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DIANE DUROCHER INTERIORS





Were “lonely” cooks the inspiration behind the open kitchen floor plan? Or did the chefs just want some extra space? Either way, the open plan has been popular for many years, and most kitchen designers have embraced its arrival. Diane Durocher of Diane Durocher Interiors is no exception. “Whether our clients are raising a family and want an easy sight line to their children, or entertaining family and friends, everyone seems to gather in the kitchen. Why not extend the space so it’s more inclusive for the cook?” she posits.

In this project, the clients approached Diane shortly after move-in, and their goal was to improve flow and update appliances in the space. Moreover, they wanted their kitchen to connect both visually and spatially to the adjacent great room. The overall palette is neutral, but the textural variety adds complexity to the space.

Initially, Diane tackled functional challenges by what appears to be a radical departure from the expected. Typically, cabinets are replaced with walk-ins and most butler pantries are secluded islands cordoned off from view. In this project, however, Diane chose to convert the walk-in pantry closet into pantry cabinetry. She incorporated the original butler’s pantry into the kitchen through the removal of a wall, which improved functionality considerably for a family that enjoys hosting large parties.

Most kitchens have a focal point and, here, the range takes center stage. The range hood was made using antique tin ceiling tiles, and its sculptural design, massive scale and tactile finish offer a stark contrast to the rigid symmetry and modern lines of the stove itself. The backsplash area boasts patterned tile work, adding both visual interest and hues that are echoed

throughout the space.

A variety of lighting solutions enhance the overall warm ambience. Recessed ceiling lighting brightens the work areas. Pendant lamps from Crystorama are suspended from a reverse tray ceiling above the island.

A spectacular chandelier from Arte de Mexico offers light and a similarly textured and ornate touch to the range hood.

The custom cabinetry alternates between open and closed. Finishes are warm and balanced. A corner built-in houses a rotisserie—a sure sign that this kitchen is not just a showpiece, but a workplace as well. In fact, Diane emphasizes functionality: She recommends refrigerator drawers, warming drawers where applicable, and additional appliances for a streamlined work flow.

The atmosphere is welcoming, like a hot cup of First Flush Darjeeling: light, clear, lively and bright. This kitchen does not overpower you with color. Rather, the interplay of textures and neutral tones are warm and soothing, while the upholstery, sculptural details and tactile finishes all comfort the senses. Diane has succeeded in creating a space that is not only inclusive, but can be experienced as a warm embrace.

Resources:

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