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*Kitchens
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JUNE 2010

KITCHENS OF THE YEAR

19TH ANNUAL

GRAND PRIZE WINNER

BY WAYNE CARLSON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHELLEY METCALF

2 FOR 1 // KOSHER/PARTY KITCHEN

Architect Bill Bocken's La Jolla clients had a first-rate oxymoron on their hands. The active family of five love to entertain friends and family members, but the "entertaining kitchen" in their 1970s ranch home was not cooperating. It was, ahem, downright antisocial.

"Hosting informal dinner parties for 20 or more guests was common for them," Bocken says. "But the U-shaped kitchen was a bottleneck — very congested for family and guests and very difficult for the chef to work. And no, expanding the space was not an option."

Then there was this other issue: The clients — developers Jeremy and Hilda Cohen — required a kosher kitchen.

"That," says the architect/interior designer, "means you need two of everything."

Bocken's solution was threefold:

1. Place a large island at the center of the space, allowing the chef to operate on one side, while other family and guests socialize on the opposite side.
2. Add a long back counter that extends into the breakfast area and doubles the storage area.
3. Install tall wall cabinets above the ovens and fridge to provide even more storage for special event items.

The design was kept clean and modern. Custom cabinets have gray-painted Shaker doors. Etched-glass panels and open storage cubicles float above the countertops. A new glass breakfast table aligns with the new work island. A wood floor replaces slippery white tile and ties in with the rest of the house.

Bocken also put in a small office/phone area to help the chef stay organized. A large photo/chalkboard houses family snapshots and menu requests.

A kosher kitchen, Bocken says, requires that the preparation of meat and dairy dishes be separated. The Cohens' kitchen, therefore, had to have two work counters and sink areas; two ovens and two microwaves; two separate storage areas for dishes, pots, pans and silverware; and two dishwashers.

"The project has a quiet power," says juror James Brown. "It is not flashy, and is completely functional." ∞

Clockwise from top: Two work counters and sink areas were required for this kosher kitchen in La Jolla. Architect Bill Bocken designed the space for Jeremy and Hilda Cohen and family. ❖ Overhead drama is supplied by decorative pendant lights suspended from the lofty ceiling. ❖ A long back counter that extends to the breakfast area added needed storage space. ❖ A message board includes room for photos and menu requests.

DESIGN: BILL BOCKEN, ARCHITECT & INTERIOR DESIGN, AIA

CONTRACTOR: CHARCO CONSTRUCTION CO.

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