

Southern Accents

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Ultimate KITCHENS

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insider's guide
to stylish renovations

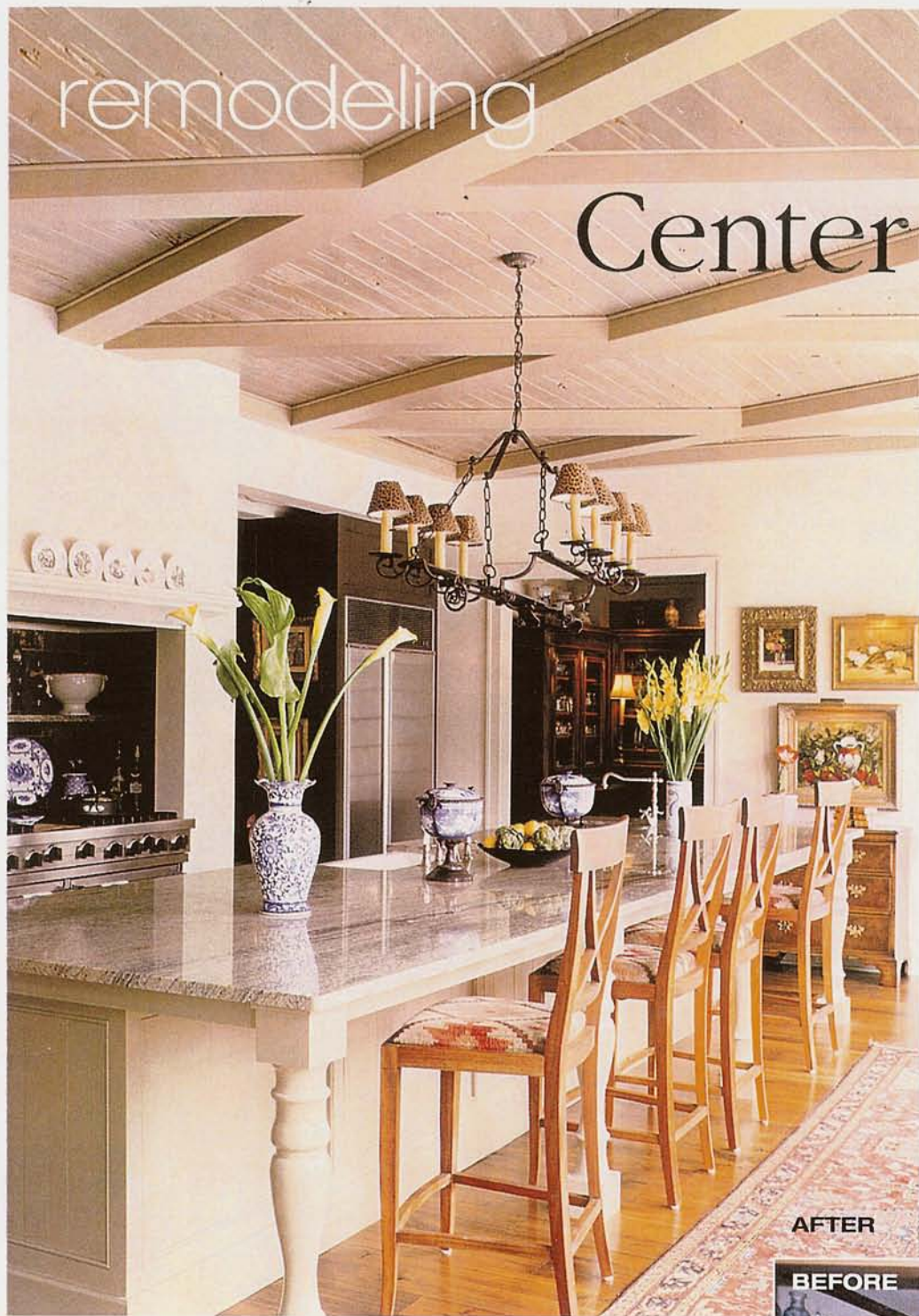
remodeling

Center Stage Kitchen

IT'S EASY TO BE MESMERIZED BY the latest kitchen wizardry. But even the sleekest cyber-fridge cannot substitute for a warm and inviting kitchen space—an interior where homeowners and guests will choose to linger. Architects Ken Pursley and Ruard Veltman of Pursley Veltman Architecture in Charlotte kept this perspective in mind when remodeling the kitchen of Bobbi and Ferrell Patrick.

The couple requested an open kitchen with fluid spaces for cooking, dining, and conversation. They also wanted the room to be an extension of the rest of their house—interiors are filled with fine antiques and an extensive art collection ranging from Picassos to rich landscapes. The two architects, who boast an equally solid grounding in interiors, grasped these concepts immediately.

Pursley and Veltman took the Patricks' cramped, overly cluttered kitchen and transformed it. While the



AFTER

Architects **Ken Pursley** and **Ruard Veltman** transform a cramped, cluttered kitchen into a finely furnished interior and stylish stage for cooking and entertaining

RIGHT: The Patricks' new kitchen is light years away from this dark, dated, and cluttered original. ABOVE: A decorative ceiling treatment, a light palette, traditional furniture touches, and colorful artwork create a warm interior out of utilitarian kitchen space.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROBBIE CAPONETTO

remodeling

spatial configuration of the new open-air kitchen is modern, it retains all the artwork, collections, and furniture touches that appeal to the Patricks' traditional tastes.

During the remodeling, the outside kitchen wall was bumped out 6 feet and replaced by a wall of windows. "The wall of windows is a modernistic device, but the use of double-hungs instead of plate glass keeps it in a traditional vein," explains Veltman, who was principal architect on the project. In order to escape the oppressiveness of the previous kitchen arrangement—with its dark, ponderous cabinetry and fixtures hugging the walls—Veltman opened up the space so that it flows into the adjoining

insights from pursley veltman

- Don't assume that remodeling is always the most cost-efficient solution. Renovating something old may often cost more than moving into something new.
- Move out during the construction phase of remodeling.
- Rather than adding on to your house, first consider renovations such as taking out a wall or two or opening up and reconfiguring the existing spaces.
- One successful remodeling strategy is to give an underused room a new function. For example, a dining room can be converted into a spacious new kitchen that is adjacent to the living room spaces, while the old breakfast room can be changed into a working pantry.
- If an addition is required, make sure you are getting enough use out of your existing rooms. Often homeowners simply add on to an older home, rather than truly renovating it. Essentially, they end up with two homes: the original front home which looks good from the street but still has its original low-functioning formal living and dining rooms, and the new addition in the back. This literally cuts the house in two.
- It is important that an addition maintain the style, scale, and circulation of the original house.
- Some of the most dramatic ways to transform a space are by adding multiple windows and French doors to bring the outside in, simplifying rooms with monochromatic paint schemes, or introducing different textures from room to room.
- Don't get too caught up by the latest trends and technology. Invest in fine furnishings, antiques, artwork, or a few architectural details to accentuate and make a room. Neither an oversize entertainment system, superior water pressure, nor the latest appliance will make up for badly designed, badly furnished rooms.
- Simplify and return to the basics. Before remodeling, consider the types of rooms you want to live in and how they make you feel.



The architects downplayed the major kitchen appliances to keep the focus on interior accents. However, they played up the stove by setting it in a charming alcove with molded hood, stone backsplash, and display ledges.

living and dining room. He removed all upper kitchen cabinets to reduce the sense of heaviness. Walls were kept light and filled with artwork. This allows the kitchen to blend with the other rooms in the house.

A long kitchen island with a polished-granite countertop measuring 5 by 15 feet extends down the center of the kitchen. "It is the one grand gesture in this space," says Veltman. Its furniture-styled features contribute to the atmosphere of a furnished room rather than an appliance-heavy, utilitarian cooking space. Affectionately called "Long Island" by the homeowners, it provides ample room for the Patricks to cook, gather, and entertain. Equipped with a farmhouse sink, two inconspicuous dishwashers, warming and refrigerator drawers, and hidden music speakers, the island provides everything Bobbi and Ferrell need at hand to prepare a meal.

However, the real mechanics of the remodeled kitchen are concealed behind the sliding barn doors of a new butler's pantry, located in a recessed space between the refrigerator and stove niches. The pantry contains a sink; a microwave; all the kitchen appliances, including a coffeemaker and icemaker; another refrigerator; and 30 feet of floor-to-ceiling storage for food, cookware,

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LEFT: A butler's pantry with sliding barn doors and a rolling library ladder allows some prep work to take place backstage. **ABOVE:** The vestibule area holds cabinets of antique china and an impressive array of wine bottles displayed in a microprocessor-regulated wine refrigerator with a glass door and tilted pull-out racks.

and cookbooks. "The butler's pantry allows Bobbi to do some basic food preparation behind the scenes while leaving the main kitchen area uncluttered," says Veltman. Even when the doors of the pantry are pulled open, the view is attractive. Shelves of blue-and-white tableware, a rack of cop-

per pots, and a library ladder on rollers add polish to this functional workspace.

The remodeled vestibule space, which was originally dead hallway, serves a dual purpose as a wine cellar and porcelain gallery. The hutches that once dominated the Patricks'

cramped kitchen now display their collection of antique blue-and-white porcelain. A wine refrigerator with a glass door showcases favorite vintages. "The exposed wine storage allows the hosts to easily select wine, and it provides an artistic backdrop to the kitchen," says Pursley.

Pursley and Veltman also gave the ceiling in the main kitchen area a distinctive treatment. Pecky cypress and painted pine beams, laid in a diamond pattern, convey an atmosphere that is both rustic and refined. Artwork in gilt frames, antique side tables, a wrought iron chandelier that was converted from an antique pot-holder, and walnut floors covered with Oriental rugs contribute to the interior. "Few appliances are visible, with the exception of the stainless steel fridge, which was recessed into an alcove. However, we purposefully played up the stove range," says Veltman. "The stone backsplash was Ferrell's idea. He used the same slate in his garden and cut the pieces himself. The stone adds texture." Equipped with attractive display ledges and the rugged stone backsplash, the stone alcove adds the final touch of charm to this commodious kitchen.

