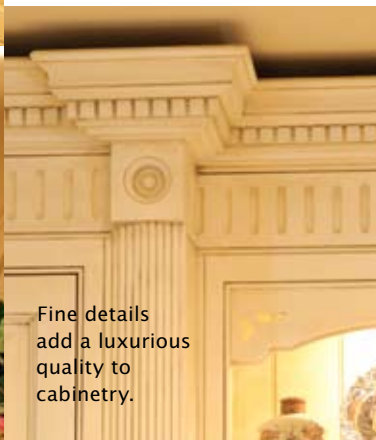
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Debbie's new center island adds functionality to the kitchen.



Built-in cabinetry appears freestanding when stopped short of the ceiling.



Fine details add a luxurious quality to cabinetry.

“We like to have large holiday parties and entertain at home for friends, so oven space was always a problem,” Debbie says. To ensure she would have enough oven space to cook for 2 or 200, she opted for a freestanding stainless steel Wolf gas range/oven combo and a pair of cabinet-mounted stainless steel Wolf convection ovens. Debbie says, “All three ovens are really big and wide so I can fit large pans inside. They also provide two different heat sources - both gas and electric.”

The couple was able to re-use their existing double door Sub-Zero refrigerator; it was simply re-paneled to match the new Clive Christian-designed custom cabinetry. Verta comments, “One unique aspect of the cabinetry is that it isn’t built all the way to the ceiling. Many people feel that their cabinets must go to the ceiling when it is 8-feet high, but by making the cabinets a bit shorter, a wonderful shadow line is created along the ceiling, assisting with the impression that the cabinetry is freestanding. This ‘unfitted’ look is usually desirable when trying to create an Old World feeling. The newly installed cabinetry was then hand painted by Clive Christian artists who antique and soften

the corners of the cabinetry to give the impression that the kitchen is original to the home and has been painted over many times.”

To continue the English manor theme, the homeowners chose a Shaws farmhouse fireclay sink, which was handmade in England. They were also able to salvage the kitchen’s original limestone floor, which simply required replacing a few missing tiles. For added elegance, Italian marble countertops in Calacatta Borghini continue up the wall and along the kitchen’s backsplash, creating a clean, seamless look. Even though marble is much more porous than are traditional stone countertops such as granite, Debbie says she couldn’t be more pleased with her choice. “We sealed the marble three times to protect it, so it will be fine,” she says.

Given that the couple has already hosted five wedding parties and their own daughter’s wedding reception since the renovation was completed, the kitchen’s design—both functionally and aesthetically—has been put to the test. Debbie says, “We are just thrilled with this new space.” Anyone visiting the home for the first time would never know that the kitchen was brand new. It now seamlessly complements this gracious home.