

# Indoor and Outdoor Entertaining Spaces

...continued from page E1



*Tom and Suzanne Melohn's kitchen.*

Marie Legallet credits their architect Jim Miller of Oculus Architecture and Design, for making the most of their updated, harmonious traditional rancher. The family purchased the home in 1997 and did the kitchen remodel about 10 years ago; their previous kitchen was white, but because the new kitchen is part of the great room, the family wanted to keep the feel of the overall space more of a living area, unified by natural materials like the wood floor, stone fireplace, and glowing raised wood breakfast bar.

Like many properties in the Orinda area, the back yard presented some challenges; it was not all flat, usable space. Steve Lambert of Garden Lights Landscape designed and installed stone retaining walls, a water feature and colorful plants along with plenty of patio space that effortlessly blends with the interior of

the home.

Tom and Suzanne Melohn tore their house down to the ground about four years ago and started from scratch. The original structure was a 1,400-square-foot ranch house from the 1950s. They worked with Moraga-based Bob McLaughlin of MRC Construction. Melohn describes his work as “amazing.” She had cut pictures out of design magazines as examples of what she was looking for, and McLaughlin made it happen. The family is very pleased with the fresh, traditional feel of the home. She and the tile installer took a field trip to the Walker Zanger showroom where she found a lovely serene blue/gray/green tile that is used throughout the home.

But wait, there's more: in addition to the complete house construction job, the back yard was totally raw when the property was purchased. McLaughlin

built the cabana that was originally meant to be a “man cave,” with a full kitchen and bathroom, and Alex's Garden Service designed and installed the blue stone patio and outdoor barbecue on the terraced hillside. While they are thrilled with the overall finished product, during the remodel process the family moved a total of four times, which was stressful, said Melohn.

Taking the Heart of the Home Kitchen and Garden tour will be the opposite of stressful; those looking for design ideas or garden inspiration can leisurely stroll through six unique Orinda homes. Co-chairs Lavis and Kathleen Metheny have some new ideas this year that include a pre-event cocktail party to thank homeowners who will graciously open their doors to the public and presenting sponsors, and a silent auction of sculptural works from talented Miramonte art students along with artwork from a group of Orinda painters.

...continued on page E6



*The Melohns' backyard cabana with spacious patio on terraced hillside.*