



An existing addition is remodeled to accommodate an eat-in kitchen and gathering space in this ca. 1816 stone house.

Both worktable and gathering spot, the island forms a galley with the opposite wall, which is symmetrically arranged around a large sink.

New Country KITCHEN

by Patricia Poore | photographs by Gridley + Graves

The new kitchen is generous, incorporating a restored hearth and a dining area; the family wanted a big gathering space.



WHEN DAVE AND PATRICE WALTERS moved in during the summer of 2004, they had a lot of work to do. They've spent over six years working on this ca. 1816 house in Pennsylvania. A big project was the transformation of this space, once two small, out-of-date rooms. The existing kitchen was a former summer kitchen that had been connected to the house in the 1940s. So the couple tackled structural work, insulated and installed windows and doors, and laid the brick-tile floor themselves. "Everything but the wonderful cabinets!" Patrice says.

The cabinets, hutch, and island were built by Kevin Ritter. His company, Timeless Kitchen Cabinetry & Design, grew out of a demand from clients of his father's reproduction furniture business. [Bryce M. Ritter & Son: bryceritter.com] Kevin Ritter produces only about a dozen kitchens a year, so each is one of a kind and highly detailed. The Ritters are known for their respect for patina (reclaimed pine is often used) and specialty finishes (distressing, real milk paint). The cabinet hardware usually comes from local blacksmiths.

"Dave and Patrice like symmetry, which led to the



THIS PAGE: Nicely housed in a former summer kitchen and addition, the new space has such traditional features as a scoop-front soapstone sink and storage hidden in furniture-quality cabinets. **OPPOSITE:** On one end, a large cupboard balances the refrigerator enclosure, at the far left.

ERIC ROTH (TOP LEFT)
JAMIE SALOMON (BOTTOM RIGHT)



hidden convenience



In designing kitchens for old houses, Kevin Ritter encourages the use of fully integrated appliances whenever possible. A large refrigerator can be given the appearance of an antique cupboard. A dishwasher disappears into the cabinetwork when it's behind a face of antique lumber, and fitted with hand-wrought hardware.

In this kitchen, too, “garages” for small appliances, like the coffee maker, were built into the red-painted hutch.

balanced design,” Ritter says. A soapstone sink and a window at center are flanked by high cabinets and then, at each end, by large floor-to-ceiling pieces. “The large refrigerator enclosure is matched by a pantry cupboard on the opposite side,” Ritter explains. The new kitchen is generous, incorporating a restored hearth and a dining area. Many of the rooms in the old house are small, and the family wanted a large gathering space. (With the kitchen finished, the couple moved on to their next project: son Luke was born this past December.)

The owners designed the space in consultation with Kevin Ritter. Cabinets and built-ins were made specifically for the space. The red hutch is a focal point of the room.

resources

Cabinets by Kevin Ritter, **TIMELESS KITCHEN CABINETRY AND DESIGN**, Malvern, PA: (610) 296-2775, timelesskitchendesign.net • Soapstone countertops and sink by **BUCKS COUNTY SOAPSTONE**, Perkasio, PA: (215) 249-8181, bcsoapstone.com

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A cooktop and the oven are integrated into the island, making for an efficient workspace in the large room.

The custom cabinets disguise modern conveniences including a large refrigerator/freezer and recycling bins. Design of the hutch accommodates the microwave oven and coffee maker, visible only when in use.



It was built as a freestanding piece of furniture but is attached to the wall and allows for electrical connections for the small appliances it hides. Although inspired by antique cupboards, the piece was designed for function—not only to house the appliances, but also to be a food pantry and provide storage for tableware. “With few upper cabinets in this kitchen—and most of our kitchens—a hutch or pantry cabinet is needed for storage,” Ritter says.

Inglenook brick tiles were used on the floor, with radiant heat installed below. “It’s incredibly comfortable in the winter,” Ritter attests. The sink, a solid piece of stone with the basin cut out so there are no seams, is an innovative design by Bucks County Soapstone.

Although the room embraces a large refrigerator, a modern cooktop, multiple ovens, and a fancy coffeemaker, none of these detract from the simple, early appearance of the room. *

