

# Solutions. A cook's paradise with spectacular views inside and out.

by Peter Lemos

The kitchen in Art Leach and Judy Hennessy's Jackson, Wyoming, home is surrounded by spectacular scenery. Unfortunately, the cookie-cutter house virtually ignores views of the nearby Teton Mountains. Because their professions revolve around food—and because the original kitchen was as basic as the house—the couple fancied a renovation right from the start. Leach, a chef and restaurant owner, and Hennessy, a certified nutritionist, love to invite large groups to dinner, but when Leach decided to conduct cooking classes in their home, their renovation plans became pressing.

The couple chose to create a new kitchen that would capture the mountain views from the exterior while giving 20 or more guests interior views of Leach preparing food. For architect Stephen Dynia, who has designed restaurant kitchens, this project was an opportunity to mix styles. "The result was some variant between residential and commercial kitchens," he says. To turn the room into a performance space, Dynia replaced a bearing wall with a massive crossbeam that spans the space under the high ceiling, creating a proscenium arch over the kitchen. Monopoint lights that dim to accommodate different room functions add to the theatrical feel.

Dynia conceived the space as a shallow U surrounding a long, stainless steel-covered island, a design spacious enough to spread out meals for 12 guests or several demonstration dishes for students. To draw in the views, enormous picture windows extend to the roof along the back of the room.

Leach wanted a state-of-the-art working space with everything simply designed and conveniently located. The new kitchen features professional-style appliances, including a wood-fired wall oven and a 48-inch-wide, stainless-steel gas range with four burners, a grill, a griddle, and two ovens. Everything needed for cooking is within reach: pots hang over-



head, while shelves beneath the counters hold equipment, utensils, and dishware. A deep pantry stores staples for Leach's classes, along with seldom-used cooking equipment.

The key element of the whole design is a movable oval tabletop that fits into the island and that quickly switches functions. When the table is in its slot, it can serve as an intimate dining spot or as the stage for Leach's classes; once it's pulled out, it can be used for formal dining.

This kitchen is a skillful blend of showmanship and efficiency, yet the design is compact enough that when the theater lights dim, Leach and Hennessy can make themselves very much at home.

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#### The Problem.

The original kitchen in this speculative-built house had a cookie-cutter kitchen that didn't accommodate the homeowners' needs. Both serious cooks and in the food industry, they wanted a kitchen that could host cooking classes, large groups for dinner, and intimate dinners for two. They also wanted it to be open to the mountain views beyond.



**The Solution.**  
The new addition allows for a shallow U-shaped kitchen with all the bells and whistles of a commercial kitchen—a wood-fired wall oven and 48-inch-wide stainless-steel gas range, left. A massive overhead beam, below, demarcates the transition from function to display and seating area, whether cooking, teaching, or entertaining. The moveable oval table slides easily into its pocket when not in use.



- 1 New kitchen
- 2 Moveable table
- 3 Pantry
- 4 Wood oven
- 5 Original kitchen

