



Take a Second Look

This 1929 kitchen looks and feels period-appropriate but sports the functionality and people-friendly features of a 21st-century home

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Cabinets Christopher Peacock's Lambourne Collection combines natural ash with painted cabinets—in Farrow & Ball's "Mouse's Back." **Sink** The pro-style pull-down faucet is from Rohl's Modern Architectural Series. **Countertops** are Caesarstone's "Calacatta Nuvo" quartz. **Hardware** Leather straps and satin-brass pulls add to the vintage look.

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Historic homes often have some squirrely kitchen design features—leftovers from bygone days when hired staff was the norm, along with root cellars and dumbwaiters.

Taking down walls and removing low-hanging archways were the first orders of business when designer Christopher Peacock renovated the kitchen of a 1929 suburban Chicago house for the 2015 Lake Forest Showhouse and Gardens.

“Originally, there was an alcove with a big arch hiding a window,” he says. “It was a beautiful window, and yet you couldn’t see it. It was a missed opportunity.”

Removing walls and doors and enlarging doorways transformed the maze of rooms into one 16x22-foot light-filled

space befitting today’s kitchen-centric families. “We removed the big archway on the alcove by the kitchen sink, and immediately that brought all this light into the space,” Peacock says.

Although the designer updated the floor plan, he remained true to the 1920s and ’30s feel of the house, furnishing it with traditional raised-panel-style cabinets in taupe-painted and natural-ash finishes. “I love white kitchens, but I wanted to get away from that and use this beautiful color,” he says. “This becomes a fresh interpretation of a traditional cabinet.”

The island base and the hood above the range are painted off-white. “I like to have these negative/positive moments. Too much of one thing or color gets boring.”

Peacock introduced warm satin-brass hardware on the cabinets with stylized bin pulls and round knobs mounted on square escutcheons. The light above the island—a modern take on a traditional billiard-table pendant—sports a brass finish too.

“It all has to work together, and the one thing that connects everything here is the brass hardware,” Peacock explains.

Taking advantage of one of the kitchen’s original oddities, Peacock set a furniture-like cabinet and coffee bar in an alcove to the left of the range. A mirrored back behind the shelves bounces light and adds a ▶

Island The “Shearwater Twin Billiard” fixture from Remains Lighting illuminates the island, topped with Caesarstone’s “Vanilla Noir” quartz. “Shelby” bar stools are from Pearson.

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Range wall A Jenn-Air range and brass-trimmed hood tuck into a niche lined with Caesarstone's "Calacatta Nuvo" quartz. Period-appropriate "Manoir Gray" French oak floors are from Exquisite Surfaces. **Coffee bar** A mix of painted and stained finishes gives the cabinet furniture styling.



touch of glamour—"without being too grand," Peacock says.

Opposite the range wall is the cleanup zone with a large sink under the newly exposed window. Mullions painted black accent the elegant original windows.

To balance the asymmetrical window placement, Peacock designed a hutch-like cabinet just to the left of the sink. Glass doors on the upper cabinets echo the window and brighten the corner.

"It's by the sink and one of the dishwashers so you can wash the dishes and easily put them away. It becomes a cleanup area that is also very pretty," Peacock says.

An awkward niche to the right of the sink was converted into a handy storage spot to slide in countertop appliances such

as a toaster and stand mixer. "I really tried to frame the window and make it the feature," the designer says. "Then I introduced the ash—on the vertical slide-in trays and drawer fronts. That connects the two sides of the room."

Two refrigerators with lower freezers are integrated into the cabinetry and flank the doorway to the breakfast room.

"You can have beautiful things in a kitchen, but there should never be a dominant feature. If there is, then there needs to be something to offset it," Peacock says. "Rooms should feel complete and well-rounded as opposed to being all about one piece. I love balance." ■

Kitchen designer: Christopher Peacock

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