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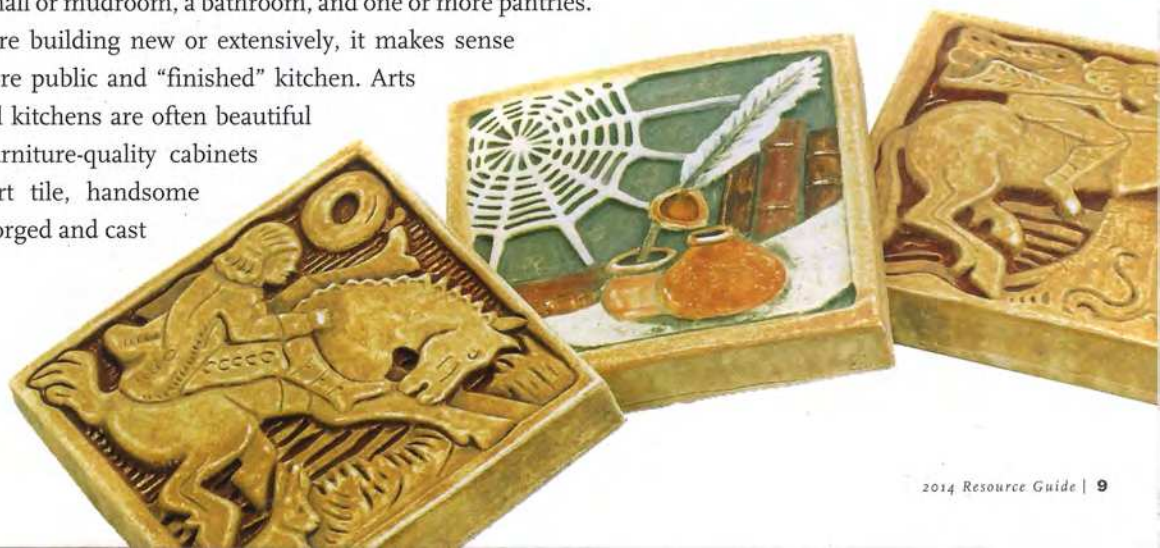
revival KITCHENS & baths; tile

ORIGINAL OLD-HOUSE KITCHENS were often plain and utilitarian—with painted cabinets, a floor of linoleum or softwood (or occasionally tile), and a washable wainscot of beadboard or white tile. Most bungalows, American Foursquares, and Tudor Revival houses had kitchens built for use by the housewife (not servants). Kitchens may have been small, but they were integrated into the main floor plan, and they had built-ins and electricity. Putting a sympathetic new kitchen into these houses is easier than remodeling a colonial or Victorian one. Even if you splurge on hardware and lighting, a true “period” kitchen is an easy and affordable room to re-create.

Many people remodeling older homes do not, however, want a bungalow-era kitchen. The kitchen is no longer a utility room, but the center of the house. It may have a second prep area, a wet bar, a household office, a breakfast area, and a TV. As in the past, related rooms include a back hall or mudroom, a bathroom, and one or more pantries. Whether you are building new or extensively, it makes sense to design a more public and “finished” kitchen. Arts & Crafts revival kitchens are often beautiful spaces with furniture-quality cabinets accented by art tile, handsome light fixtures, forged and cast

BELOW: New tiles from Tile Restoration Center include ‘Horse with Rider and Hare’ (designed by Ernest Batchelder) and ‘Inkwell’ (center, by Claycraft Potteries). Relief tiles are hand-painted.

OPPOSITE: In a historic California house, a kitchen built for practicality is filled with artisan details. Hanging lamp by Sue Johnson.





ABOVE: Classic materials include the hex-tile floor and subway-tile wainscot in this Belle Epoque bathroom designed by David Heide Design Studio for a Foursquare house. The look fits any fine home ca. 1890s through about 1930.

hardware, and decorative textiles.

Still, you want the kitchen to fit the house. Don't be tempted to over-scale the room. Before you assume you need to add on, try borrowing space from a back hall or pantry and keep to the original footprint. Additions should be proportionate to the house; sometimes just a few feet, bumped out on the rear or side of the house with windows for extra light, is enough.

Keep it simple. The room will have a more timeless look if details are borrowed from historic kitchens, or the pantry or hall, rather than copied from high-style details in the dining room. Besides, a simple kitchen is easier to

clean! Consider using several different counter surfaces. That's historical, and it's practical. Pick something nonporous near sink and stove, butcher-block for prep, perhaps a marble slab for baking or pizza making. You may even save money by purchasing remnant or salvaged material for small areas.

Common sense should prevail: Why spring for professional appliances if you eat out five nights a week and use a microwave on the other two? On the other hand, if you're always in the kitchen making a mess, don't use fussy, hard-to-clean details and materials. ■

—Patricia Poore