



The ritual of preparing a meal brings family and friends together.

[By Elizabeth Gaynor]

TODAY'S IDEAL KITCHEN INCLUDES ALL THE elements of the keeping room of Colonial days—a full-size table for dining, a comfy place to sit and a versatile work surface open to all. “Regardless of how often we cook, the kitchen has become the stage where much of our personal lives unfold,” contends architect Erica Broberg of Smith River Kitchens in East Hampton, N.Y. “Your kitchen really is your ‘living’ room.”

A Place To Gather

“Unlike Victorian or early 20th-century homes, where kitchens were hidden and dining spaces were formal, the ‘open’ kitchens of new homes combine space, volume and function,” says Clive Cashman of IKEA. “We want family and guests to be in view of us and part of the ritual when we prepare food.” Creating a kitchen you also can entertain in is a bit of a challenge but not impossible. Here’s how:

Offset the work areas. “Countertop workspace is paramount for cooperation in a kitchen,” Cashman notes. Each cook should have 36 inches of his or her own space for food preparation. “A mobile cart that can be brought out when you need it, tucked away when you don’t, is one option. It will add not only a surface but also valuable storage space.” If you’re remodeling, factor in at least 42 inches of space between parallel countertops that will be used as work stations. Where cooks are likely to be working back-

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