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COOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

Get the look of a cottage kitchen inspired by fond memories.

BY KAREN WILHELMSEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL ROBINSON

IN A COZY LAKE HOUSE NORTH OF ST. JOSEPH, Michigan, architect Kathryn Quinn set out to design a warm, relaxing space to suit what her client had in mind: her grandmother's cottage kitchen. "She had strong memories of the simple, functional and somewhat funky kitchen she grew up visiting in Wisconsin," Kathryn says.

The result is a mix of bright colors, functionality and a not-too-perfect look that any cook can feel welcome in.

FOUND FURNISHINGS

With grandma's kitchen as inspiration, Kathryn created a "relaxed, casual environment with no clock around." Antiques were sprinkled throughout to achieve a homey vibe. "Bring in vintage pieces that tie you to your own past or our collective past. A contemporary kitchen needs the odd pitcher from the shop you stumbled upon while on vacation out west," she says.

CATERED TO YOU

Because the client is tall, Kathryn had countertops installed almost four feet higher than before. The louvered sink cabinet doors "keep dampness at bay, particularly in a country home," Kathryn advises. "Utilitarian (non-fussy) tile for the countertops and cabinets that don't head for the ceiling offer display space for those antiques-store finds or semi-precious heirlooms."

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The kitchen was designed to be central to the home, located off the mudroom and next to stairs leading up to the kids' rooms. A Dutch door heads out to the porch and the L-shaped "open yet space-defined" countertops seamlessly lead to the main room. Windows flank the sink and a functional extended soapstone sill connects to the front porch.

SEE SHOPPING GUIDE, PAGE 110.

Tip:

"I recommend that the primer and first coat of paint on cabinetry be shop-applied, the second coat brushed on in the field so you see the brush strokes and it is easy to the touch up the paint," Kathryn says.

Tip:

Kathryn suggests using white tiles, utilitarian faucets and simple painted cabinets for a timeless look that won't go out of style. In need of a new look? Just paint the cabinets.

For more information on architect Kathryn Quinn, visit kquinnarch.com.

Tip:

"If a kitchen is too perfect, you can't leave anything out; a little quirkiness allows for the slightly messy cook to not be intimidated by a controlling design. After all, you want the cook happy!" Kathryn says.

