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## **Airy Kitchen Balances Elegance with Comfort**

By Anita Shaw

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**PASADENA, CA** - Majestic. Elegant. Stately. These are all adjectives fit to describe the home chosen to be the 2009 Pasadena Showcase House of Design. Created in 1917 by famed local architect G. Lawrence Stimson, the Italian Renaissance Revival estate features a grand marble staircase, acanthus scroll columns and paneled ceilings.

Combining the grand home's aesthetic with the light, airy feel of a modern southern California kitchen to create a classic, functional space was the assignment for Jean Horn, principal, Jean Horn Interiors in Claremont, CA.

"I wanted to create a space that felt timeless and very light," states Horn.

### **Design Elements**

The parameters set by the showhouse committee concerned only the color palette, according to Horn. This included a wide range of neutrals, beiges, golds, greens blues – "more natural colors. I used a neutral, sandy beige palette," says the designer.

While color was key, the home's architectural style dictated much of the design influence for the kitchen.

"The home has a very classic, estate feeling to it, so that's what we worked with," notes Horn. "My intention was to have the kitchen be an architectural continuation of the home, so I introduced a lot of architectural detailing that was very traditional and classical."

Among the details that Horn incorporated into the design were custom corbels for the range hood, as well as rosettes, fluted columns and posts. "I wanted to create a sense of architecture in the cabinetry because, throughout the house, there were fluted pilasters and a lot of detailing," she remarks.

### **Custom Elegance**

The kitchen's most expansive wall is also its most formidable, with two sinks, dishwasher, tons of storage and spectacular views of the gardens. The 25' window wall features the secondary sink under the left window and primary sink under the right.

The lighter use sink is the more decorative of the two – a 33" Cocina Grande hammered brushed nickel sink from Native Trails, paired with a single-hole satin nickel faucet from Rohl/Perrin & Rowe.

The 36" Shaw fireclay single basin farmhouse sink is the workhorse for the kitchen, and is located in close proximity to the range area. A Rohl/Perrin & Rowe two-hole bridge faucet, also in satin nickel, adds to the elegant, old world feel of the space.

Pulling the area together are custom birch cabinets with a multi-color, multi-process finish created by MKS Specialty Finishes.

The toe kick along the perimeter cabinets is a furniture-style base, with the exception of the sink areas. "Essentially, all of the cabinets have that base that comes forward of the face frame to give it a furniture appearance," she stresses.

A Viking dishwasher with integrated panel is located to the left of the main sink. The corner cabinet to the right of the sink features Hafele's Arena Plus corner pull-out shelf for easy access.

The upper cabinets along the wall have glass fronts. Interior lighting shows off the dishes and handmade pottery inside. A mini custom corbel created by Horn helps anchor them to the wall, "because they were all sort of floating separately," she remarks.

The crown molding along the top is a double crown, with a stock crown teamed with a sub crown. "It gave it a little more delineation and interest," she adds.

"It's a kitchen with a lot of details, but also simplicity at the same level," she notes.

### **Stone Sensibilities**

Among the more distinctive materials found in the kitchen is limestone – both on the floors and the countertops.

The Martinique limestone countertops from Walker Zanger "create a warmer, sort of Old World feel," Horn observes.

Limestone also made sense for the homeowners in that it can be spot treated because of the honed finish.

Walker Zanger also provided the limestone flooring for the space, and Horn enthuses about the results. The flooring – Montbard Planking Burnished limestone – is 15.75" high and comes in four varying lengths. "It has a staggered joint that varies, so it creates a bit more randomness and an older look, giving the floor a custom quality," she states.

### **Classic Combinations**

In a sea of soft, creamy hues and elegant lines, the 48" black gas range from Viking makes a strong statement. Anchoring the 18' wall, the focal point for the room is flanked by cabinets on either side.

"The range is a departure from stainless steel, because I wanted to create the feel of a furnished kitchen, rather than a commercial one," notes Horn.

"The design of this room was all about creating elegance," she adds. "The kitchen opens up to the family room, so I wanted a furniture-style room. And, black with beige is a classic combination."

Above the range is a large hood finished in Venetian plaster. Two large corbels anchor the hood.

A distinctive backsplash is also part of the range wall. "The tile runs the full height of the wall, but it is the only area where it is featured," says Horn. The Studio Moderne tile, also from Walker Zanger, features a marquis pattern – a combination of an octagon and a rectangle that is interlocking.

"It has a gloss finish to it, which was a way of getting some contrast to the matte quality of the limestone," she continues. "While the tiles are bisque, when the light is on them, they look like glass.

"The tile also has a ridge-like quality, so they echo the feeling of the existing coffered ceiling," she adds.

Directly across from the range wall, two 30" tower refrigerator/freezer units from Viking are concealed behind panels. Decorative lattice covers the grille. To the left, a stainless steel combination steam/convection oven is teamed with a microwave, both from Viking.

## **Uncluttered Island**

Since the homeowners were contributing financially to the kitchen design, they did have some input into the decisions made. One of their specific requests had to do with the function of the island, which was to remain as a buffet-type space for when they entertained and brought in caterers.

As a result, there were no sinks or cooktops incorporated into the 9' island, its surface left completely bare. She did, however, include a 27" warming drawer and 24" undercounter refrigerator drawers with integrated panels, both from Viking, in the island's design.

And, while the previous island had no seating, a seating area with three bar stools was added to create a breakfast area.