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**HOME REMODELS+
DECORATING IDEAS**

At Home With Thomas Paine

**IN THE KITCHEN WITH
CHEF PASCAL CHUREAU**

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Grey never looked so good as in this kitchen remodel of a Salem home built in the 1930s. Multileveled cabinetry features seeded glass in the upper level doors and an architectural frieze beneath them. Alaska White granite fabricated by Carranza Marble and Granite pulls tones from the backsplash, a mix of white subway tiles and deco ornaments from Mercury Mosaics. A deep farmhouse fire-clay sink by Franke includes a large commercial faucet with a coiled design. A custom-made roman shade from DSC Window Fashions in Denver softens industrial looking pendants from Restoration Hardware.

GONG GREY

WRITTEN BY MARK MUSSARI PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG KOZAWA



“IT WAS THE MOST BIZARRE THING I’VE EVER SEEN.” That’s how Jason Ball, Principal Interior Designer and owner of Jason Ball Interiors, LLC in Portland, describes the original kitchen he faced in this sweeping remodel of a 1930s home in Salem. “It had a built-in breakfast bar on a raised platform with stools that were actually attached to the floor,” Ball states. The walls were in what the designer euphemistically describes as “a Pepto-Bismol” color. “The whole thing was reminiscent of an ice cream parlor,” he adds.

You’d never know it now. Ball transformed the dated kitchen with its challenged chroma into a striking and highly functional room rendered predominantly in deep greys and warm tans. The kitchen’s subtle chromaticism and careful geometric symmetry extend to the rest of the house. “The homeowners were a young couple who wanted to get their home ready for a family,” recalls Ball. “Still, we wanted to pay homage to the original era of the house.”

The home – which featured some Tudor elements in its overall design – had not seen a remodel in decades. “We knew it had to have a traditional feel,” explains Ball, “yet the owners wanted to add their own personal aesthetic.” More traditional elements surfaced, particularly in the new custom cabinets.

“I had them painted in a battleship grey Benjamin Moore color,” points out Ball – who used this color to draw the eye from one room to the next without being too obtrusive. “I wanted a dramatic palette but without too high a contrast,” he confirms.

Love, lines, angles and rhymes: The dining room design is driven by bold Kasbah wallpaper from Clarke & Clarke, featuring a strong Middle Eastern pattern. The English turn-of-the-century dining room table was purchased from the previous homeowners. The crystal chandelier was original to the home. “We painted the candlestick covers to coordinate with the leather chairs,” says designer Jason Ball. Upholstered armchairs are from Nathan Anthony Furniture in Los Angeles. Solid teak doors were also part of the home’s original design.

Architectural features emphasize the more traditional approach. “The door style has some detail to it,” indicates Ball, “but not an abundance.” To avoid using tall, modern-looking cabinetry, Ball employed a stacked design; seeded glass cabinets appear on the uppermost level, while a frieze connects them to the next level. To add linear elements, remodeling contractor Brandan Keyser, President and Owner of Keyser Construction, Inc., removed soffits and raised the kitchen’s ceiling. “Before it felt claustrophobic,” he says.

“This really opened up the ceiling and added height.”

The design team also replaced the original flooring with some exotic, pre-finished Merbau wood. “Not only is the finish dark,” says Ball, “but so is the meat of the wood – so scratches won’t show. The family wanted something durable.”

Ball juxtaposed these more classic designs with modern stainless appliances that emphasize the greyer tones and are echoed in pendant lighting from Restoration Hardware. Crisp white subway tiles with contemporary circular deco accent tiles provide a modern contrast. “To arrange the tile inserts, we used a special scroll tile saw, which enables you to cut in circles,” says Keyser. Granite countertops feature a pattern that unites the room’s various tones. Ball also added some bling in his choice of kitchen wall paint, *Ethereal* by Benjamin Moore. “I used an iridescent paint,” he comments, “to add a little sparkle – a little extra sheen.”

Because the home includes a number of transitions, offering views from one room to another, Ball decided to move a doorway between the kitchen and the dining room. “The doorway originally there was not arched,” he affirms. “It was rectangular and had a swinging door attached to it. Today, the doors all

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line up." A centered arched opening now leads into the dining room, which features huge arched doors in teak.

"The dining room is important," notes Ball, "because you see right into it when you first walk into the house. The clients wanted this view to be "the" view." And what a view it is. Bold geometrics help to define this elegantly designed space. "We wanted a highly-patterned, graphic wallpaper," observes the designer. To apply that wallpaper, however, the design team needed to address the dining room's dated walls. "They had a thick rough texture that had to be sanded down," says Keyser.

The wallpaper's arresting pattern includes grey tones from the kitchen cabinetry while adding some tan and white, creating a warm contrast to white wainscoting and ceiling trim. "Along with the rich brown floor," says Ball, "these elements help to tone down the pattern in the wallpaper." The floor in the dining room posed its own challenge. "We had to rebuild that floor," comments Keyser, "because it wasn't structurally level." "The homeowners wanted to make it feel that - in its bones - the house had been well-maintained," explains Ball. "I'm pleased with the way we conveyed the idea of a traditional design with a little design flair."



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