

FEATURE RENOVATION

Old World Kitchen Rejuvenates Character Home

By Margaret Anne Fehr

Photography by John Johnston

It's not often that an older house reveals the last time it was renovated, but that was exactly the case when Dietrich and Jocelyn recently embarked on a major kitchen re-do to their 1919 character home.





The island adds functional work space to an already expansive kitchen. Built in cabinets (right) offer abundant presentation space and feature classic wood slats. The exposed brick chimney (far left) blends in and adds just the right rustic touch.

Says Jocelyn, “When renovations got underway in earnest, we actually found a sheet of paper in the wall saying that this kitchen had been renovated, October 5, 1958 and three people had signed their names. I put it down on the windowsill but unfortunately, it was lost amidst all the turmoil of the renovation.”

The 1958 renovation had changed the space from two rooms, a kitchen and breakfast room, with the removal of the joining wall that resulted in the present day 14 foot by 20 foot dimensions. Jocelyn says, “We pushed back one wall that housed a cupboard and wall oven and gained another three feet in the process.”

The couple had a strong vision of what they wanted to see happen in the kitchen after spending five years, by Jocelyn’s recollection, in planning the style, colours, finishes and granite countertops that were to come together in an Old World, quasi-French kitchen synthesis.

The couple turned over their renovation plans to All Canadian Renovations, a Winnipeg construction company well-known for its expertise with character homes, to make their vision take shape.





This page: the impressive cooking area with majestic venting hood complete with German accent tiles. Next page: The old world ambiance is maintained throughout the space while tastefully applying modern day functionality.

Tony Teunis and Mike Kerr, co-partners of All-Canadian Renovations are well-versed on the processes that occur when people get serious about committing themselves to their dream. Says Mr. Teunis, “It’s very typical for people to take a long time figuring out what they want done. There are a lot of thought processes that customers go through and we just help move them along. And once, the homeowner realize that we want to keep the character of their home intact as much as possible, it’s reassuring for them.”

So the All-Canadian team knew what they were in for once the walls came down and they encountered the old plumbing and electrical wires that were standard issue for 1958, as well as structural issues like ‘things being way out of square’ recalls Mr. Teunis.

Happily some bonuses were revealed as well. Jocelyn says, “We uncovered a brick wall which is the actual functioning furnace

chimney. The brick is old and definitely construction grade, but it has tremendous character and works very well with the old world feel we were wanting. We had the surface treated with an acid product to clean it up and now it adds so much to the room.”

The kitchen cabinetry is constructed of alder wood. Jocelyn explains, “The doors are made of actual wood slats, a very old-fashioned construction method. You can actually see light through them.”

Brushed nickel cup-style pulls adorn the doors and cupboards for a harmonious match and columns have been strategically incorporated into the stove area and island to further reinforce the Old World European décor.

The undisputed focal point of the kitchen is the cooking area with venting hood and tile backsplash over the stove. Says Jocelyn, “We



had brought back some accent tiles when we were in Germany with the idea of incorporating them someday into our renovated kitchen. We took great care to match them with other tiles of the same size and the results are just what we had hoped.”

The kitchen island, with glass doors on one side and drawers on the other, has proved to be an unqualified hit. Says Jocelyn, “It’s definitely a working island with a spacious granite countertop of Laurentian green, a Canadian product. In fact, we made the conscious decision to buy as much Canadian product as we could.”

The couple enjoys the functional work space that the island has provided. “Actually my husband is the chief cook and bottle washer around here. I guess that makes me his sous-chef. That’s what’s so great about the island. We can work side by side and there’s room enough for both of us and the clean-up is so easy.”

Old World ambience is represented overhead with primed tongue and groove that’s been whitewashed. Says Jocelyn, “The ceiling reinforces the planking on the floor which is actually vinyl strip flooring that looks just like hardwood, complete with ridge profiles, plus it offers the durability and user-friendliness of vinyl.”

The kitchen is amply lit with 10 ceiling pot lights, four cabinet lights and under-cabinet xenon lighting for countertop illumination. The only feature light, the Tiffany-style lamp defines the dining area.

A nook for cookbooks was incorporated into the far wall. Says Jocelyn. “It’s placed under the stairs so that unused space was put to good use. It was also very simple to do.” ⑤

