



ABOVE: Add a chandelier in the kitchen for a fancy touch. BELOW: Britt and Roxanne Visser can prepare meals while watching their kids play in the sunroom.

Five-Star Service

This kitchen turns up the heat with an exceptional island and distinctive touches. By **Kiki Titterud**

This large space can host an entire high school graduating class, yet it's intimate enough for a family breakfast. How did Britt and Roxanne Visser accomplish this feat in their remodeled kitchen?

Give Them Something To Talk About

First, they came up with a signature piece that suited both their style and needs. With the help of builder Chris Ettel, the Vissers created an island that's all the gossip in Virginia Beach. It has everything you need, including the kitchen sink. At one end, a countertop-height rectangle of granite offers plenty of prep space. One side boasts a wine rack and cabinet storage

while the other holds trash, recycling, and the dishwasher. But it's the end that has everyone talking. Here, an attached round granite tabletop, supported by a pedestal stained to match the island, steps down to table height. The Visser family enjoys eating breakfast here every day.

It Doesn't Stop There The rest of the kitchen surrounds this innovative island in a U shape. This configuration provides Roxanne plenty of space to cook family meals and set up stations for food, drinks, and desserts when she entertains. Roxanne's space is zoned for how she uses it. One wall is for cooking, another for food storage, and the third for dishware and display. The key



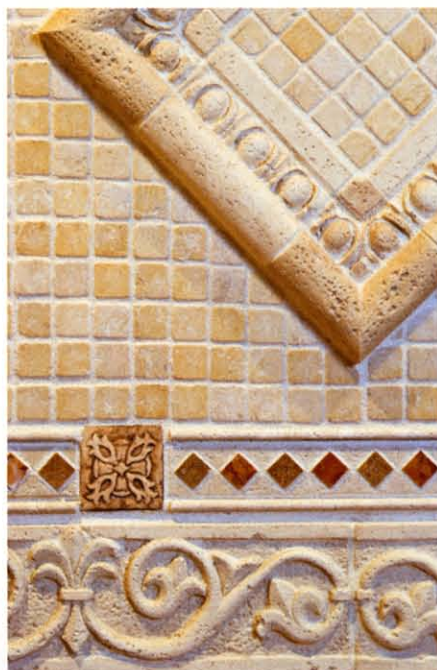
It's in the Details . . .



Handcrafted ceramic dishes by Florida artist Susan Painter (www.susanpainterpottery.com) bring this kitchen to life.



There is no overlooking the amazing attention to detail in the crown molding. Dentil molding, which looks like teeth, gives this family kitchen a formal style.



A mix of small square tiles and carved borders creates a unique backsplash that complements the intricate details found elsewhere in the kitchen.



Use otherwise leftover space to add more storage. Here, wine bottles are separated and organized in sections under the island workspace.

to making it all work is ample floorspace between the island and perimeter so there's never a traffic jam when walking, working, or entertaining.

Not all Function If there were a Miss Kitchen pageant, this one would be crowned without a doubt. Notice how the cabinet heights vary, creating interest at the ceiling and drawing the eye toward the many layers of molding. The tops of the china cabinet and cooktop have the greatest amount of detail. This thoughtfulness creates furniture-like pieces in the cabinetry. The mantelpiece above the cooktop is a shelf for display, simply dressed here with candlesticks and a bright piece of handcrafted pottery.

Top-notch Tile The backsplash is a great place to get creative because you don't need a lot of tile. Adding trim, mosaics, ornamental pieces, and color to standard tumbled marble turns blah into beautiful. The backsplash becomes art. Trust us: You won't regret paying extra attention here. A neat backsplash can really take a kitchen up a level.

Planned Down to the Last Light The lighting in this kitchen is so smart you won't even notice it's special. (That's what makes it good.) First, every switch has a dimmer, including the can lights. This helps set the mood, saves more energy than you might think (up to a 40% savings when dimmed halfway), and extends the life of the bulbs.

In a good lighting plan, there are light sources at every level. Recessed cans in the ceiling brighten the whole kitchen; one even accents the plate on the mantel. Task lighting under the upper cabinets illuminates the work surfaces. The beautiful yet simple chandelier provides a decorative touch. Lights inside the glass-front cabinets help highlight the Vissers' colorful dishware collection. ●

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