



Tuscan inspired kitchen

MANY HOMES IN Canada share a distinct style: inspired by the rustic flavours of cottage country and the East coast, tempered by more contemporary sensibilities, with elements drawn from the Georgian and Victorian architecture that has been so popular in the country's history. Lots of impressive and original things have grown from this unique Canadian style, but once in awhile you see a design that breaks the mould and draws on entirely different influences. Done poorly, such a space might seem imitative or out-of-place; done well it can be something unforgettable.



There can be no doubt which is the case in this charming Tuscan-inspired kitchen by Lorie Martin Pessot of kitchENVision. The kitchen's welcoming ambience and old world elegance are evoked with the careful choice and combination of textures, colours and lines, resulting in a sense of warmth and depth that seems tangible even in photographs. And though the distinctly European style is an uncommon sight this side of the ocean, it immediately seems natural and perfectly suited.

Originally sectioned off from the dining area by a builder-style countertop peninsula, this kitchen underwent a drastic transformation of space to take full advantage of its long and narrow dimensions. Removing the peninsula made the two rooms one and set the stage for the extra-long counter and island that are the kitchen's dominant features. The island is a magnificent piece that divides the walkway from the working area while providing lots of counter space. At one end it houses

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continued



a compact bar cabinet complete with hanging stemware racks, and at the other it includes a cleverly incorporated seating area. The table-style countertop protrusion with a custom turned wooden post was part of an effort to lend a furniture-like feel to the larger elements of the kitchen, along with features like the cabinetry's post ends, applied mouldings and highly-detailed toe kicks.

The sizable pantry is outfitted with mirrored doors to drastically increase the perceived size of the otherwise narrow-feeling kitchen, while the rest of the design utilizes horizontal lines to create a sense of motion along the space's impressive length. The counter runs the entire length of the kitchen and continues into the dining room where it becomes a convenient serving area that's perfect for drinks and buffets.

The light and sunny colour palette is one of the cornerstones of this design. The combination of yellows, browns and golds - accessorized and decorated by the homeowner with touches of red and green - creates a scheme that manages to be pale yet rich, soft yet vibrant. The






cabinetry's smooth glazed finish is brought to life with the addition of textures, patterns and decorative elements throughout the space, such as the subtly textured brown walls, the ornamented, twisted-rope handles, and the antique-style seeded glass display doors on the upper cabinets.

The countertop has the liveliest pattern of all: a busy, high-contrast variety of granite called Star Beach that blends all of the design's dominant hues and unifies the space. The granite sink featured in the island is sunken below the countertop with no lip for an unbroken look, and it is ornamented by a pump-like, antique-style faucet fixture for added character.

One challenge in designing this kitchen was the bulkhead along one wall, which couldn't be removed because of the wiring and plumbing it houses. Instead, custom crown moulding was used on the upper cabinets to complement the existing plaster moulding at the ceiling, while the oven hood was actually blended into the bulkhead, and painted and textured to match the wall. This gives a built-in feel to these features that counter-balances the furniture-style accents on the island and cabinets.

Rich in detail, expressive in design and uncommon in style — this kitchen is special and unique. It draws on different traditions to achieve the timeless appeal of an Italian villa, and it makes use of the available space artfully and efficiently to great aesthetic and practical effect. It's definitely not your typical Canadian kitchen, and yet its careful design makes it hard to picture it decorated any other way. 

*Resource materials & photos provided by:
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