





Tastefully done

Kitchens are the hub of the holidays

By Beth Anne Piehl • Photography by G. Randall Goss

The heart of any home is the kitchen. Eudora Welty, the award-winning Southern author, felt it when she reminisced about her youth. “When I was a child and the snow fell,” she once scribed, “my mother always rushed to the kitchen and made snow ice cream and divinity fudge — egg whites, sugar and pecans, mostly. It was a lark and I always associate divinity fudge with snowstorms.”

Indeed, memories of holidays and family are often inextricably tied to the scents and comforts blended alongside the ingredients in stainless steel bowls and amidst the whir of mixers and laughter.

When HomeLife went looking for great kitchens to present for this holiday issue, what to our wondering eyes should appear but four stunning Northern homes, all featured here.

If the number of cookbooks owned is any indication, Dr. Tim Linehan and his wife, Julie, must spend a lot of time

in their kitchen, a cozy space that still provides ample work room.

“Our initial goal of the kitchen remodeling project was to maximize utilization of the space available without making any structural changes to the room,” said Julie, of their Bear Cove home overlooking Walloon Lake.

A peninsula, rather than an island, creates a considerable amount of extra countertop. And three different materials are used — copper, butcher block and granite — giving it a unique appearance that Firebaugh, CKD, says is a popular trend in kitchen design.

“The ability to mix styles and have the kitchen more eclectic is very fashionable right now,” said Firebaugh, who designed the Linehans’ space to suit their fun and casual lifestyle.

A baking area with the butcher-block top has pull-out wicker-basket storage drawers underneath. The oven has a tile-and-metal backsplash that looks more like a piece of art than a spaghetti-sauce catcher. Linear spice racks pull

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The Linehans

Gingerbread house created by Jane Bock Designs



The Browns

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out from the sides of the oven, which has five burners. And a tambour hides breads and the toaster.

For the holidays, Julie plans a hybrid meal of family favorites — turkey with herbed andouille sausage stuffing, cranberry and lemon salad, creole tomatoes and garlic mashed potatoes. Desserts will be inspired from abroad, like sticky toffee pudding with homemade cinnamon dulce de leche ice cream.

“I probably use my spice drawer more than any other feature in the room,” said Julie. “I love to experiment with cooking and baking ethnic foods so spices are an integral part of my daily kitchen activities.”

Bill and Peg Brown live a ways from the nearest grocery store, northward up M-119 in Harbor Springs along a sandy stretch of seclusion.

Since they love to cook, it presented



Families gather 'round in the kitchen

a kitchen design challenge — how to incorporate enough storage space in a home that is definitely expansive yet limited in width.

“We are pretty restricted because we are built into the side of a cliff,” said Peg.

The solution was to include a roomy butler’s pantry off the kitchen with countertops that can serve as a food staging space for parties or family get-togethers.

It’s one of many practical ideas in the Brown kitchen; another idea worth borrowing is the inclusion of two refrigerated storage drawers, perfect for keeping the fruits and vegetables that they purchase from nearby Pond Hill Farm.

The countertops are Kirkstone, an English soapstone, and a deep copper sink sits at the center.

Over the oven a water pipe is situated for easy filling of pots. The oven itself is professional grade with six burners and a griddle.

“It’s a very convenient kitchen,” said Liz Firebaugh, the Petoskey CKD who worked with the Browns.

Convenience is key when the couple’s three adult children come to visit with their families. “They all love to cook,” said Peg. The family Christmas Eve tradition is beef fondue, which has been on the Brown menu for many years and one that their children now share with their families (see family recipes, page 33).

“The recipes are incredibly easy to prepare and all can be made ahead,” said Peg, “which is a perk at this busy time of year.”

Borge and Hennie Reimer have incorporated reminders of their native Denmark into the kitchen and living spaces at their Cedar Bluff condo overlooking Little Traverse Bay.



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