



FROM POLAND—AND ITALY—WITH LOVE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNY SIEGWART

Arriving at a vision for a room's design can be quite a process. With myriad floor plans, colors and materials, there are so many options, it's difficult to choose the right course of action. But Kristin Kostama-McNeil of Anne Rae Design knew immediately which direction to take in Renata and Chuck Bevilacqua's kitchen design.

"Renata was born in Poland and her heritage was important to her and impacted a lot of her design decisions," Kristin says. "At our very first meeting, she expressed her love of classic European style and shared all the gorgeous Polish pottery pieces she had been collecting over the years. Showcasing her cherished collection was at the heart of the design foundation."

For example, a Bluestar 60-inch range was specified in a color to complement the *niebieski* (Polish for blue), hand-painted, artist-signed ceramics, many of which were gifts from Renata's mother when she came back from visits to the homeland. Backsplash tile was chosen in a muted blue,

which also coordinates with the pottery. To highlight the range and backsplash area, Kristin created an alcove. Clad in stone, the special niche exudes an old-world aura.

Renata enjoys her time here. She loves to bake scones in the oven and the stove's griddle comes in handy for the Nutella and strawberry pancakes she whips up for her elementary-school age kids, Jake and Mia. She can do a lot of the prep work on the durable quartzite surface of the main 12-foot island as Jake and Mia sit across from her, waiting to enjoy their morning treat. Husband Chuck, who is of Italian descent, likes to cook too. You'll often find him rolling dough on a secondary woodblock island that sits in between the main island and his beloved wood-burning pizza oven.

"He makes his own dough from scratch," Renata says. "We try to make Fridays pizza night, every week or every other week; my son runs track and plays baseball and my daughter plays soccer so it gets a little hectic. He's made all kinds of different



pizzas—sausage and mushroom, kale and prosciutto, apple pear and gorgonzola. Jake and Mia get into it too—especially Mia."

This family entertains a lot, so they wanted a kitchen that would open to the home's other living spaces, to the views of Poway's Mount Woodson and the Maderas golf course, and to the outdoors and their backyard pool.

"Considering how much time this family spends in the kitchen and likes to entertain, we swapped the existing family room for the new kitchen, extended the back of the house to add square footage and included a full wall of glass doors that fully retract, exposing the back patio for larger parties and allowing the view to be the backdrop of this amazing kitchen space," Kristin explains.

The result is a family-friendly kitchen that's beautiful, efficient and inviting. "When I walk in, I look at the vanishing-edge pool and the mountains and I feel like I am in a resort," Renata says. ❖



Stone and wood beams (left), a Polish pottery collection (above), vintage wooden oven pizza and bread paddles (below and left) and custom iron lighting bring an Old World, European feel to a kitchen designed by Kristin Kostama-McNeil.

Facing page: Hand-painted tile colors echo the hues found in homeowner Renata Bevilacqua's Polish pottery collection.

“A traditional kitchen with a twist.”

— Salomon Daniel



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