

cottage kitchens



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Vintage Charm and *Modern Flair*

A 1925 cottage gets a modern makeover that preserves its classic charm.

Black lower cabinets add warmth to the kitchen, while the white walls keep the room bright. Chelly installed flush inset cabinet doors and drawers to give the space a vintage vibe, but mixed in a Carrara marble backsplash and quartz concrete-colored countertops for a modern touch.



PHOTO BY PHIL WENTWORTH

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Every space in the breakfast nook is used to full advantage, with cabinets on either side of the room that store linens and other items that aren't often used. The single-pane glass windows are original to the home, but Chelly restored them and painted the trim black for a modern touch.



PHOTO BY PHIL WENTWORTH

One of the advantages of living in an older cottage is the charm of the structure.

But when it's time to renovate, it can be a challenge to preserve its character while making functional changes. After 14 years of living in her 1925 English cottage revival home in Portland, Oregon, designer Chelly Wentworth, owner of C Change Design, decided it was time to make some significant changes to her kitchen.

FENG SHUI

“When we bought the house, the previous homeowners had remodeled the kitchen, and it was not done by a designer,” says Chelly. “They installed floral cabinets, Corian countertops and 99-cent red vinyl composition tiles.” But the aesthetic wasn't the only issue. The space was small to begin with, and the layout wasn't helping. “It felt closed in,” she says.

Without adding any square footage, they opened up the kitchen by moving around appliances. “We switched the location of the refrigerator and the pantry with the hood and range,” says Chelly. This change created some breathing room in the kitchen and opened up wall space for a tile backsplash and hanging racks. They talked about knocking down the archway to open up the kitchen to the breakfast nook, but Chelly was adamant about saving this original feature. “People told me to knock out the wall, but I wouldn't do it ... I kept the wall and made the room more functional with cabinets,” she says.

MODERN MATERIALS

Though moving their appliances created a substantial change, they also improved the entire look of the space by switching out materials, opting for a modern cottage farmhouse vibe with new stainless steel appliances. Out went the cheap red vinyl, and in went reclaimed Fish Tail Oak flooring.

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Save vs. Splurge

SAVE. When you need to save money, make sure it's not on something that will affect the function of your kitchen. "Save on things that you may need or want in the moment but that can easily be replaced later," says Chelly. This includes chairs, tables, light fixtures and even cabinet hardware. If they break or go out of style, you can easily switch them out.

SPLURGE. Function is the most important feature in a kitchen, so ensure that the foundation is reliable. "Spend money on the pieces that are going to be attached," says Chelly. This can include countertops, cabinetry, quality appliances and even tile installation. "You want good craftsmanship and good materials," she says.

The freestanding hood and stove fit perfectly into the corner that used to house the refrigerator and pantry. There was no room for shelves or cabinets, so Chelly chose clever storage options, such as narrow pullout drawers on either side of the range that house her spices and utensils.

"It's made of reclaimed shipping pallets that are made from tropical oak," says Chelly. "It's strong, and we fell in love with its character." They tried using sustainable and local sources as much as possible, and they succeeded. Their Vent-A-Hood and walnut-plank breakfast nook countertops are also from local Oregon suppliers.

PERIOD PICKS

Even more important than changing the look and functionality of the kitchen was preserving the integrity of the home. "My philosophy with my home is to do one room at a time and do it right, without destroying the character of the house," Chelly says. "I wanted to preserve that character and still get everything into the small space." Rather than install wall-to-wall cabinets, Chelly relies on pullout drawers and hanging racks for storage and to keep her countertops clear. "It's difficult to find pot-and-pan storage in an old kitchen, so hanging racks make it easy," she says.

Chelly also added vintage features, such as flush inset cabinet doors and drawers in keeping with the home's period. "I used molding profiles to match the original millwork in the rest of the house,"



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Clever Storage

Old, charming cottages can often be lacking in space. Here are some storage options to keep your tools accessible without overcrowding your counters.

- 1. PULLOUT DRAWERS.** Deep cupboards won't be of service if you can't reach the items in the back. Install pullout drawers in your cabinets and cupboards so you can use every inch of space and still have access to everything.
- 2. HANGING RACKS.** Pots and pans take up a lot of space, and they can be a pain to stack in a cupboard. Save space on your walls for hanging racks to keep your most-used pots and pans accessible. You can also use them for spatulas and ladles to save room on your counters.
- 3. LOW CABINETS.** Storage doesn't have to stay in the kitchen area. If you have a breakfast nook, install some low cabinets that will serve as storage space and choose a material that will suit your needs for the top. For example, if you need space for food prep, install butcher block countertops, or you can use the surface for décor pieces.

[ABOVE LEFT] Chelly installed cabinets in the breakfast nook for extra storage. The cabinets on the right wall are used as a home bar with wine accessories and shakers stored in the base cabinets, and mixes and glassware stored above.

[OPPOSITE] Moving the refrigerator to this side of the kitchen made room for a pantry and extra storage cabinets. Chelly uses pullout drawers in the cabinets to allow easy access to appliances and uses tray dividers to organize her kitchen supplies. "I put the microwave in a pullout drawer instead of on the counter so it's not in the way," she says.

she says. Rather than replace the original painted-shut windows in the breakfast nook, Chelly simply restored them and painted the trim black to add a modern touch. The black she used on the trim is the same black she used to paint the lower cabinets. "I stuck with neutrals for longevity and gave the kitchen a punch with the contrasting cabinet colors," Chelly says. "I figured I could be bold and change it over time if I want." Mixing modern touches and classic cottage charm, she created the perfect blend of past and present. **[E]**

SEE SOURCES, PAGE 128.