



let us entertain you

For frequent party-givers in San Francisco,
an elegant kitchen is the heart of the home . . . even when
there's no cooking on the menu

It's easy to imagine guests drifting into this formal yet warm and inviting room, with its classic moldings, carved corbels, and gleaming marble surfaces, without a clue that they are actually in a kitchen. Not a work-a-day kitchen, mind you, but a space every bit as elegant as the formal entry hall and living and dining rooms through which they've wandered to get here. It's exactly the effect the homeowners, Drago Herman and Shirin Oshidari, asked the design team at Clive Christian San Francisco to conjure inside their gracious 1899 Pacific Heights Victorian home.

High ceilings invited the designer to showcase a dramatic chandelier and the classic moldings that are a Clive Christian trademark.



Elegantly carved corbels repeat from the mantel over the cooktop to the center island. Concealed lighting makes the glass-fronted cabinets appear to float between the high ceiling and the countertops below.

A Touch of Class

PLAY UP THE FLOORS: Detail hardwood flooring in contrasting wood borders that follow the contours of the cabinets.

APPLY PERIOD DETAILS: Use true-divided lights in cabinet doors to enhance the antique attitude.

ADD DECORATIVE ACCENTS: Display non-working art objects, such as antique faience, across an open shelf.



They certainly turned to the right people: With its roots deep in London, the company represents nearly three decades of devotion to upscale quality in design and manufacturing of elements for the kitchen—and beyond: Clive Christian now designs for every room in the house. Which may inform the

drawing-room grandeur translated to the back of the Herman/Oshidari house by San Francisco Design Director Alona Sahar.

“This family was interested in the kitchen as a place to hang out,” she explains. “They don’t cook much—they have a professional cook for that—but they entertain a lot. So there are open doors from the main entrance inward, to let people flow naturally into the family room/kitchen.”



(above) Stainless steel adds a 21st-century gleam to the calm attitude invoked by the creamy, painted cabinets. Built in England, they were shipped over and finished on site.
 (right) Unendangered by cooking accidents, an Oriental rug underscores the elegant attitude of this leisure-class kitchen.
 (opposite) No guessing where the refrigerator is hidden: the designer paneled its door but deliberately left the vent in view.



Elegant materials and indirect lighting abet the formal attitude. Downlights wash over Italian marble slab countertops; uplights romance the deep crown moldings that wrap the 12-foot ceilings. At the “mantel” that surrounds the cooktop as well as under the marble counter on the island, Clive Christian’s signature “Belgravia” corbels, handmade in England, add a touch of their namesake ultra-posh London neighborhood.

Appliances such as dishwashers and refrigerator drawers virtually disappear behind custom paneled doors. However, the refrigerator itself is easy for, say, a thirsty guest to spot. “We didn’t intend to hide it,” Alona says, pointing to the uncovered exhaust panel on top. Everything else was painted (on location after the elements arrived from the company’s workshops in England) to blend harmo-

niously behind gleaming coats of Antique Cream paint, another Clive Christian signature.

Just because she likes the playful contrast between traditional and contemporary, Alona added a high-tech pot-filler faucet at the work-island sink. And simply for its surprise factor, the owners have stretched an Oriental runner on the hardwood flooring in the aisle between the cooktop and the work island. *



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