

# T

HOME AND  
REMODELING

Volume 23 No 7  
**\$10.95**  
Trendsideas.com

# TRENDS

over  
**345**  
products and  
solutions



updated kitchens









## French connection

This renovated kitchen was inspired by the charm of the Normandy farmhouse style

*Preceding pages and above:* To keep this kitchen in the French farmhouse style, wooden cabinetry was custom built, and antique handles sourced. The cabinets also conceal modern appliances such as a refrigerator and microwave. The floor was pulled out and replaced with cherry wood to match the existing dining room floor. Accessories, such as rush caned seats, reinforce the farmhouse style.

Changing a space to reflect the character of an old home sometimes requires the demolition of the existing rooms to re-create an authentic look.

In this early 20th century home, designer Vernon Applegate demolished the interiors walls of three small rooms and an enclosed porch to create an open-plan kitchen and family room, with connecting pantry.

"As the home was in a classic style with French Normandy influences, the homeowners wanted to continue the theme with the new kitchen space. Being well-travelled and collectors of antiques,

they wanted a space that was an expression of their personal style, as well as functional."

Applegate says the outer wall was set back to where the original porch ended, and reconstructed with French doors and casement windows. This window style is mimicked in the display cabinets above the kitchen counter. Accent lighting and glass shelves in the cabinets highlight the contents, but the seeded blown glass distorts the exact details.

The oven and stove top are the only modern appliances visible in the kitchen. Other appliances, such as the microwave and refrigerator, are hidden behind white, custom-built cupboard doors.





Despite the contemporary stainless steel stove, the traditional theme is reinforced with nickel-plated pots and a pot filler, and an antique book press.

As the homeowners wanted a predominantly white kitchen, Applegate introduced a variety of light tones and shapes to enhance the design. Tiles behind the stove are diagonal, broken up by nickel medallions depicting a fleur-de-lis pattern.

To soften the bulk of the white cabinets, he chose products with curved arches and edges, including the ventilation hood and the granite countertop. On the walls of the kitchen and family room, a buttery yellow paint adds warmth.

**Above:** French-style windows allow natural light into the kitchen. This casement style of windows is mirrored by the cupboard doors. Diagonal wall tiles and curved edges break up the bulk of the white cabinets.

**Left:** The Normandy style is enhanced by the homeowners' personal accessories, such as jars for home-made preserves and antique bread tins.



**Above:** The kitchen and its connecting laundry and pantry room were created from the existing floorplan. Small changes to the interior structure were made, including angling a chute into the laundry room. A freestanding granite island is the boundary between the kitchen and family room.

The floor of the open-plan space was rendered in dark wood, to match the mahogany floors in the rest of the house. The floor also provides a dark base to the light color palette, adds to the farmhouse feel, and visually links the kitchen space to the family room.

The island counter acts as a division between kitchen and family room. On one side tall rush-caned seats allow people to sit at the bar, while on the family room side, a large sofa has been placed against the wall.

"We needed a boundary to the kitchen but felt that a wall would put us back to square one, where

we had small, dark rooms," says Applegate.

Creating a single space enabled the architect to introduce French doors, which let in plenty of natural light and provide a view to the porch.

The homeowners did, however, prefer to separate the laundry and have some hidden storage space. For this, Applegate created a connecting pantry large enough to accommodate storage, a washing machine and dryers.

Applegate says this space is not strictly in the Normandy style – it has a more eclectic feel. Shelving holds interesting kitchen collectables and the cabinets all have quirky handles.