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Oakland



5 *Creative*
KITCHENS

Making Over the Most Important Room

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Creative Kitchens

Modernizing the Most Important
Room of the House

BY **CECE BLASE**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **LISA SZE**

“*F*unctionality” is the buzzword for a few Oakland homeowners who recently remodeled their kitchens. Easy cooking and clean up, plus a well-defined kitchen work triangle (sink, stove and refrigerator), drive their new redos. Multiple workspaces to make meal preparation a shared experience and improved storage are other essential elements.

While ease of living is the primary aim, these owners wanted to preserve architectural unity. Those whose older homes boast period styling strived to make their kitchens look like a natural extension, replicating original trim, molding and windows. Owners and designers had more latitude with contemporary rooms but kept true to the inherent design, selecting wide-open floor plans and up-to-date finishings.

Today’s kitchen is more than just a place to cook dinner. Instead, it’s a room that serves multiple uses, from command control to entertainment center. As the new great room of America, a remodeled kitchen is also a personal reflection of its owner’s wants and style—an expression of creativity as well as a unique set of needs.



DESIGNER:
Susan Templer of
Templer Interiors

DISTINCT POSSIBILITIES

When Mary Ann Rafferty and Kate Stankis redid their kitchen as part of a larger remodel, they wanted something distinct to complement their modern, simple aesthetic. One criterion was ample wall space. "They didn't want wall cabinets," says their designer, Susan Templer. Challenged to find storage alternatives, she created roomy cabinets in the center island. The homeowners also insisted on a large work area with counter seating, so Templer designed an innovative bi-level countertop, bowing the raised portion to offset the squareness of the room.

A metal tile the homeowners found on a shopping expedition prompted the backsplash above the sink. "They liked it so much and wanted to use it, but they didn't know where," says Templer. They finally chose the kitchen, because it matched the stainless appliances and served as a striking accent to the countertop and new bay window over the sink. Templer says the placement was inspired by the sprays of graphite that come from a slightly shaken Etch A Sketch, so she scattered tiles above the backsplash to create the effect of a small explosion.

