Anything GOES

KITCHENS TODAY CAN BE ALMOST ANY STYLE, BUT THEY MUST BE BEAUTIFUL—AND HARD WORKING!

“Red has always been my favorite color,” says Cindy Leet. As a matter of fact, when Cindy and her husband, Allen, moved to this Leawood Forest Estates home 11 years ago, she updated the tired, laminate 1980s kitchen by painting the walls red. But she’s since discovered that it’s easier to work with a more neutral base and add pops of her favorite color as an accent. When the Leets knew they were ready for a real renovation, they approached Kathy Euston of Euston Kitchen Co. to handle the project on the recommendation of a friend. “I knew I wanted a farmhouse look,” Cindy says.
"Kathy was wonderful because she pulled all the elements together—white cabinets, inset drawers, glass doors—that gave the look I wanted." And from start to finish, the project only took two-and-a-half months. It's the perfect neutral background for the accents of red and turquoise that Cindy adds with furniture, fabric and accessories. She's an ardent do-it-yourselfer, including painting an old pine armoire with turquoise chalk paint. "I like to paint, sew, strip wallpaper—do things myself if I can," Cindy says. The end result is a kitchen that's fresh, colorful and a real reflection of the Leets' style.

Opposite, top: The Leets' contractor, Greg Clayton, designed and built the bookcases and fireplace surround. Opposite: A GE Monogram stove holds pride of place in the new kitchen. This page, clockwise from top: Kathy Euston designed the imposing stove hood. Counter stools are from Target. Red accessories, including a lipstick-red KitchenAid mixer, stand out against the honed Labrador granite countertops. Wicker furniture and fabrics from Nell Hills complete the seating area opposite the island.

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The homeowners built this Prairie Village contemporary home 26 years ago, and "it was time to refresh," says the wife. "I've been wanting to do this for many years, and I finally wore my husband down," she says with a laugh. "And this time I wanted it done with a real kitchen designer." The couple approached Portfolio Kitchen & Home and rave about their experience with David Zebley. "He's a calm, easy-going presence to work with, and that made it easier to bring what I wanted to the picture," she says. "There was always a solution or an alternative." The original kitchen was white laminate with appliances from that era. The fireplace was faced in white tile with a standard hearth. "My husband and I wanted to raise up the firebox," she says, to make it easier to view from the dining table and the kitchen proper. The redesigned fireplace is faced with back-painted textured glass that has a silvery look which balances the stainless steel cabinetry on the opposite wall. Slab Venatino marble countertops and backsplashes are used throughout as a beautiful contrast to the custom alder wood cabinetry. And is she pleased with the result? "Absolutely!" she enthuses. "I'm to the moon. It's like a dream come true!"

Above: Most of the stainless-steel appliances are built into one wall; an alder wood bookshelf insert provides contrast. Left: An articulated Kohler faucet at the island sink.

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Clockwise from top: In the dining area, a chandelier and contemporary chairs from Museo boost the design quotient. A built-in coffeemaker, refrigerator drawers and extra storage and countertops were added where windows used to be. Two Mirabelle single-handle pre-rinse faucets serve the custom-fabricated stainless steel sink.
Bill and Sharon Schalekamp are inveterate DIYers, having renovated almost every room in their Mission Hills home since 1984, when they moved in. They knew it was time to tackle the kitchen though, Sharon says with a laugh, "when all our appliances started breaking down!" So last year, the Schalekamps began planning the redo. "I knew exactly how I wanted it to look," Sharon says. It was important to find a kitchen designer who would work with them on the redo. "We're used to doing a lot of the stuff ourselves," she says. So they called on Pam Vernon of Classic Kitchens. "I really can't say enough about Pam," Sharon says. "She was a great match; she was patient and helped us work out the details." Bill did most of the demolition, electrical and plumbing work, while Sharon cut the 12-inch by 12-inch marble tiles they selected for the backsplash down to 6-inch by 12-inch size and then did the installation. "I wasn't going to sacrifice quality," Sharon says. And the finished kitchen is proof of that.

This page, clockwise from top: A view from the family room through to the kitchen. Open shelves hold family treasures. The Wood-Mode cabinetry came in the exact shade of green that Sharon has used throughout the house. The antique seed cabinet came from Bill's grandfather's Rexall Drugstore in Iowa. Bill remembers stocking it as a child.

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The kitchen opens to the dining area, which the Schalekamps added on in 1987. The island countertop is Calcutta gold marble; the surrounding countertops are Absolute Black granite in a suede finish.