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# KBB

KITCHEN & BATH BUSINESS

TOO MANY COOKS

**THREE'S  
A CROWD**

DO THEY WORK?

**LOW-FLOW  
LOW-DOWN**

TIPS FOR REFERRALS

**SATISFYING  
CUSTOMERS**





Too many cooks may spoil the soup, but in this kitchen three cooks can keep things simmering simultaneously without getting in each other's way.

The kitchen is in a 150-year-old weekend home owned by three professionals, all of whom love to cook—at the same time. So the room was laid out to let the trio work side-by-side and still have space for guests.

The designers on the project accomplished this by specifying a second full-size sink, a separate under-counter oven, and plenty of counterspace with a built-in ledge for decorative accessories. And it all works in a room that, while offering modern convenience, still maintains the country charm of the old farmhouse.

"A primary design criteria was creating

TWO SINKS  
HELP RELIEVE  
CONGESTION

# THREE'S A CROWD



PHOTOS: LILLO RAYMOND

a room that directs the viewer's attention towards the wood-burning stove and the bluestone wall behind it," said Ellen Cheever, CKD, CBD, ASID, Ellen Cheever & Associates, independent designer on the project.

The evolution of the kitchen also illustrates what happens when two designers are involved on a job. Cheever did the first set of plans based on sketches from the owners without seeing the space.

Then the job was turned over to Joe Matta, a Heritage Custom Kitchens dealer in Goshen, N.Y., who revised the plan after visiting the job site and further consulting with the clients and Cheever.

## NO TRAFFIC JAM

"Two designers can work very well together if they keep the client's best interests in the forefront and confer with each other before suggesting changes or modifications to the evolving plan," Cheever observed.

The result is a 17' x 16' kitchen for three that never feels like Grand Central Station at rush hour. "The owners all cope during the week with small city

kitchens [meaning no dishwasher and no counterspace], so they look forward to cooking on weekends," said Cheever. "But this isn't a case of one cook and two helpers. They all like to do their own thing. One person will be baking a cake, another stirring a risotto and the third, sautéing a chicken Marsala. A guest might be getting drinks. Yet no one has to keep saying, 'excuse me, excuse me.'"

One way of alleviating congestion was to separate the oven and cooktop. A Dacor undercounter convection oven was specified to provide extra counterspace. Matte put the oven at the end of a countertop run, with an angled cabinet to its right to store cookie sheets. The base cabinet was angled to permit a wheelchair to fit through the entry door when one owner's mother visits.

The primary sink was located under the windows, since the owners spend a lot of time in the kitchen during the day and wanted to watch the mountains and a birdfeeder. Matta suggested removing the original small windows and replacing them with larger windows each 34" wide

(Continued on page 38)





This 17' x 16' kitchen for three never feels like Grand Central Station thanks to two sinks, a separate under-counter oven and a handy shelf along the backsplash.





Wall cabinet comes down to the countertop to conceal a post that supports a steel I-beam. A second or third cook can use the refrigerator, microwave and sink without running interference. Sink base includes garbage pail and pull-out for liquor storage. Switchplate of Corian maintains clean look of backsplash.

and 40" high. His recommendation was based on his visit to the job and illustrates the advantages of personally seeing the space. "You have to listen to what the house tells you. The house is your client, too," Matta explained.

The new windows let in a lot more light, yet are not so large that they destroy the old-fashioned charm of the room. Since two of the owners are only 5'2", they especially appreciate not having to stand on tiptoe to see out.

The dishwasher, a KitchenAid KUDS 215, was chosen for its adjustable racks and for noise abatement. "Because there's a wood-burning stove in the kitchen, the owners tend to sit there a lot after dinner," said Cheever. "The last thing they wanted was to have to listen to a noisy dishwasher."

Although the owners are all right-handed, the dishwasher was placed right of the sink to make it accessible to more than one person. "Placing it to the left would have meant jamming it into a difficult corner. Now, one person standing to the right can be unloading the dishwasher while a second person loads from

the sink," explained Cheever.

To the left of the main sink is a pull-out garbage bin with two receptacles. One is for compost, the other for regular trash.

Another key to the three-way functioning of the kitchen is the gas KitchenAid cooktop, Model KGC5100. Because its controls are in the middle, and because the burners are staggered rather than directly behind each other, two people can easily use it at one time.

#### **PULL-OUT STORAGE**

To the left of the cooktop are more pull-outs storing all baking paraphernalia. This way, someone who is baking has access to utensils without disturbing anyone at the cooktop. There is plenty of countertop space over the oven for someone to roll out pie dough or cookies while other food preparation takes place between sink and cooktop.

Ideally the counter should have remained unobstructed all the way to the left of the cooktop, but there was a problem. Previous owners had removed a load-bearing wall between the kitchen and the dining room, and the whole



house was beginning to sag. So a steel I-beam had to be installed with a post at the end of the countertop. A special Heritage wall cabinet runs down to the countertop, concealing the post and ending the run of cabinets without sacrificing good looks. "This illustrates how you turn a negative into a positive," Matta pointed out.

The third wall houses the Sub-Zero 550, a second full-size sink, with microwave above the countertop, and a wall cabinet for glassware. When Cheever first drew a plan for the kitchen she initially placed two separate 24" x 21" sinks (with separate faucets) side-by-side, located under the window.

### SPREADING THE SINKS

Matta, on seeing the space and reviewing the plan, conferred with Cheever and then suggested a second full-size sink instead on the refrigerator wall. He was concerned about crowding on the window wall. "After meeting with all three clients personally and understanding how they each would be involved with the kitchen, spreading the sinks apart made sense," he explained.

He and Cheever both recommended a full-size sink as more useful than a bar sink for a kitchen with multiple cooks. The counterspace, while small, is still adequate for mixing drinks or preparing a salad, or doing cleanup. The wine rack and nearby glass storage, with a rollout under the sink for liquor, allow guests to mix drinks without interfering with the cooks. A garbage pail under the sink allows the area to be used for cleanup.

It was important to keep the room open to the dining room. A porch surrounds the kitchen and dining room, and because the old windows are small, there isn't much light. So some counterspace was sacrificed to allow as much light as possible to enter from the dining room.

Because they had been city-bound in small kitchens, none of the owners had a microwave and they didn't think they wanted one in their weekend house. But Matta urged them to reconsider, reminding them how nice it would be to pop something into the oven when they arrived late on a Friday night. They followed his advice, selecting a built-in GE Monogram microwave oven that also has convection.

In order to play up the rustic charm of the blue stone wall and hearth, the DuPont Corian Sierra Dusk countertops where chosen, with Cameo White Corian sinks.

The decision was made to run Corian all the way up the backsplash for easy maintenance and to avoid introducing another material into the room. But Cheever was concerned that the backsplash needed something to break

up the gray. So with the help of the fabricators, Wellington Enterprises, Garnerville, N.Y., a matching Corian shelf was designed that runs around the room about halfway up the backsplash. Objects on the shelf visually break up the expanse of Corian. Specially made Corian switchplates maintain the design integrity of the backsplash. The bullnose edge of the countertop and shelf echo rounded edges of chair rails in the dining room and elsewhere in the house.

Faucets from Chicago Faucet include soap dishes and were selected for their traditional looks.

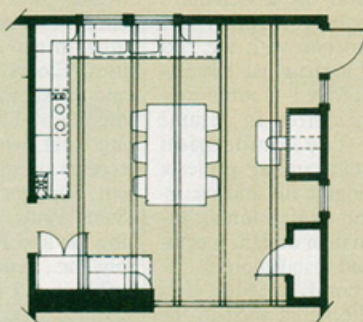
Because the kitchen has its original mahogany colored wide-plank floors and wood beams, wood-grain cabinets might have been too much. So plain flat-panel white painted frameless birch cabinets from Heritage Custom Kitchens were selected instead. The crown molding finishes off the room with a traditional feeling.

Because the room can be dark, under-cabinet lighting was especially important to the design. Matta supplied individual undercounter fluorescents with outlets from Advanced Kitchen Components. The lights can be individually controlled. In addition, there is a light bridge with three recessed incandescent lights over the main sink and lighting in the range hood.KBB

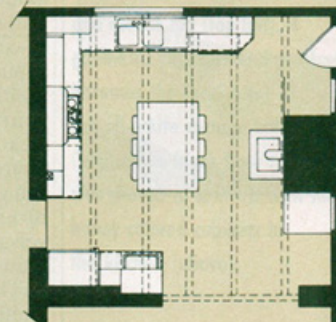
The primary sink was located under windows that were enlarged to take advantage of a view. One cook can work between the sink and cooktop on the left while a second person works between the sink and the oven on the right.



### THE EVOLUTION OF A KITCHEN PLAN



FIRST PLAN



SECOND PLAN

The plans here show the evolution of this kitchen. First is the version done by Cheever, an independent designer, who was working with the owner's measurements without seeing the space. It includes two sinks side-by-side and doesn't change the window over the sink. The undercounter oven is to the left of the cooktop. After seeing the space and conferring with both Cheever and the owners, Matta prepared a plan that included moving the second sink to the refrigerator wall and putting in a larger window over the primary sink. The oven moves to the right of the main sink. He also suggested an island, which the owners vetoed for aesthetic reasons. They preferred the older look of an antique table and chairs in front of the wood-burning stove.