

A few deft relocations and period enhancements revived the romance in a 1920s kitchen, while a wholly new room blends seamlessly with the rest of the house.



Revival with a Mission BY MARY ELLEN POLSON

ROMANTIC REVIVAL houses from the 1920s are invariably charming, but cramped spaces often lurk at the back of the house. When architect Linda Brettler was asked to remodel a kitchen and add an office to a Spanish Revival house in Los Angeles's Silver Lake neighborhood, the budget was as tight as the space.

The kitchen, measuring only 10' x 10', was

flanked by an underused entry area on one side and a tiny breakfast room on the other. "I hate to open up rooms like this and make one big space," Brettler says. "The trick is opening it up and keeping the period flavor."

Working within the existing footprint, Brettler knocked out most of the wall between the kitchen and the 7'x10' break- [continued on page 100]

Relocating the stove (inset) into a recessed space and partially opening up walls between service areas were the keys to creating a period-sensitive kitchen in Brent and Patricia Friedman's Spanish Revival home.



LEFT: Stained and distressed stock lumber gives a new room ageless character. **TOP:** A tiled roof, casement windows, and Mediterranean accents successfully tie the addition to the rest of the house. **INSET:** The original location of the garage made parking the car a vertical challenge. Architect Linda Brettler relocated the space, solving several problems in the process.

fast room. Adding an archway and an extra-deep counter that doubles as a breakfast bar brought the breakfast area into the kitchen without sacrificing its sense of place. In an inspired move, Brettler removed a shallow pantry and part of a closet in the adjacent living room to create an arched, custom-tiled niche for the stove.

Relocating the stove also made it possible to move the refrigerator out of the entry area and into the work triangle. Brettler kept the project on budget by refacing the existing cabinets and reusing most of the existing appliances. The result is an open and airy kitchen and breakfast

area that enhances the Spanish Revival mood of the house.

The next phase of the renovation, adding a room over the garage, would seem fairly straightforward. In this case, however, the garage—set into a hillside—was placed too high on the site, making parking a bumpy experience. The Friedmans opted to tear the garage down and rebuild at an elevation that allowed smoother entries and exits for cars. A bonus was an easier transition from the new room to a backyard patio.

The new room consciously reflects the style of the house. Brettler lined the vaulted ceiling with

stained and distressed lumber, and added custom decorative rosettes to stock doors. Other style-appropriate treatments include casement windows, French doors leading to the terrace, and a red clay tile foyer with decorative tile accents. On the façade, small elements, such as wrought-iron inserts, corbels, and applied antique tiles, help tie the new two-storey elevation to the rest of the house. Clearly, this is a case where what's new only enhances the old. ✦

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