

For homeowner Donna Krebs-Ulrick, two islands were a must: one for working and one as a place to gather. Stools offer ample seating at the outer island, while the leathered granite countertop provides plenty of room for resting elbows and drinks or setting out buffets.





On a Mission

Refined finishes, reclaimed woods, sunset hues, and an efficient layout compose a convivial kitchen in tune with a couple's fondness for Spanish style.

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“We created a space that was functional for cooking and entertaining, but that is still timeless in feel.”

—LISSA LEE HICKMAN, DESIGNER

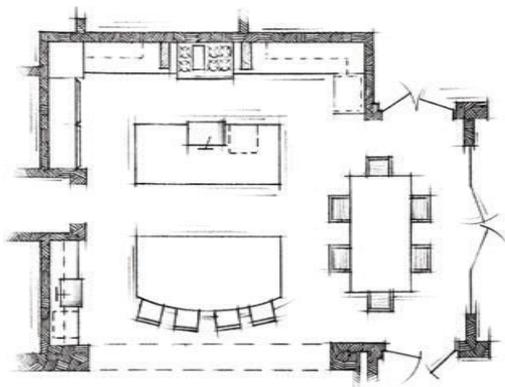
DRAWN BY IDYLLIC SCENERY and a most agreeable climate, Connecticut residents Grant Ulrick and Donna Krebs-Ulrick settled on Scottsdale, Arizona, as the perfect place to build a second home. Their new abode pays tribute to the Spanish missions they've visited through the years; the skillfully designed kitchen and adjacent living spaces combine to create a spacious, stylish setting for the parties Donna loves to stage.

"I really wanted a kitchen designed for entertaining," says Donna, who hosted 80 guests in the great-room shortly after moving into the home. "Last Christmas morning, our Connecticut family was hanging out in the kitchen making waffles. We threw open the doors to take in the wonderful Arizona breezes. There was room for everyone—it was great!"

The kitchen's greatness relies on its open plan, a second island designed for gathering, and reproduction furnishings, fittings, and fixtures, says designer Lissa Lee Hickman, who worked with Donna on the home's interiors. "The kitchen needed to work for parties and be the home's cozy hub," Hickman says. "It had to maintain the integrity of the Spanish architecture and make the most of the valley and sunset views."

Doors in the breakfast area and family room open to loggias, a pool, and panoramas. Inside, a coffered ceiling with weathered beams and tiled insets, glazed and stained cabinet finishes, corbels, and handcrafted details evoke historic haciendas and 18th-century religious outposts.

the plan



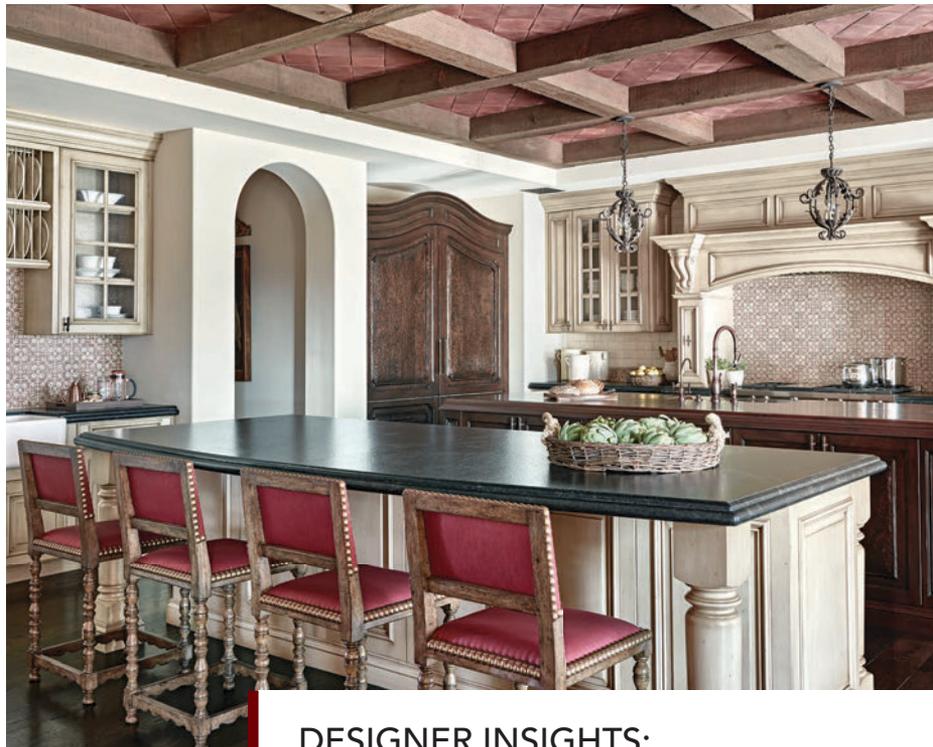
Two islands distinguish this kitchen as a space for both work and play, giving homeowner Donna Krebs-Ulrick (and a sous-chef, if necessary) ample space to cook while guests mill about. Soaring ceilings and an open floor plan leading into a dining area accommodate traffic flow with ease, and keep the interior feeling breathable despite darker finishes.



OPPOSITE: Custom cabinetry gives the refrigerator an armoirelike form; a dark espresso stain ties the sizable structure to the inner island, which completes the kitchen's cooling, cooking, and cleaning work triangle. **ABOVE:** Hand-hewn beams make for a captivating coffered ceiling treatment. Terra-cotta tiles were added to bring red hues and unexpected dimension overhead. Keeping perimeter cabinets and walls neutral allows darker finishes and jewel tones—Donna's favorite hues—to stand out.



THIS PHOTO: A second apron-front sink in a run of cabinets is just steps from the outer island. Seeded-glass cabinet doors and stacked plate racks present old-timey ideas in a buoyant manner to keep the workstation from feeling top-heavy.



“I wanted the kitchen to have a Spanish feel, like the rest of our home,” Donna says. “We brought in creams and terra-cotta reds, hand-painted tiles, and architectural details that give the kitchen an old-world look.”

Wrought-iron light fixtures, a refrigerator with an armoire profile, and reclaimed walnut floors underscore the kitchen’s period character. “There are formal and rustic elements that combine to create a look of casual elegance,” Hickman says. “We balanced the reds and darker finishes with lighter cabinetry.”

In addition to the Spanish Colonial references, Donna finds beauty in the kitchen’s utility. The work space and a nearby butler’s pantry offer generous storage and multiple sinks, microwaves, dishwashers, and refrigerators. For all the kitchen’s bells and whistles, though, it is how the space feels that appeals to Donna the most. “I love our kitchen,” she says. “It is big, but thanks to its Spanish style, it feels cozy and comfortable. I could live on one of those breakfast barstools, drinking coffee, reading the newspaper, and enjoying those beautiful valley views!”

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ABOVE LEFT: A classically designed mantelpiece and custom cabinets wrap the chef-worthy cooktop with vintage forms and modern convenience. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Barstools upholstered in hand-dyed fabric bring in Donna’s beloved rusty red, which reappears in the ceiling tiles and hand-painted backsplash tiles.

DESIGNER INSIGHTS: OLD-WORLD STYLE

Designer Lissa Lee Hickman shares her strategies for imbuing a new kitchen with centuries-old charm.

- *Weathered woods.* Outfit ceilings with reclaimed beams to warm a space and draw the eye upward. Select wood flooring that appears to have endured ages worth of foot traffic.
- *Cabinet forms.* Substantial molding details give cabinets a formal appearance; plain-profile cabinets work well in farmhouse and cottage looks. Include upper cabinets outfitted with seeded or crackled glass or glass panes embedded with chicken wire.
- *Colors and finishes.* Glazed, color-washed, antiqued, distressed, and painted cabinet finishes suggest kitchens from days gone by. Create a furnished-over-time look by mixing different cabinet finishes. Choose natural stone countertops with honed or leathered finishes. Use oil-rubbed-bronze or unlacquered brass faucets.
- *Strategically selected accessories.* Track down antique accessories, reproduction furnishings, and vintage artworks that hail from the period and region you wish to emulate. Keep kitchen walls and perimeter cabinets light in color to showcase the furnishings’ silhouettes and hues.



THIS PAGE: Doors slide open to connect the breakfast area to a small patio and a grilling station. Designer Lissa Lee Hickman selected linen and cotton textiles and woven blinds to ease the space's formality. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT:** A band of decorative tiles bearing Spanish motifs distinguishes work areas flanking the range. **OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT:** Hefty corbels and moldings of various sizes provide traditional Spanish design elements. **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT:** The inner island is a symphony of aged patinas. The white apron-front sink offers a visual break from antiqued finishes. **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT:** Sculpted ogee countertop edges, weighty columns, and hand-rubbed finishes differentiate the outer island from the inner work island.



