

# kensington kitchen





Kensington, a streetcar suburb of San Diego, California, is a collection of five original subdivisions that began in 1910. With its stone gateways, ornamental lighting, and curving streets, the pedestrian-oriented neighborhood is known for its historic, California-style single-family homes. The houses were solidly constructed, are in excellent condition today, and many have been formally designated as historic resources. Kensington residents are proud of their community's historic origins and work hard to preserve its image.

The owners of this one-hundred-year-old, 1,689-square-foot Kensington home wanted to add functionality and space to their kitchen while honoring the original character of the building. "Many of the early-1900 homes had white kitchens, so we decided to use black and white as the basic palette for the design," explains Tatiana Machado-Rosas, senior interior designer at San Diego-based Jackson Design and Remodeling. "Two walls were removed to create an expansive space encompassing the kitchen and dining areas," says residential designer Chris Ashby. The kitchen and dining areas now open to the family room, creating a great room feel and making it comfortable for guests to interact with the homeowner hosts as they are cooking. The open floor plan also allows more natural light into the space.

The white cabinets are semi-custom and blend with the white furniture pieces that are integrated into the space. "The cabinet design has a vintage look that is more in keeping with the era of the home," says Machado-Rosas. "The drawers and doors are inset and the bases are footed to present a furniture-like appearance. There are plenty of organized

storage options between the cabinets and the custom-built storage areas throughout the kitchen." A glass door shelving unit is nestled into a large arched niche. Another small arched niche is on the wall next to the peninsula and holds cooking essentials while adding a decorative touch to the area. "We used several arches in the design to reflect the home's Spanish influence," adds assistant designer Alison Green, who also worked on the project. "Architectural touches like arches also add a certain charm to a space."

The original dining room had wainscoting along the walls from when the home was built one hundred years ago. The designers maintained that wainscoting and then added some to the back of the peninsula so that it would look original. Countertops are quartz with a marble look. "This makes them easier to maintain and yet continues the vintage feel," says Machado-Rosas. "The existing oak wood floorboards in the dining room were meticulously duplicated and continued into the kitchen for visual continuity." The flow of the wood floor, along with the light cabinets and open floor plan, help to make this 352-square-foot space look much larger than it is.

Details, such as the niches, a collection of vintage pottery, antique-style lighting, the wrought iron chandelier, and the curved arch between the kitchen area and the family room are reminiscent of early 1900s California design; however, the bold black hood over the peninsula, the concrete-tile backsplash with a striking geometric pattern, concealed appliances, and the simple lines of the space have a more modern feel. "The design fuses classic, vintage-inspired elements with the modernity of a black-and-white color theme and clean lines," says Machado-Rosas, "to perfectly blend the new design with its historic surroundings." *Written by Carolyn M. Runyon. Photography by Jackson Design and Remodeling. [YHL](#)*

## color coordinated

A basic black-and-white kitchen lends itself easily to any holiday decor. Gold, deep blue, silver, and, in this case, red and green work beautifully with this neutral palette. These homeowners used subtle touches to evoke holiday cheer. Here's how.

**1** The table centerpiece has small candle hurricanes with artificial cranberries and white, round candles. Larger hurricanes hold "snow-dusted" pinecones, nuts, and more red cranberries. A cream linen runner is covered with greenery, pomegranates, and a flowing white ribbon.

**2** Covered glass containers on the countertop are filled with holiday cheer. A large apothecary jar holds peppermint sticks with bright artificial cranberries, a medium one contains red apples, and a smaller one displays white meringues.

**3** Because red is a year-round accent color for this kitchen, the owners included details such as a red colander filled with green artichokes, a plate of gingersnaps, and several eggs on red accent napkins. They also left out their red stand mixer, cutting board, and some prep tools . . . just to help continue their red holiday theme.

