

Made to Order

Warm woods, a peppy color palette and robust fabrics combine in a saucy kitchen makeover.

"The essence of this kitchen makeover is a mix of eclectic elements brought together by the repetition of color, line and pattern," says Debbie.

Homeowner Elaine Jelcic didn't set out to remodel her kitchen. She and her husband, Mark, merely wanted to update the well-worn 10-year-old flooring. But, as any do-it-yourselfer knows, projects have a way of multiplying. "We decided to knock down a divider wall between the kitchen and the family room and get rid of the peninsula separating the rooms," says Elaine. Company had always gravitated to these spaces, so what better way to foster good times than by uniting them—with the help of some beautiful wood floors and a new design scheme tailor-made for relaxing. (To see the family room face-lift, check out the June 2005 issue of *Decorating Ideas*.) To make her vision a reality, Elaine enlisted the help of friend Debbie Egizio, who is also a designer for *Country Sampler Decorating Ideas* magazine.



Natural Expanse

Once the cherry-finished floors were installed throughout the spaces, Elaine and Debbie rolled up their sleeves to get cooking in the kitchen. Elaine wanted to replace the existing cabinetry to match the wood floors, but to do them all would cost too much. Debbie's suggestion? Replace the upper cabinets and

just the door fronts on the lower cabinets. Antiqued wood-finish upper cabinets were purchased to complement the floor's aged feel. But "rather than making it all dark wood from floor to ceiling," says Debbie, "we mixed it up, painting the lower cabinets an antiqued creamy white to lighten the room and give the eye a break." This lighter finish acts as a subtle link, tying the room together by repeating on the ceiling and baseboard trim, doors, and kitchen table and chairs. (To recreate the look, follow the Antiqued Finish instructions on page 63.) The couple also added architectural elements to create character. The bun feet on some cabinet fronts make the pieces look custom-built, and chair rail used on the kitchen ceiling creates a tray-ceiling effect common in period homes. They also replaced the existing ranch-style baseboards with detailed 4½" trim—antiqued, of course.

The New Marble

Because wood reigned supreme in the new kitchen, Elaine and Mark wanted a natural material for the countertops, too. "We loved the look of granite," says Elaine, "but it was too costly." So, they decided to install concrete countertops themselves and chose a premixed reddish brown color to match their scheme. "It's not terribly complicated," says Elaine of the process, "but it's time-consuming, and you need some pretty strong people to move them." If installed professionally, concrete countertops can cost as much as marble, but "you save a ton if you do it yourself," says Elaine. With the help of Debbie's husband, concrete installer Rocco Egizio, Elaine and Mark created several molds for the concrete. From a designer's perspective, concrete was a superb choice for the redo because it offers many customization possibilities. "Just like their aged wood floor, the countertops will mellow with time," says Debbie. Maintenance is simple: A periodic coat of wax protects countertops and enhances their handcrafted surface.

Elaine mixed in glass-fronted cabinets to illuminate the dark cabinet expanse and showcase her colorful pottery and dishware. Crown molding highlights the staggered cabinet installation, adding an elegant, old-world touch.

(Opposite page, above) A tray-ceiling effect was achieved using chair rail moldings from Fypon. Glaze was applied to the trim's crevices with a liner brush to match it to the other painted finishes.

Made to Order

Made to Order

Sun-Baked Hues

Warm woods, natural materials and aged finishes warranted a similarly inviting color palette. Taking her cues from the feel the couple wanted the living spaces to have—fun, arty, and colorful but grounded—Debbie found a line of handmade ceramic tiles in sunny-day hues that inspired the room's zesty colors. Warm yellows mix throughout the backsplash in matte and shiny finishes. A strip of red tile and geometric-patterned accent tiles break up the yellow expanse and add a dash of contemporary style to the rustic-looking tiles. (To learn how Elaine installed her backsplash, see the instructions on page 64.)

Color in the form of floral and subtle geometric-patterned fabrics also keeps things lively in this hardworking space. Over the kitchen window, a scaled-down version of the window treatment in the family room creates cohesion between the living and eating spaces. Because of their unusual size, the glass-paned doors in the eating area called for custom treatments. Elaine selected hobbled Roman shades in the same large-floral-print fabric that was used for the window sheers. A cheery fabric with tiny red and pink flowers on the chair fronts accents the deep red fabric with tan polka dots on the chair backs. Designer details such as red piping around seat cushions as well as an antiqued finish make these affordable chairs look fit for royalty.

Almost a year later, with the renovation complete, Elaine and Mark are elated with the new space. "It was more work than we bargained for," says Elaine of the process, "but I'm so happy with the result. The colors, the wood—everything is so warm and inviting. We've really made this house into our home."



Elaine chose stainless-steel for the faucet, light fixtures and cabinet knobs to create a visual balance that blends contemporary utilitarian elements with old-world style.

Bright IDEA

Elaine's lower kitchen cabinets were oak, which has a distinct grain, and her new upper cabinets are a smooth maple. To make the existing lowers match the newly made uppers, artist Debbie Egizio put her designer mind to work and came up with a solution that looks great and is easy to accomplish. To fill heavy grain, use a putty knife to apply a thin coat of wood filler on top of the grain. After the filler dries, sand the area lightly. "You can see from the side, in the light, if you've covered everything," says Debbie. Then, prime and paint wood as desired.



The somewhat-contemporary chandelier combines red with stainless steel, two design elements in the kitchen. "It's just a little kick of color to pull your eye up," Elaine says.

Made to Order

Manufacturers at a Glance

Anne at Home: Cabinet hardware

Cheng Concrete Exchange: Countertops

Decorative Product Source: Delta faucet

Dunis Studios: Backsplash tile

Home Decorators Collection: Chandelier and dining chairs

Jill Rosenwald: Ceramic vases and bowls

Fypon: Base and ceiling trim

Van Dyke's Restorers: Bun feet

Bridgeview Custom Cabinets (to the trade): Cabinetry and door fronts

Draperies by Design: Hobbled Roman shades



DIY CONCRETE: FROM BASICS TO BEYOND

The homeowners relied heavily on the book *Concrete Countertops* when remodeling their kitchen. With the help of Rocco Egizio and advice from author and designer Fu-Tung Cheng, the couple went step-by-step through the process of making a concrete countertop, from building the mold, mixing and pouring the concrete to curing, grinding, and polishing, and finally, installing the countertop. They also found helpful the book's extensively detailed chapters on troubleshooting, maintenance and the unlimited potential for creative customization. If concrete is your material of choice, this book will become a constant companion in your quest for a truly custom countertop. To learn more about concrete, visit the Cheng Concrete Exchange at www.concreteexchange.com.

Concrete Countertops by Fu-Tung Cheng with Eric Olsen (2002: The Taunton Press, 202 pages, \$29.95). For more information, contact The Taunton Press at 800-477-8727 or visit www.taunton.com.

Shopping List

- Wood filler
- 150-grit sandpaper
- KILZ primer
- Benjamin Moore semigloss paint in Morning Light
- AquaGlaze
- Benjamin Moore flat latex paint in Chocolate Candy Brown
- Paintbrush
- Paint roller
- Sponge brush
- Cloth rags
- Liner brush
- Plastic container
- AquaGuard Satin sealer

Antiqued Finish

Experiment with ratios and practice all paint techniques prior to working on actual pieces.

1 If necessary, smooth out grain with wood filler. Let dry. Sand pieces and wipe with a damp rag or tack cloth.

2 Apply a coat of primer. Let dry.

3 Paint the piece with Morning Light paint. Let dry. Apply a second coat.

4 Mix one part Chocolate Candy Brown to four parts glaze. Experiment with ratios until desired effect is achieved.

5 Antique techniques will vary depending upon the size of the piece. For small-

er pieces, it is easier to use either a sponge brush or rag to cover the entire piece with glaze mixture (see photo A). Wipe away excess glaze with a clean rag (see photo B). Each time you wipe the piece, use a clean portion of the rag or a new rag; otherwise, you will spread the glaze, making the piece darker as you progress. Allow the darker areas to settle into corners or outside edges, which is where they would normally form over time. Wipe door centers and raised areas on other pieces first so they are lighter. For crevices, tightly wrap a clean section of a rag around your finger and wipe slowly with medium pressure along the crevice, lifting to check that a straight line of glaze remains in the crevice (see photo C). Continue wiping excess glaze with clean

part of rag to complete piece. The crevices should be dark, and the entire piece should be tinted with color. Touch up any blank spots in crevices with a liner brush, and wipe away excess with clean rag wrapped around your finger as above. If the piece appears too light, let it dry and reapply glaze mixture sparingly with a rag to areas that need more color.

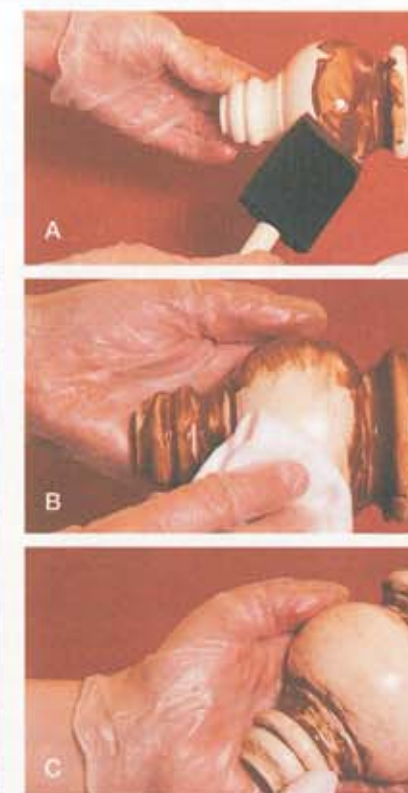
6 Instead of covering a large piece with glaze, age the edges by applying a thin layer of glaze around the perimeter with a rag. If areas end up looking too dark, load a rag or a brush and use it to blend and lightly wipe away some of the dark sections with straight glaze. This is an aging technique, so imperfections are welcome.



Elaine found the island at a secondhand store, but the top was damaged and the hardware unattractive. The top was removed and a mold was made for a concrete countertop. Adding pewter knobs to the drawers gave them a new lease on life. With room for baskets and storage, this island functions much better than the old peninsula. "We use the space much more efficiently," says Elaine.



To give built-in cabinets the same charm as their freestanding brethren, Debbie cut bun feet in half with a handsaw and glued them to the cabinet fronts.



Shopping List

- Dunis Studios ceramic tile in Umbria, Vanilla Malt, New Vanilla Malt, Old Varnish, Summer Squash, Chestnut, Lunar Dust, Aged Mineral Frost, Textured Deep Wicker and Textured Chantrelle and decorative tiles, wave-wall and 1" x 8" liners in Sangria
- Straightedge level
- Tile spacers
- Rubber gloves
- Tec Double Duty ceramic tile adhesive
- Wet saw
- V-notch trowel
- Tri-Poly fortified unsanded grout in Caramel (1631) and sanded grout in Caramel (1531)
- Container for mixing grout
- Float
- Sponges
- Grout sealer
- Caulk

Backsplash Tile

1 Plan tile layout. If using focal-point tiles, start with these when designing layout, as everything else works around them. Use layout that involves the fewest number of tile cuts and allows for rows to be relatively the same width.

2 To determine decorative-tile placement, center tile in desired area, level it, and outline it with pencil. Find tile's center point, and using a straightedge level and a pencil, mark wall with a vertical line (see photo A). To determine horizontal tile placement, use countertop as a guide. To ensure tile placement remains accurate, draw a horizontal guideline halfway up wall parallel with countertop.

3 If using a decorative-tile strip, mark a horizontal line on wall at the desired height. For longer walls that don't have decorative tiles, mark a few vertical lines to create a grid to follow for tile placement.

4 Determine tile-placement sequence. (Debbie used 10 different-colored tiles and wanted the color to be distributed evenly.) Arrange tiles in a row until you have a pleasing composition. Lay first row of tiles following predetermined arrangement. As you lay the second row of tiles, start the next color sequence by staggering the tiles a few apart so that the same colors are not on top of each other.

5 Apply tile adhesive evenly to a small wall section above the counter using a v-notch trowel. Ensure that guidelines are visible (see photo B). Hold trowel at a slight angle. Apply mastic horizontally, troweling off excess, and go over the area again so that trowel lines follow the same direction.

6 Align the first row of tiles with countertop edge, leaving a 1/8" gap by inserting a spacer between counter and tiles. These tiles have uneven edges, so spacers will not stay in place. Leave about a 3/16"-thick space between tiles. Check with a level to ensure proper alignment.

7 You will need to use a wet saw to cut tile to fit next to cabinets, around electrical boxes, etc. If tiles end beneath or alongside a cabinet, cut tiles to fit directly against cabinet, leaving no gap for caulk. Continue applying tile adhesive and tiles to remaining sections. Use bull nose or finished tiles for exposed end rows. Clean up excess tile adhesive with a wet sponge, and let tiles set overnight.

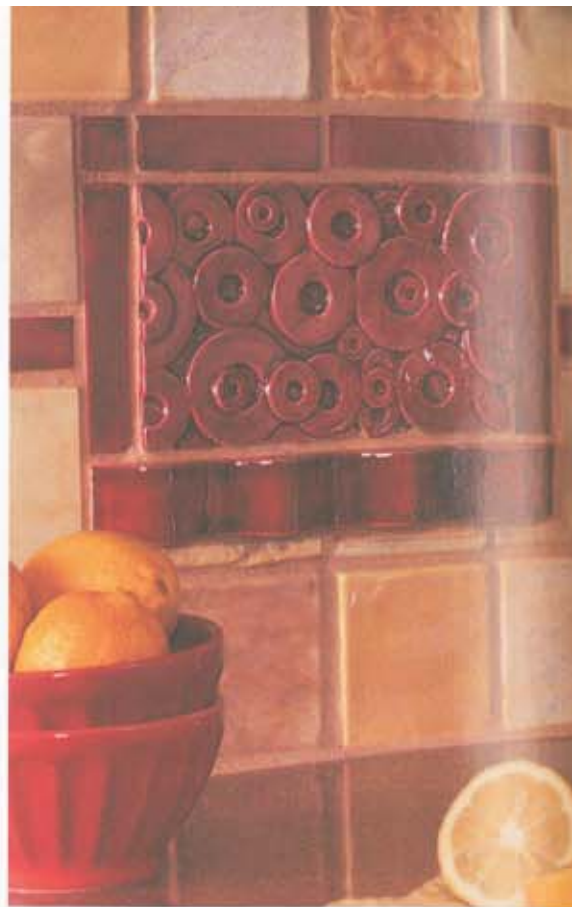
8 Because grout lines vary in thickness, you'll need a custom grout to work for small and large gaps. Mix one part sanded grout to one part unsanded grout in a container. Apply grout to tiles using a float. Gently skim over the tiles, keeping the float at a 45-degree angle (see photo C).

9 Wipe away excess grout with a well-wrung-out sponge to avoid breaking down grout. Let grout cure following manufacturer's instructions. Seal the grout following manufacturer's instructions.

10 Run a tape strip along countertop where the tiles meet the edge. Apply caulk along the edge, and smooth it with your finger. When the caulk has set up, remove the tape.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 74.

Photography Maurice Victoria Projects and Styling Debbie Egizio, Anita Jelcic
Text Amy Rosenstein



Subscribe
RISK-FREE
Today!

PAINT IT *Perfect*

DAZZLING DO-IT-YOURSELF DESIGN



If you are intimidated by paint, let us help! Here at *Decorate with Paint*, we make painting fun, easy and affordable. We'll bring you the hottest techniques, the newest products and the best tricks of the trade to help make your next painting project a success.

We'll show you how to do it all!

- Colorwashing
- Textured treatments
- Stenciling
- Faux finishing and more!

Whether you're a beginning painter or an expert, you'll find innovative finishes for furniture, floors, ceilings and more! **Step-by-step photos** and **free patterns** make every project easier to complete. 4-6 weeks for delivery.

Get every idea-packed issue of *Decorate with Paint* delivered right to your door at a fraction of the cover price! Subscribe Today!

Receive a FREE TRIAL ISSUE when you subscribe to one year (6 issues) of *Decorate with Paint* for only \$19.95.

Your satisfaction is guaranteed or your money back on all unmailed issues.

Subscribe online at www.sampler.com/customerservice, or call 800-829-1926. By mail, send order information to: *Decorate with Paint*, P.O. Box 420659, Palm Coast, FL 32142-8800. Check or credit card accepted. Canada \$25.95, foreign \$30.95 prepaid in U.S. funds. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

