

When the walls came tumbling down in the kitchen of their early-1900s home, a couple rejoiced. The demolition cleared the way for an open gathering spot that functions in the present and venerates the past.



Before

OPEN RESPECT

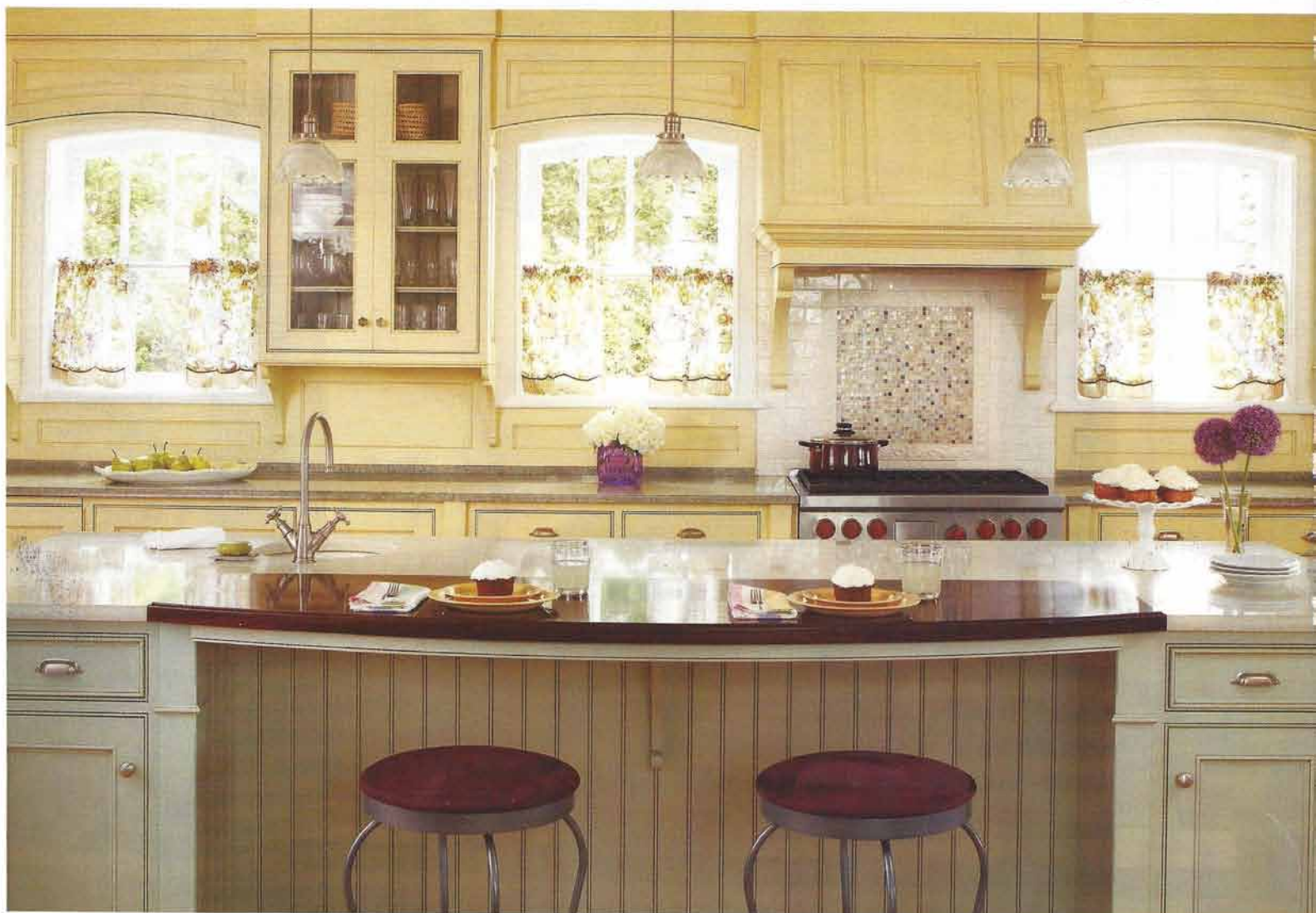
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Replacing one wall with columns and another with a peninsula opened the kitchen of Lynn and Michael Herlihy's 1916 home to light and views.

The mix of **warm colors** and **rich surfaces** suggests



Waiting a decade to redo a kitchen is nothing—Lynn and Michael Herlihy's home waited nearly a century for the space it deserved. "It does now look like the kind of kitchen that should have always been there," Lynn says. "It's very modern in terms of function, but feels as familiar and homey as the rest of the old house."

Sequestered at the back of the 1916 shingle-style home in Westbrook, Connecticut, amid a maze of closets and passageways, the original kitchen was a poor fit for a 21st-century family with four teenage boys. They made do for 12 years while fixing other rooms, then called Gerard Ciccarello, a certified master kitchen & bath designer (CMKBD) and member of the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA).

Ciccarello left the kitchen in its original spot but opened up the floor plan, replacing one wall with an island and another with a peninsula.

Now, people in the kitchen can look through the adjacent great-room for a view of Long Island Sound. "For the primary gathering spot in the house to be deprived of an ocean view was unthinkable," Ciccarello says. "Swapping a wall for a peninsula seemed the logical thing to do."

Opening the kitchen meant losing storage space—the one remaining wall held three original windows that couldn't be moved. The solution was a new pantry that both the cook and guests can use. "The pantry provides one-stop shopping and centralized storage," Ciccarello says. "A big part of the program was creating traffic lanes and seating areas outside the cooking and cleanup zones so a crowd of people could gather without getting in the way of the cook."

Another emphasis was blurring distinctions between old and new elements. Millwork helps, reducing the impact of a new beam and support

a kitchen that has evolved over the years, like the house.

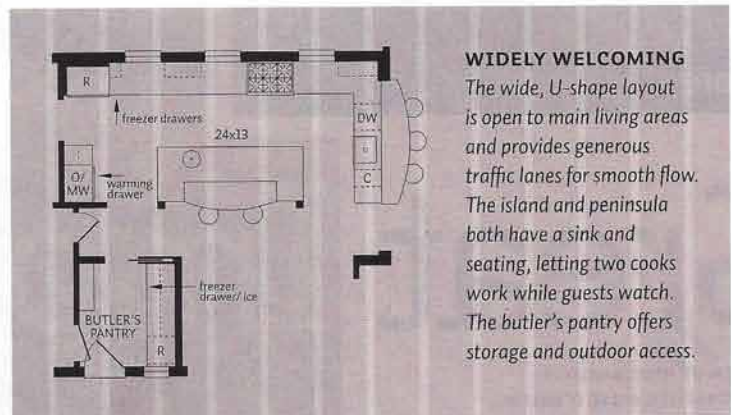


posts near the island. Classic-style backsplash panels and window valances harmonize with vintage architectural trim in the rest of the home.

Likewise, traditional cabinetry in three similar—but not identical—styles preserves been-there-forever character. “The slight differences between the perimeter cabinets, the island, and the pantry keep things from looking too uniform and predictable,” Ciccarello says. “It creates the illusion that the kitchen, like the rest of the house, has evolved over a long period of time rather than overnight.”

Revolution or evolution, the change is welcome. “It is so nice, finally, not to be shut away back there all by myself and to have room for family and friends to congregate,” Lynn says. “For me and the house it was a long time coming, but well worth the wait.” **KBI**

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WIDELY WELCOMING
The wide, U-shape layout is open to main living areas and provides generous traffic lanes for smooth flow. The island and peninsula both have a sink and seating, letting two cooks work while guests watch. The butler's pantry offers storage and outdoor access.

OPPOSITE: Moldings on the window wall match the architectural character of original millwork. A walnut insert adds a dining-table feel to the island. ABOVE LEFT: The refrigerator stands next to cabinetry-matching freezer drawers, while the counter opposite is a landing area for the wall ovens. ABOVE RIGHT: The peninsula offers an apron-front sink and a pleasant view.