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## MCC Kitchens Shine for a Cause

By Lou Fancher



Carol and Gerry Tanner's kitchen glows warmly under natural light from the skylight above. Photos by Andy Scheck

house; we didn't even live here for 7 months. When we saw the kitchen, we knew we were going to tear it all down and replace it," Carol explains.

The Tanner's are patient, diligent shoppers. "We went from store, to store, to store," she says cheerfully. She points out the double-colored cabinets, (caf•caramel and Hermosa) and the Brazilian Teak floor. "I do love the cabinets," she says, "it's the hinges: you give them a push and they close slowly, without that "snap!" at the end."

If hardware and appliances are the bones of a kitchen, personal touches are what give it a heart. There is a wine theme woven throughout the room; from the decorative vine pattern incorporated in wall tiles above the stove, to the central island wine refrigerator, and especially, in the faux painting created by Julie Zouzounis. "The painting is done on canvas, and then adhered to the wall," Carol explains. "That way, you can take it with you if you move." Encouraging a closer look at the art, Carol points out one more feature: "The wine bottle - see the label? The names on it are the names of my son-in-law's relatives."

Neither Tanner claims to be a gourmet chef. "The microwave gets a lot of use," Carol admits, sounding guilty. Gerry takes a bolder approach, opening the microwave door and saying, "That's where I cook, right there."

Family, however, is a major factor in the Tanner's kitchen. Carol considers it a place to meet with the couple's children and their spouses. And it's a place to try new recipes. "I did fix Linguine with Shrimp and Lemon Oil last week," she says, sounding mildly surprised by her new-found culinary inspiration.

For Gerry, the remodeled kitchen is a laboratory. "The skylight wasn't insulated, and a wall there (now removed) was hideous, blocking all the light..." he leaves off, allowing a visitor to imagine. It's not the cabinet color that brings out an exuberant side to his otherwise neutral descriptions; it's the R-11 windows, the "really nifty" radiant barrier, and a hot/cold EverPure water filtration system. "You can get an ionizer that makes the water more alkaline," he says, mentioning scientific studies that support alkaline's benefits to cancer patients in recovery.

Having a dream kitchen doesn't mean he must stop dreaming, after all.

The new kitchen at 479 Augusta, a second home on the tour, places the emphasis on accessibility. "It's a kitchen for everyday living," says Dave Bruzzone, who designed the room to have "a relationship with the rest of the house."

The kitchen's open architecture, like a smile, is inviting. Wide, Hickory plank flooring extends from the kitchen into the adjacent rooms, adding to the expansive, spacious feel. High ceilings and double-sized archways keep sight lines open.

The walls are especially thick: reminiscent of historical, Mediterranean homes in Italy, or Greece.

The Bruzzone house is located in what is unofficially called "the country club extension," a new, 68-lot division in the community. "We started building the house three years ago," Bruzzone says. "Normally, we do a house in 6-9 months. It took a little bit longer because there were some diversions. What you see here is what I wanted to do. I incorporated features of a Happy Valley house I like."

Bruzzone, like the Tanners, is a humble chef. Asked if he will step up to the stove in the new kitchen, he answers, "No." Then adds, as if to right a wrong, "But I eat-and I love it." Bruzzone, still apologetic, says he and his wife, Mary, do watch the Food Channel. "She's a terrific cook," he says, finding a statement he can be proud of.

To Carol Tanner, the Moraga Country Club Kitchen Tour is a public way to celebrate the happy ending of a total house remodeling project. To her husband Gerry, it's a chance to share the science behind a contemporary kitchen. To Dave Bruzzone, the tour is a deadline and a chance to flex his altruistic muscles. To Sue Olsen, a well-known local Broker Associate and the show's organizer, the tour is a heady-swirl of professional and personal pleasures. And for families touched by breast cancer, the Moraga Country Club (MCC) Kitchen Tour represents hope.

The tour, which takes place on October 7th, from 5:00-8:00 p.m., is a charity event, with all proceeds donated to the Susan G. Komen Race For the Cure(r). The non-profit organization is the largest breast cancer charity in the world and a leader in research, education, and advocacy. In 2009, the MCC tour raised nearly \$6,000.

For Carol, the cause is as personal as the kitchen. "I have three sisters, and two of them have had breast cancer," she says. Standing in the center of her sun-splashed kitchen, she is the consummate hostess: polite, affable, and even a bit shy.

When Carol and Gerry Tanner decided to downsize, they found 171 Cypress Point Way. "We did the whole

"And barbecue? She's the one for the job."

The griddle in the middle of the stove and the antique bronze faucets and wall tile accents signal an attention to detail in the design. Custom, beveled counter edges and an inset frame-like feature repeated on the honey-colored cabinetry is a bonus. But it's two exquisite hanging lights that make the kitchen unique. Designed by Lights of Diablo in Martinez, their softly curving glass looks as if chocolate has been drizzled from above, and small flecks of gold - especially when the lights are not turned on - catch the sunlight.

Three other kitchens round out the MCC tour. 156 Cypress Point Way features a Wolfe range and a cabinet that opens to reveal all the appliances. 112 La Quinta is the grandest kitchen in terms of size, with a cherry island that seats eight. 585 Augusta Drive is the kitchen for cooks; the footprint is original, but every other feature has been updated.

The 2010 tour is Thursday, October 7, from 5-8 pm. Tickets are \$20 and are tax deductible. Wine, appetizers and resource information will be available at each location. For more information, visit <http://www.mcchometour.com/#1>.



A Julie Zouzounis painting adorns the Tanner kitchen.



An open archway leads to Mary and Dave Bruzzone's kitchen.



The beveled counter top and detailed cabinetry add charm to the Bruzzone kitchen.



The decorative tiles in the Tanner kitchen feature a vine pattern.



The Bruzzones' range sports a large griddle.

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