# french seduction

Well-blended textures and a whisper-soft palette give this timeless kitchen its European flavor.

**Field Editor** Heidi Pearson
**Photographer** Werner Straube

Off-white cabinets and blue-gray herringbone tile soften the dark ceiling beams in this Minnesota kitchen. A flirty chandelier balances two handsome iron lanterns.

**DESIGN STRATEGY >>** Distinguish an island with a contrasting countertop to introduce created-over-time appeal. Wood countertops, such as this walnut version, will show nicks and patina over time, adding to their vintage appeal.

**ALTHOUGH THE KITCHEN WAS BUILT FOR A MINNESOTA HOME, IT SPEAKS WITH A FRENCH ACCENT.** Inspired by the simple charms of country French style, designers Marita Simmons and Krysta Gibbons blended the home's formal sensibility with the casual tone of a centuries-old château to create a cooking zone that's both elegant and welcoming.

The design duo worked from the ground up—first convincing the homeowners that a light white-oak floor with wide planks was a must. "The lightness of the floor feels very French, yet relaxed and simple," Simmons says. The oak's soft amber hue is balanced by dark ceiling beams and a dark walnut countertop on the island prep area. "The countertop isn't stained to achieve that color," Gibbons says. "It's just oiled. You wouldn't get that same richness using maple."

Rather than stark white cabinets that might have made the room feel cold, Simmons and Gibbons steered the homeowners toward off-white enamel-painted cabinets for a softer look. Bracket-style feet distinguish the toe-kicks, and the glass-door cabinets feature scalloped arches. Ornate pilasters embellish the island, while elaborate crown molding adds formality up top. The cabinets stop just short of the dark ceiling beams to mimic designs of the past. "In historic French country homes, the beams would already be there; then you'd bring in the cabinetry," Simmons explains. "It lends an authentic feel."

The designers' layered approach gives the room an evolved-over-time flavor. And yet, nothing feels overdone or overwrought. Restraint, says Simmons, is the key to this kitchen's understated elegance. "That beautiful herringbone backsplash above the range would not have had nearly the same presence if we'd run it around the entire perimeter of the room," she notes. To help the tile stand out, she and Gibbons chose simple wood panels for the rest of the backsplash and had them painted to match the cabinets.

Although the overall look is gently aged, the kitchen's functionality is fully up-to-date. The appliance suite includes a separate cooktop and wall ovens, which creates a distinct baking zone and allows cookware to be stored under the cooktop. The two-sink floor plan accommodates multiple cooks and ensures easy entertaining. Just past a breakfast table that sits at one end of the island, a wall of glass doors opens wide, marrying the kitchen to an outdoor living room and poolside terrace.

Comfortable but composed, this timeless kitchen proves that an otherwise formal American home can relax in style when desired—and capture the romance of centuries-old architecture.

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**OPPOSITE** Bracket-style feet, pretty nickel hardware, and a wood-panel backsplash give cabinets a furniturelike feel. Horizontal planks back the glass-front cabinets, while a display area above the range hood helps lighten the look. **ABOVE** A bridge-style faucet and apron-front sink add vintage flavor. Counter-to-ceiling windows continue the home's elegant millwork.

**ABOVE LEFT** Subway-style tile in a herringbone pattern introduces visual texture above the range, without screaming for attention. **ABOVE** An integrated refrigerator pairs with double ovens to introduce modern function near the island prep area. **LEFT** Glass-front cabinets feature scalloped arches for a decorative flourish. A doorway (seen at right) leads into the walk-through pantry, which connects the kitchen to the mudroom. **OPPOSITE** A built-in sideboard provides an elegant backdrop for the breakfast area. Glass insets reflect light from south-facing glass doors across the room (not shown).

# Dream Kitchens & Baths™

**KEY**
**[T]** To the Trade. Not available to the general public. Contact a design professional for help.
**[P]** Paint Color. Paint colors depicted might vary from manufacturers' colors. Use names or numbers as a starting point. To get the exact color you see, take the page to a paint retailer.

## EUROPEAN INFLUENCE

### French Seduction

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**Residential design:** Jeff Murphy, Murphy & Co. Design, Buffalo, Minnesota; 612/470-5511; *murphycodesign.com.* **Interior design:** Marita Simmons and Krysta Gibbons, Kipling House Interiors, Minneapolis; 612/803-9544; *kiplinghouse.com.* **Cabinetry** custom enameled—Cabinetry Refined, Inc., Minneapolis; 612/695-6386; *cabinetryrefined.com.* **Cabinet paint** Bone White—Benjamin Moore; 888/236-6667; *benjaminmoore.com* [P]. **Hardware** in polished nickel—Restoration Hardware; 800/910-9836; *restorationhardware.com.* **Countertop** Delicatus with eased edge—Amsum & Ash, Minneapolis; 763/571-8400; *amsumash.com.* **Backsplash tile** Gramercy Park in Wedgewood Blue, similar items available—Walker Zanger; 877/611-0199; *walkerzanger.com.* **Flooring** hand-scraped white oak with custom Tromso finish—WD Design, Laona, Wisconsin; 877/674-2210; *wdflooring.com.* **Perimeter faucet** bridge in polished nickel, **island faucet** single lever in polished nickel—Perrin & Rowe, presented by Rohl; 800/777-9762; *rohlhome.com.* **Wall ovens, cooktop**—Wolf Appliance, Inc.; 800/332-9513; *wolfappliances.com.* **Coffeemaker**—Miele, Inc.; 800/463-0260; *mieleusa.com.* **Island lanterns** French lantern—Charles Edwards; enquiries@charlesedwards.com; *charlesedwards.com.* **Chandelier**—Julie Neill Designs, New Orleans; 504/899-4201; *julieneill.com.* **Light at sink** Randolph in aged brass—Hudson Valley Lighting, Inc.; 800/814-3993; *hudsonvalleylighting.com.*

### English Beauty

Pages 20–23

**Interior design:** Linda McDougald, Linda McDougald Design/Postcard from Paris Home, Greenville, South Carolina; 864/233-6622; *postcardfromparis.com.* **Cabinetry and range hood design**—Linda McDougald, Linda McDougald Design/Postcard from Paris Home, Greenville, South Carolina; 864/233-6622; *postcardfromparis.com.* **Cabinetry and range hood fabrication, countertops** Caesar Ivory limestone—Florez Fine Woodworking, Greenville, South Carolina; 864/233-5583. **Field backsplash tile** Architectonics in Alpaca Gloss Crackle—Waterworks; 800/998-2284; *waterworks.com.* **Range niche tile** Tantrum in River—Sonoma Tilemakers, Inc.; *sonomatilemakers.com* for a dealer near you. **Cabinet paint** Foothills SW7514—The Sherwin-Williams Co.; 800/474-3794; *sherwin-williams.com* [P]. **Range** Chateau 120 in stainless steel with nickel and brushed stainless-steel trim—La Cornue; 800/457-1356; *lacornueusa.com.* **Refrigerator** BI48S/S/PH in stainless steel, **refrigerator drawers** 700BR—Sub-Zero, Inc.; 800/222-7820; *subzero.com.* **Oven** H 4084 Speed Oven from the Master Chef series, **steam oven** DB 4084, **warming drawer** ESW4084-14, **coffeemaker** CVA 4066, **dishwasher** from the Diamante series with exposed controls G2143SCSS—Miele, Inc.; 800/463-0260; *mieleusa.com.* **Apron-front sink** RC3018 in Biscuit from the Shaws Original collection, **bridge faucet** Perrin & Rowe U.4719 in polished nickel, **pot filler faucet at range** Country Kitchen A1451 with five-spoke handle in polished nickel—Rohl; 800/777-9762; *rohlhome.com.*

### Welcome Patina

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**Interior design:** Jennifer Dyer, Jeneration Interiors, West Hollywood, California; jd@jenerationinteriors.com; *jenerationinteriors.com.* **Cabinet refinishing**—Larry Harp and Jon Innis, L&J Contractors, Cookeville, Tennessee; 931/260-4227; *landjcontractors.com.* **Knotty alder cabinetry, granite perimeter countertops, walnut island countertop, and travertine flooring** original to home—contact local kitchen construction professionals. **Porcelain tile for backsplash**—Arizona Tile & Stone; 480/893-9393; *arizonatile.com.* **Sinks**—Kohler Co.; 800/456-4537; *us.kohler.com.* **Faucets**—Rohl; 800/777-9762; *rohlhome.com.* **Range**—Viking Range Corp.; 888/845-4641; *vikingrange.com.* **Cast-stone range hood**—Francois & Co.; 888/313-3237; *francoisandco.com.* **Refrigerator integrated with cabinetry**—Sub-Zero, Inc.; 800/222-7820; *subzero.com.* **Dishwasher**—Bosch; 800/944-2904; *boschappliances.com.* **Banquette benches and table** custom—Jeneration Interiors, West Hollywood, California; *jenerationinteriors.com.* **Window treatments at banquette** custom—Evelyn's Custom Draperies, Inc., Scottsdale, Arizona; 602/273-7347. **Barstools**—Erika Brunson, Los Angeles; 323/931-3225; *erikabrunson.com.* **Banquette chairs** vintage—homeowners' collection. **Blue vase on table, white ceramic jar, wood charger, pizza cutting board, blue napkins**—Pottery Barn; 800/922-5507; *potterybarn.com* (product line varies). **Glass vase on table, cutting board, copper pot, utensil holder, yellow colander**—HomeGoods; 800/614-4663; *homegoods.com* (product line varies). **Cheese stand, silverware, yellow dish towel, white plates**—Target; 800/800-8800; *target.com* (product line varies).

## CONTEMPORARY CHIC

### Organic Blend

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**Design:** Vin Leger, EAG Studio, 2443 Fillmore St., Suite 215, San Francisco, CA 94115; 415/300-0585; *eagstudio.com.* **Design of cabinetry throughout and island**—Vin Leger, EAG Studio, San Francisco; 415/300-0585; *eagstudio.com.* **Fabrication of glass-front cabinets and acrylic cabinets** Parapan Acrylic Option—Element Designs; 877/332-3396; *element-designs.com.* **Fabrication of cabinetry at storage wall**—Etagere Cabinetry, San Francisco; 415/822-4939; *etageresf.com.* **Countertops for island and storage wall** Cinder, **backsplash and perimeter countertop** Light Gray with 3-inch eased edge—CaesarStone US; 877/978-2789; *caesarstoneus.com.* **Kitchen cabinet hardware** Profile Square pull, **hardware on storage wall cabinets**—Mockett & Co., Inc.; 800/523-1269; *mockett.com.* **Hardware on floor-to-ceiling glass pantry** Mercury—Handles Accessories; *handlesaccessories.com.* **Pullout baskets**—Häfele America Co.; 800/423-3531; *hafele.com/us.* **Island sink** Precision Super Single undermount sink—Blanco America, Inc.; 800/451-5782; *blancoamerica.com.* **Island faucet** swivel kitchen faucet with Laminar Flow—KWC Faucets, Inc.; 888/592-3287; *kwcamerica.com.* **Perimeter sink**—Julien, Inc.; 800/461-3377; *julien.ca.* **Perimeter sink faucet**—Kohler Co.; 800/456-4537; *us.kohler.com.* **Refrigerator** Freedom Fresh Food Column from the Professional series—Thermador; 800/735-4328; *thermador.com.* **Cooktop** five-burner gas cooktop with Hexa grates, **dishwasher** Energy Star Diamante Plus with cutlery tray—Miele, Inc.; 800/463-0260; *mieleusa.com.* **Cooktop hood**—Modern-Aire Ventilating; 866/731-2007; *modernaire.com.* **Microwave oven**—GE Appliances; 800/626-2000; *geappliances.com.* **Window**—Fleetwood Windows and Doors; 800/736-7363; *fleetwoodusa.com.* **Wood flooring** custom oak—contact local flooring professionals. **Barstools** Pam in Yellow—Ligne Roset; 800/297-6738; *ligne-roset-usa.com.* **Chairs at bay window** Anda and Plural—B&B Italia, USA, Inc.; 800/872-1697; *bebitalia.it.* **Side table**—West Elm; 866/428-6468; *westelm*