

modern kitchen, vintage style

The best of old-world charm and today's conveniences combine seamlessly in this renovation.



this kitchen went through as many fads as a high school sophomore. Our cute 1927 Tudor Revival home was “remuddled” in the fifties, sixties, and seventies. By the time my wife and I bought the house, the tired kitchen was covered in dated wallpaper and sprayed “popcorn” ceilings. Yuck.

goal: timeless charm

When I redesigned what would become my favorite room in the house, I decided I wouldn't follow the fads. No recessed

lighting. No appliances in stainless steel. I wanted guests to wonder if this is the original kitchen. Still, as the “Food Finds” columnist for *Southern Living*, I love to cook at home whenever I'm not on the road. So functionality was a definite priority.

The original cramped breakfast nook was only suitable for a pair of hobbits. We wanted to blend that space into the kitchen. Of course, the wall separating the two rooms turned out to be load-bearing. I solved the problem by hiding a steel support beneath a faux ceiling timber. Other hollow wooden beams give symmetry to the rest of the ceiling.



✓ Tearing down a wall made the kitchen large enough for a casual breakfast nook.



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Material choices came next. The tile floor cost just \$2.50 per square foot, almost \$20-per-foot cheaper than tumbled stone. I also tiled the countertops and backsplash, except for the pastry station, where I used marble.

cabinet quandary

Period cabinets from the 1920s and 1930s sport flush-mounted doors hung on exposed hinges. We bought all of our hardware in unlacquered brass from Rejuvenation Lighting & House Parts. Our crew took four attempts to hang the doors. I put on most of the hardware myself. Fake doors cover the dishwasher and refrigerator. The fridge was my biggest savings.

Instead of buying a \$6,000 built-in, I snagged a basic black model at an appliance store, took off its handles, and glued the wood paneling right to the doors. It voided the warranty, I'm sure, to screw in the brass handles, but I saved \$5,300.

> **What appears to be a built-in cupboard actually hides the fridge and acts as food storage.**



finishing touches

Overhead cabinets would have made the space seem smaller by crowding the new schoolhouse-style lights and the leaded-glass windows I spent months crafting from old glass. So I designed a mantel above the stove instead, built to fit our biggest pot. Below, spices rest in the tiled niche which is topped

by an arch. The functional result also highlights the old stove I bought on a trip through Clayton, Georgia, at Antique Appliances.

Today, few would suspect the kitchen is new. Whether my wife and I are sitting down for a casual meal or entertaining 100 guests, our "old" scullery really cooks.

—MORGAN MURPHY