TOP 10 CHEFS YOU NEED TO KNOW >>

PHILADELPHIA

STYLE

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THE DINING ISSUE

OUR ULTIMATE GUIDE

To Eating Out & Entertaining At Home

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A lowered ceiling, unobtrusive lighting and warm mahogany accents create an intimate dining area perfect for entertaining. Gleaming limestone floor tiles contrast with an antique Oriental carpet.

PHOTOS BY TOM CRANE

Home for the Holidays

A Philadelphia design firm brings personality and warmth to a white-walled home.

Designer Steven Weixler was an important consultant for the couple who bought this Villanova townhome. They wanted the property, but the would-be homeowners needed to be assured by a professional that they could convert the modern space into the traditional home of their dreams. Weixler promised the couple that his design firm could make it happen.

A past renovation included structural demolitions that left the contemporary home with little character and no defined style. "You could look from the front door and see what was in the sink," Weixler says. That, and the high ceilings in the dining room gave it an atmosphere "akin to...the bottom of a well."

Undaunted, Weixler and his interior design firm, Weixler, Peterson & Luzi, began the task of bringing old-world charm into the hodgepodge home. Because the homeowners love to entertain but wanted the intimate ambiance of a traditional residence, the group's goal was create an English-inspired retreat that was designed with traffic flow in mind.

Custom draperies, composed of fabrics such as silk, appear throughout the home and temper the scale of oversized windows.

Walls were added to create smaller entertaining areas. Large, open doorways guide guests through the first floor and the main entertaining rooms, and a new fireplace in the living room serves as a central gathering point. To create a cozy environment in the cavernous dining room, the designers dropped the ceiling height from 20 to 10 feet and added an extra room upstairs.

Since one of the homeowners is a professionally trained chef, great attention was paid to the kitchen. After completely gutting the cramped room, the firm worked with the couple to design a space that recalls the open, utilitarian format of a restaurant kitchen. The color palette was kept clean and white in stark contrast to the rest of the home, though the look was softened with warm-toned wood flooring and accessories. The resultant room is spacious enough to accommodate caterers brought in for big bashes yet intimate enough for a casual gathering.

With rooms restored and a new layout in place, Weixler and his team moved on to creating stately-yet-comfortable living spaces with decor inspired by the manors of England. The designers focused on building the look around some of the hom-

The kitchen was a collaboration between the designers and one of the clients, a professionally trained chef. The award-winning result combines the practicality of a scullery-style layout with the elegance of a neutral palette.

The prefabricated mantel provides a natural gathering point and adds instant architectural interest to the living room.

eowners' existing furniture, including an Oriental rug and Chippendale dining room set. A sideboard and chandelier were purchased to complement the pieces, and two Chinese silk paintings were chosen to accent the room's hues. Finally, Weixler used recessed halogen fixtures to subtly illuminate the rich wood grains, colors and textures. *—Brieanne Valencoure Dyas*

Do you have a Home with Style that deserves attention? Send photos and information to Home@dlgmedia.com.