

KITCHEN OF THE MONTH

Design by DAN RUHLAND

Tewksbury, New Jersey

Everything a professional cook might need, plus old-fashioned charm—that's the beauty of this farmhouse kitchen.

Interview by CHRISTINE PITTEL

Photographs by JAMES MERRELL

Produced by DAVID M. MURPHY



The quartersawn oak cabinetry in this New Jersey kitchen is solid and traditional. Screw Stools from Design Workshop and a shelf made with pipe fittings add an unexpected industrial touch. Shelves on either side of the Wolf range keep everyday necessities nearby. LEFT: An accent wall of richly colored tile sets off the bar area. Glass shelving and support brackets in Architectural Bronze from Urban Archaeology. Refrigerator drawers in the center of the cabinet hold ice and sodas.

CHRISTINE PITTEL: *How did two New Yorkers wind up on a farm in New Jersey?*

DAN RUHLAND: My partner, Laurence Craig, and I were looking for a weekend house in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and on a whim, we looked a little closer to the city. And then our weekends suddenly became full-time.

I didn't know you could find farmland just an hour from Manhattan. Complete with a barn. And 86 animals.

What???

We started out with six sheep—they're such nice, peaceful animals—and then we really got into the wool and learned how to spin, and that got us to llamas and angora bunnies. Then cows, chickens, ducks, cats, and dogs. We slowly acquired an ark.

And was this the quintessential farmhouse?

Pretty close. It's a center-hall Colonial from the late 1800s, with a couple of additions. We basically gutted three little rooms to make this kitchen, with a dining area and a bar area. Larry is a caterer, and we wanted to be able to cook and entertain in one big, open space.

What was the first thing you bought?

We started with the floor—old bricks from France. I liked the warmth and the variation.

But isn't it hard on your feet?

No, it's really forgiving. And we use this kitchen hard. You can make a mess and it doesn't show. Then we picked out those hexagonal tiles for the bar area, hand-made and hand-glazed so they're not perfectly flat. They have a little wave to them. And then you have that beautiful gradation from blue to green.

I count three types of tile on the walls. Didn't that give you pause?

No. I like what I like and I'm not afraid to put it all together. And the different tiles kind of clarify the different zones. The ones over the range look as if they >>

KITCHEN OF THE MONTH

could be in a fireplace, and they make that whole area feel like a hearth.

I also see four kinds of light fixtures.

But they all work in concert with one another. They've got the same rustic look.

It makes the room feel as if it were done over a period of time, by different generations.

That's good. I like that.

Larry, you're a professional chef. What makes the kitchen work?

LC: You can never have too many ovens. We've got the 48-inch Wolf range with two ovens—I use the smaller one as a dedicated hors d'oeuvres warmer—and there's another 36-inch oven in the island. And we also have a Wolf microwave drawer. Two sinks. Two dishwashers. And we've got two refrigerator drawers in the island, opposite the range, for all those spur-of-the-moment things you need when you're cooking—olives, capers, cheese—so you don't have to stop what you're doing and walk around the corner to the main refrigerator.

Where is the main refrigerator?

LC: In a separate pantry. We didn't want to look at it.

What are the countertops?

LC: Imperial Danby on the island, which is great for rolling out pastry and looks like a huge slab of blue cheese. Pietra Cardoza by the sink—it's impervious to staining. And the bar counter is patinated bronze—totally impractical, but beautiful. What did they tell us? It's a 'living finish,' which means if you spill lemon juice, you just have to smear it around quickly so it becomes part of the look.

DR: You just can't worry about that sort of thing. This is a farmhouse. It's rustic.

Are those chicken-wire chairs comfortable?

DR: They are, especially with cushions. You should come visit and see for yourself. >>



LEFT: Some of the lower cabinets have a metal grating instead of wood, to add another layer of texture. "It reminds me of those old-fashioned pie safes, and it lets things breathe and dry," Dan Ruhland says. Parefeuille Peach antique terra-cotta flooring from Exquisite Surfaces. BELOW LEFT: White mini-brick Elements Field tile by Ann Sacks in Ginger Spice. BELOW RIGHT: Handmade tiles offer intriguing variations in color and shape. Trikeenan Basics tile in Outer Galaxy from Urban Archaeology.



KITCHEN OF THE MONTH

what's cooking?

CORN AND GOAT CHEESE PUDDING

Serves 10

- 4 large eggs, preferably free-range
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 2½ cups corn kernels (from 4 ears)
- ¾ cup freshly shredded Asiago cheese
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Pinch granulated garlic
- 2½ ounces fresh goat cheese, crumbled

1 Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Spray 10 four-ounce ramekins well with nonstick baking spray (or use 10 cups of a 12-cup muffin tin and fill the two remaining cups halfway with water).

2 In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs and cream until smoothly combined. Whisk in the corn, grated cheeses, chives, salt, pepper, and garlic. Crumble in the goat cheese and whisk well.

3 Ladle the batter into the cups, whisking the batter in the bowl frequently so the corn stays distributed. Place the cups in a larger roasting pan and fill with a half-inch of cold water. Spray a large piece of aluminum foil with nonstick spray and cover the roasting pan tightly. Bake until the puddings are set in the middle (they won't jiggle when the pan is shaken) and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Uncover and continue to cook until browned, about 15 minutes. Serve hot in the ramekins, or let cool to room temperature, then turn the custards out onto plates and serve warm or at room temperature. ●

"This is a great side dish—or pair it with a salad for a light meal," says Laurence Craig. "And we get to use our fresh eggs."



LEFT: There are two faucets at the sink, one for filtered water. Kitchen Bridge faucets in English Bronze by Perrin & Rowe for Rohl. The honed Pietra Cardoza granite is scored, by the sink, to act as a drain board. Shaws Original Fireclay one and a half bowl sink through Rohl. Custom tin and antique mirror pendants by Robert Ogden. **BELOW LEFT:** Glass cloches became light fixtures, with the addition of light sockets from Schoolhouse Electric. Table from Intérieurs. Open-weave side chairs from Design Workshop; Biscayne Wire armchairs from Peddler's Home Design. **BELOW RIGHT:** They're all cushioned with a closeout fabric.

STYLED BY GREGORY BISSONNETTE
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GET THE LOOK...

Blue-green tiles, Field tile backsplash in Burnt Umber, and shelving system from Urban Archaeology: urbanarchaeology.com.

White mini-brick tiles from Ann Sacks: annsacks.com.

Antique brick flooring from Exquisite Surfaces: xsurfaces.com.

Range and ovens by Wolf: wolffappliances.com.

Refrigeration by Sub-Zero: subzero.com.

Faucets and Shaws Original Fireclay through from Rohl: rohlhome.com.

Light fixtures by Robert Ogden, available through John Derian: johnderian.com.

Wire chairs from Peddler's Home Design, peddlerdesign.com, and Design Workshop: designworkshop.us.