

Published February 3rd, 2010

The Kitchen is Where it Happens

By Andrea A. Firth



Tickets to the tour are \$25 and available at the following retail outlets:

- Across the Way (Moraga)
- Elaine's Nail
- J. Hettinger (Danville)
- Lazy K (Lafayette)
- Miramonte Webstore (for MHS parents)
- Orinda Books
- McDonnell Nursery

The Heart of the Home Kitchen Tour ticket will provide the home - locations, descriptions, and a map.

Kitchen tour co-chairs Jill Wharton and Gayle Lintner. Photo Andy Scheck

"This is the fourth kitchen that I've had my way with," says Linter with a laugh. She recently refaced the island walls adding intricately carved maple corbels that are reminiscent of the legs on the antique kitchen dining table, a detail that is repeated on the dramatic wood-covered cook top hood. As a twist on the ubiquitous large vase of flowers that often compliments a large island top, Linter found and restored a 200-year-old French meat scale that now serves as her island's centerpiece.

Pat Rudebusch, a longtime Orinda resident and tireless supporter of Orinda's schools, will serve as guest chef at Lintner's home. Rudebusch will be making apple cinnamon crepes for tour goers to enjoy as they browse the many raffle items that will be on display. The City of Orinda has donated a special prize package that will entitle one lucky young resident to serve as the Grand Marshall Junior of the July 4th parade. The Grand Marshall Junior will also be treated to lunch with the Mayor, a tour of City Hall, and a pizza party with friends and family at Village Pizza. Several other great prize packages will be raffled off the day of the tour including a one-week stay in a luxurious two-bedroom, ocean-view condominium in Mexico. Raffle tickets (\$5 each) will be available for purchase at Linter's home.

"We are trying to involve the whole Orinda community in this event," states Wharton. "It is really heart warming to see the many business owners who donate to our kids," adds Lintner.

While each kitchen on the tour offers a number of unique and interesting elements, both Lintner and Wharton agree that Laura Sawczuk's newly remodeled kitchen and family room gives her spectacular home an added wow factor. Sawczuk waited 23 years to redo her kitchen, a project driven in large part by an aging roof with several leaks that needed to be replaced. With 2/3 of the roof gone, Sawczuk had the opportunity to play with the room's design. "I tried hard to turn the layout of the kitchen and family room upside down, but remarkably the floor plan stayed pretty much intact," she says.

Throughout the one and half year building project, Sawczuk focused her attention toward incorporating a variety of wood and stone materials in the kitchen. "I love really unique grains-the way they show their imperfections and differences," she explains. Sawczuk handpicked each piece of the cherry and wide-grained fir used in the custom-made cabinets. She also sifted through piles to choose the wood ceiling beams salvaged from old farmhouses in the Midwest. "We tried to build as green as possible, and we used a lot of reclaimed materials," notes Sawczuk.

The 13-foot arched entryway doors, sourced from a restaurant in Paraguay, are a key example of Sawczuk's artistic penchant for the unique, eclectic accents throughout her home. "We have traveled around quite a bit. I find something magical about having different, unique things," she says. The distinctive Blue Louise granite countertops in the kitchen are another example. The stone's bursts of swirling blue, white, rust, and gold remind Sawczuk and her husband of the color and movement in Van Gogh's Starry Night painting.

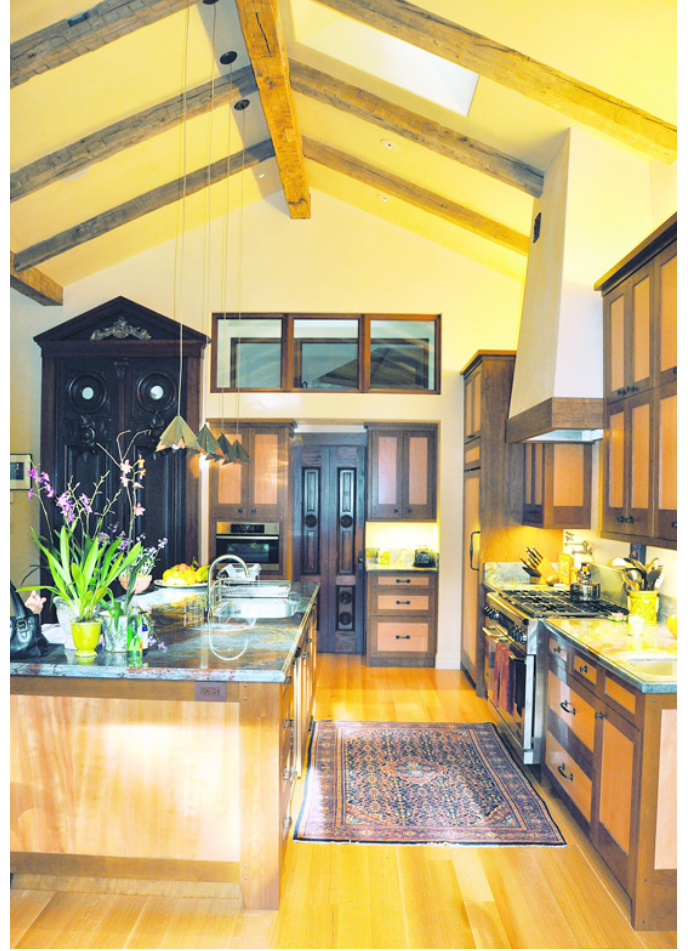
Having completed the kitchen remodel in early December, Sawczuk says the new room provided a wonderful setting to enjoy the holidays with friends and family. As she sits at the kitchen farm table and looks out the adjacent large windows that provide a new view of her park-like backyard and several mature redwood trees, Sawczuk comments, "Oh yes, we have already had some great times here." As they say, the kitchen is where it happens.

Andrea A. Firth can be reached by email: andrea@lamorindaweekly.com

The Orinda Heart of the Home Kitchen Tour will be held on February 10th,
9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.



Pat Rudebusch



Laura Sawczuk's new kitchen Photos Andy Scheck



Antique dining table and chandelier from Munich in the foreground of Lintner's kitchen



Sawczuk's kitchen island and family room Photos Andy Scheck



100-year old reclaimed wood ceiling beams in Sawczuk's kitchen



Lintner's custom-made hood and cook top

Reach the reporter at: andrea@lamorindaweekly.com

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA