House & Garden

FEBRUARY 1999 U.S.$3.50

the kitchen issue

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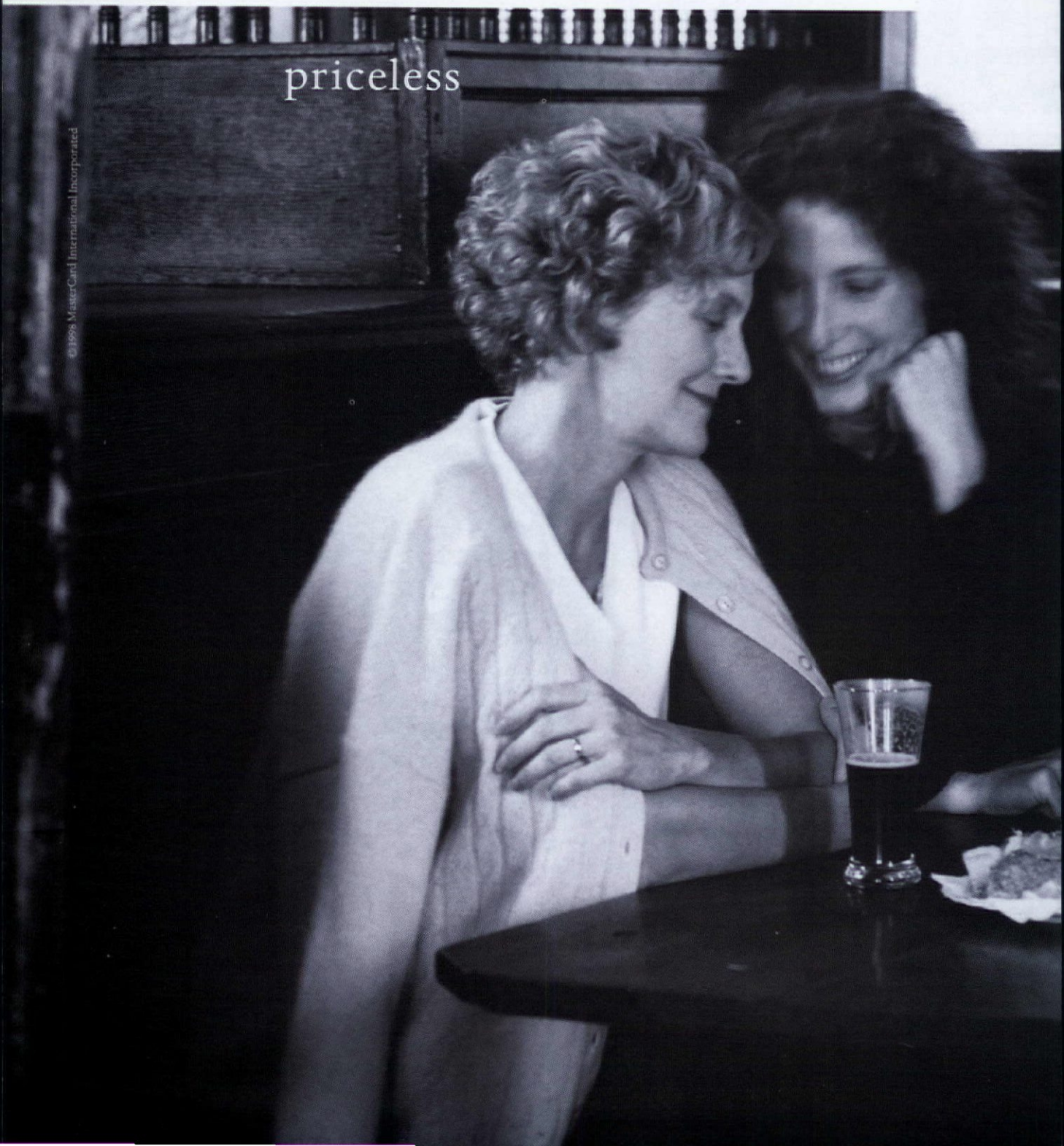

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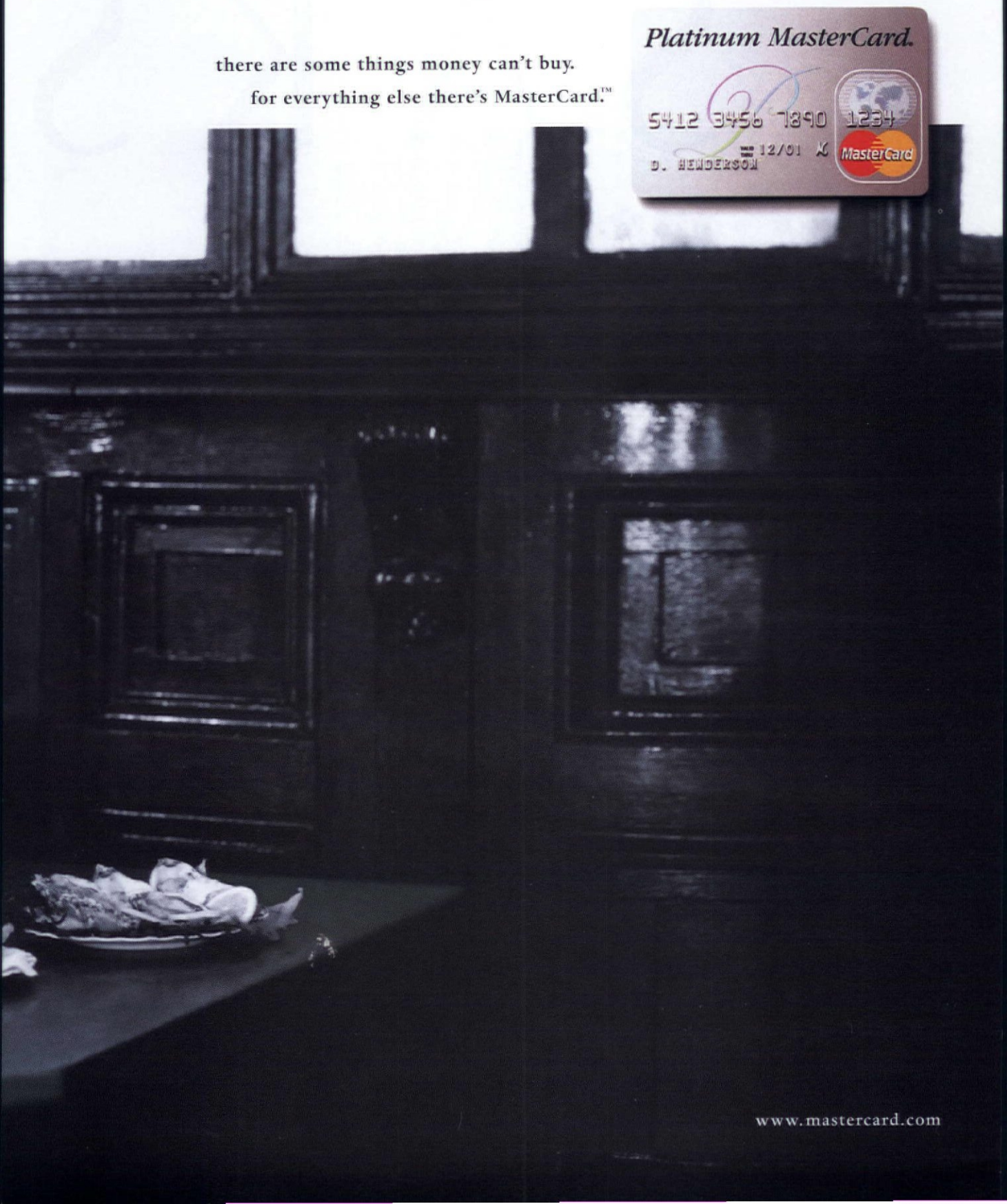

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House&Garden

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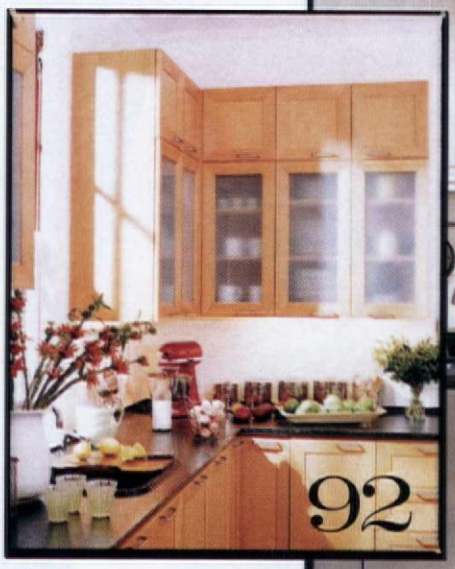

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ON THE COVER: "THE CHEF STOPS HERE," PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW WOOD

SHE COULD BE ARABELLA, DESDEMONA, MARGUERITE OR MANON LESCAUT.

BUT YOU'D ALWAYS RECOGNIZE THE FACE.

Dame Kiri Te Kanawa is indeed a woman of many parts. However, her career both onstage and as a recording artist is characterized by a constant quest for perfection. No wonder then that one of her most treasured possessions is her Rolex Lady Datejust. For the rigorous standards of precision required to bring together its many parts are commensurate with those that Dame Kiri applies to the discipline of her own performance. Whoever she may be.

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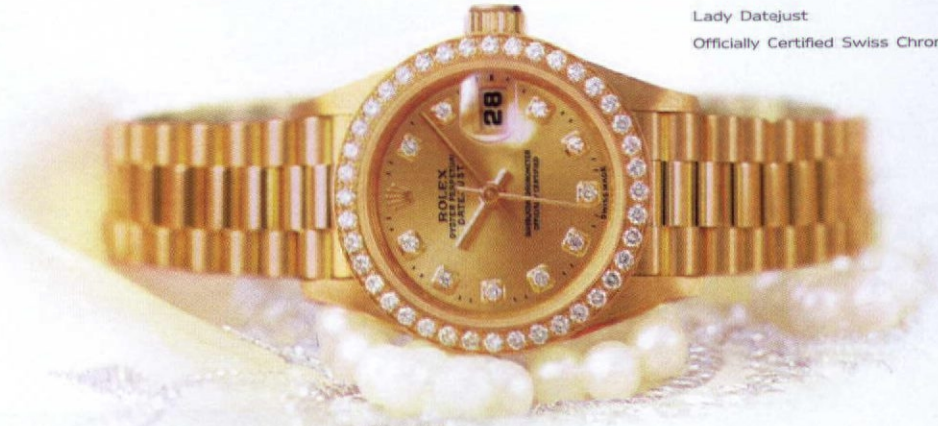

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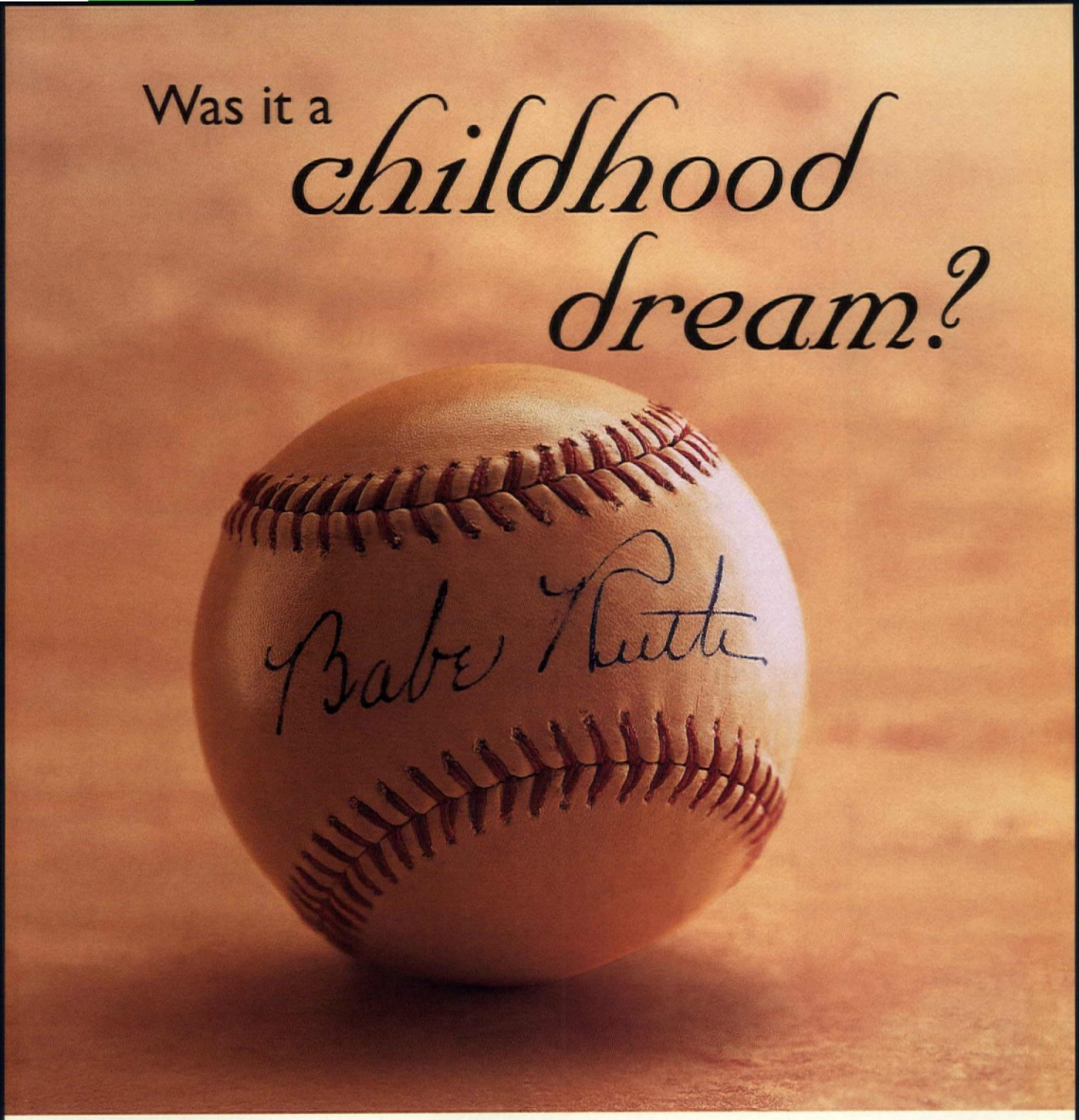
Was it a *childhood dream?*



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what the **pros know**

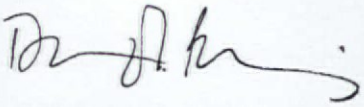
OWEN BERKOWITZ LEAPS AND WHIRLS around his new bakery in our small town like Rod Stewart performing at Madison Square Garden. He sets his giant mixers to whirring, wheels in huge carts laden with pungent Irish soda bread straight from the oven, arranges proud little bundt cakes on a tray, greets his customers as if they were guests coming into his home for breakfast. "Hey there, gray-eyed Pallas Athena, what are you reading now?" Who else is so kind in the morning? I look over his shoulder into the kitchen at the back of the shop and covetously eye the stainless-steel trolleys and the powerful ovens and the glass-doored pantries, struck by the confidence and mastery emanating from all the solid, serious equipment. I can see why people want that professional quality in their homes. "*Don't mess with me*," it says. "*I make the mess here*." Owen cradles a cheese pastry in one hand, a muffin in the other, wraps them in tissue, and thrusts his offerings into the already loaded arms of customers waiting to have their purchases rung up. "A gift! A gift!" he says in a burst of love for his craft and passion for those who know enough to follow their noses to his door. "Just try! Tell me what you think!" And of course we always think we need one more for home, one for the kid, one for the new neighbor, one for the sister around the corner, one for the visit to the parents, one for Sunday, because this one will just get us through Saturday. Owen disappears into the kitchen in a dust of flour, and leaves behind an ecstasy of warm sugar and vanilla.

Then I'm in Paris on business with Lora Zarubin, a chef who once ran a popular restaurant and is now an editor at this magazine. We have an afternoon free for errands; she has promised to introduce me to some of her favorite shops, and on our way we've started talking about her mentor Alice Waters's proposal for a new restaurant at the Louvre. The celebrated owner of Chez Panisse in Berkeley, Waters had recently written a mission statement declaring that "the emphasis is going to be on the food, the kind that makes eating a soul-nourishing experience."

Lora is in raptures over such ambition, coming as it does from California to a city that has enshrined the art of cooking. As we talk, I notice we're passing one of *my* favorite shops, Caron, a tiny perfume boutique, as simple and straightforward as can be, whose dazzle resides entirely in the large glass urns with golden spigots that line the walls and are filled with amber-hued liquids made carefully by hand, according to recipes developed over the years for scents with names like N'Aimez Que Moi (Don't Love Anyone But Me) or Pois de Senteur de Chez Moi (Sweet Pea from My Place) or Royal Bain de Champagne (Champagne Bath). My pace begins to drag, but I have never traveled with a foodie before. Lora doesn't miss a beat. Her destination is nearby. Fouquet. So that when I return home, and my sister asks me what I bought in Paris, I must confess to a newfound enthusiasm for small jars of exotic spices, for the glitter in crystals of fleur de sel (what sea foam is to a wave, this is to a salt harvest). My shelves are now lined with little vessels of perfect peppercorns, whipped honeys, mustards blended with basil or vinegar, teas with names like Thé Pour Elle (Tea for Her) or Thé Pour Un Vieux Garçon (Tea for an Old Boy). Carefully selected and made according to the ancient wisdom. . . . The guy at Customs, peering into the plain brown plastic shopping bag, raised an eyebrow.

Lora had previously changed my life by lecturing me about my habit of eating and reading at the same time: "You should be completely aware of your food, in the moment of eating. Not distracted." When I protested that I was, after all, usually only eating a simple boiled egg or a yogurt, hardly the thing to call a meal, Lora scolded further. "That doesn't matter. It's all sacred."

She's right, of course. Here's what the pros know: When we learn how to prepare food with skillful love, and to savor it and share it, food can become a visitation of joy. The true professionalism is in the care, a quality anyone can have at home. All it takes is a renovation of attitude. All you pay is attention.



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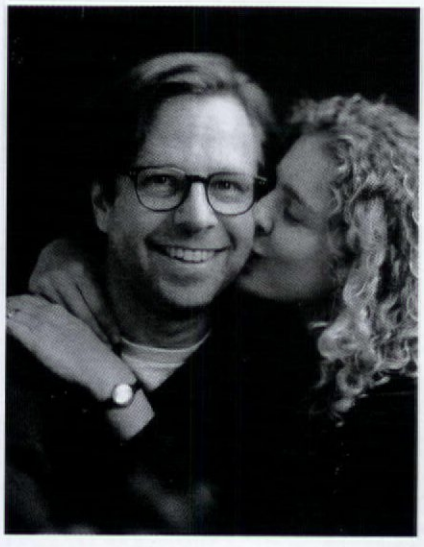
contributors

^ FRANCINE FLEISCHER
This month, Fleischer photographed three kitchens for "Personal Touches," page 92. "As I was shooting, I tried to imagine people cooking there," she says. She divides her time between New York City and Shelter Island, where she, her husband, and three-year-old daughter are renovating a home she calls, "an old clunker in need of everything."

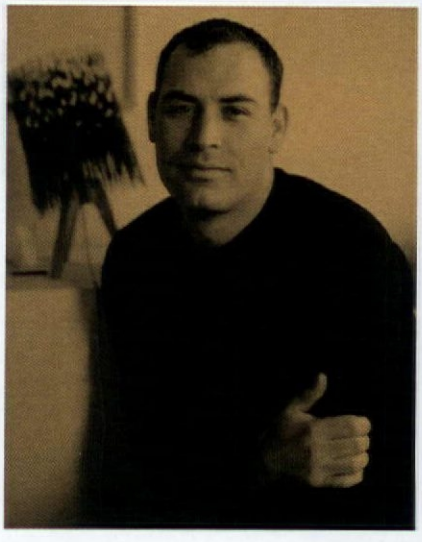


^ ANDREW FRENCH
After assisting a record-setting 75 photographers in 9 years, French set out on his own in 1990. For "Cook's Tour," page 74, he shuttled from Jean Georges in New York to Washington, D.C.'s Citronelle to capture the energy of professional kitchens. French will soon settle down with fiancée, Leanne Boepple, to whom he proposed after another *House & Garden* shoot.

v JEAN BOND RAFFERTY
In "Sparkle Plenty," page 120, Jean Bond Rafferty reports on her visit to the recently revitalized Château de Baccarat. "Baccarat is famous, but remote. When you arrive, it's like stepping through the looking glass into yesteryear," she says. "Marie-Paule Pellé has given it the breath of life, combining an 18th-century look with late-20th-century comfort." Rafferty, a frequent contributor, has lived in Paris for more than 25 years.

RUTH REICHL
The restaurant critic for *The New York Times* jumped at the chance to write about her sugar bowl ("Homely Truths," page 56). "When you're a critic, all you do is go out for fancy food in fancy places, so, perhaps more than other people, you appreciate the simple things," she explains. Her memoir, *Tender at the Bone*, was published last year.

v ANDREW WOOD
Avid sailor Andrew Wood decided to drop anchor in London last July, after five years in Asia. For "The Chef Stops Here," page 84, Wood photographed the Troisgros family's home near Lyon. "From the outside, it looked very traditional," he says. "But inside is a different matter."—SABINE ROTHMAN



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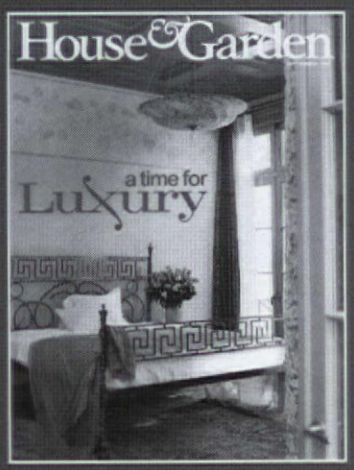

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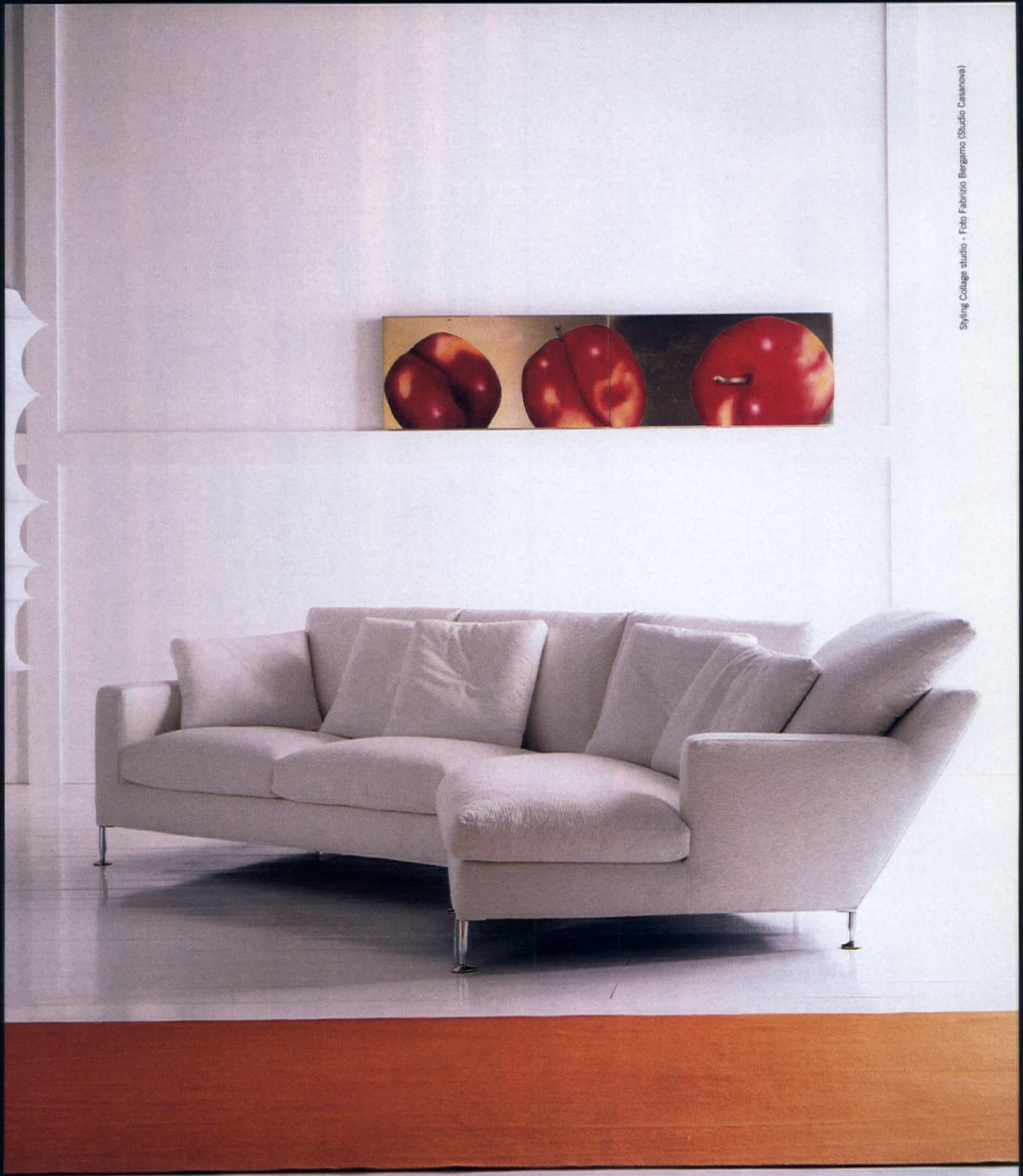

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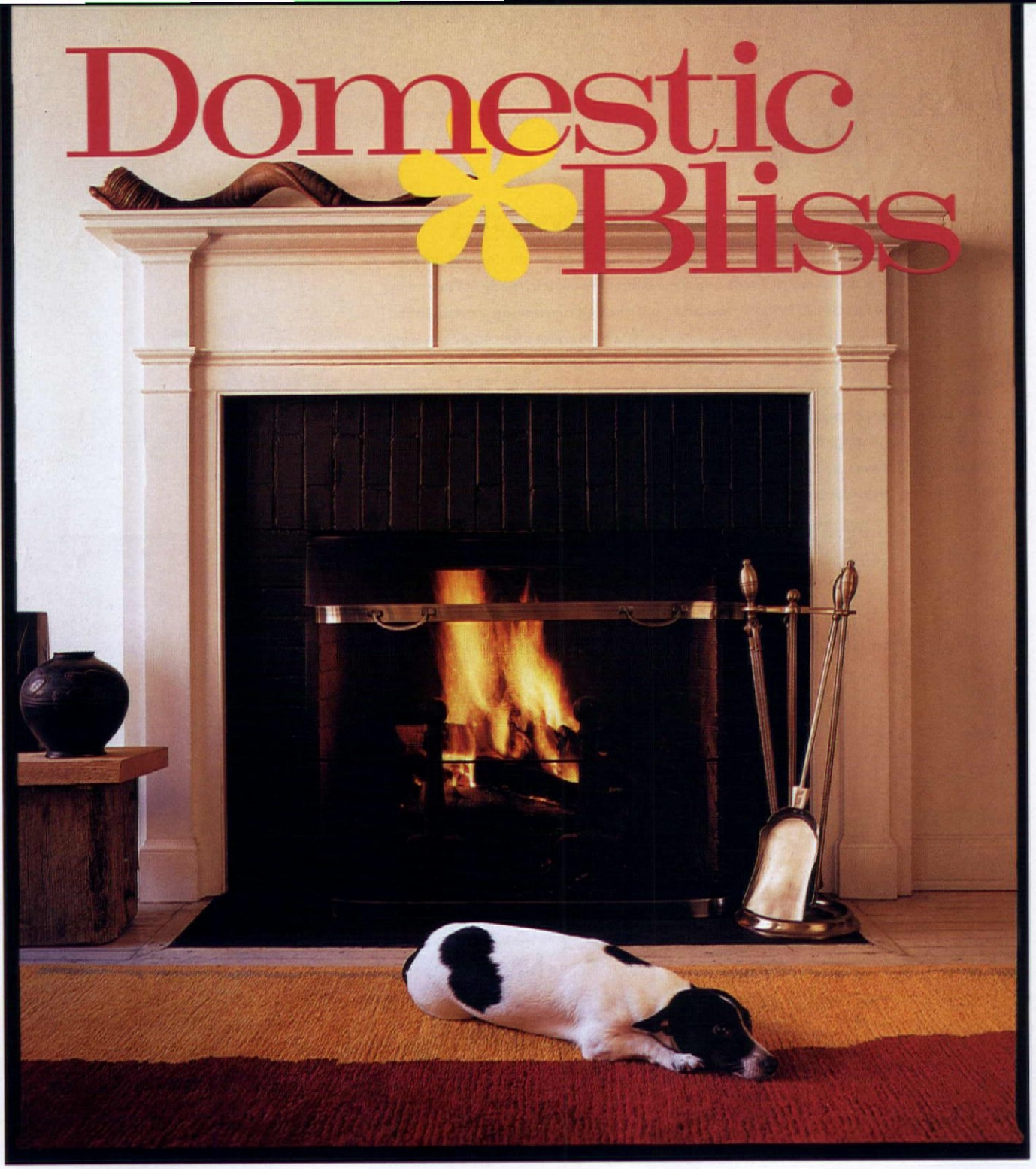
Domestic Bliss



home fires

In the winter, the hearth is the **soul of the house**. Whether you are a minimalist or a traditionalist, there are **woodburning stoves**, **mantels**, **and andirons** to spark your imagination. Also this month, mail-order shopping with a rural gourmet and **The 20-Minute Gardener**'s savvy survival guide to working with teenagers.

EDITED BY DAN SHAW

BURNING STATISTIC In 1971, 36% of new homes had one or more fireplaces. By 1996, 62% had fireplaces. Today, 94% of new homes selling for more than $300,000 have at least one fireplace.

the hottest woodstoves

Woodburning stoves, those emblems of rusticity, are becoming urbane. The soapstone fireplaces and bake ovens, below left, made in Finland by Tulikivi (804-977-5500), are practical enough for heating a cabin in the woods, but sleek enough for a SoHo loft. So are the modernist steel stoves in gray or matte black, below right, from Denmark's Rais (914-764-5679); they look like pot-bellied stoves reinterpreted by Miuccia Prada. Some of the stoves in Rais's Attika line can be clad in glazed ceramic tiles in colors like fuchsia, moss green, and yellow. Even Vermont Castings (800-227-8683), which has been manufacturing no-nonsense woodburning stoves since the mid-1970s energy crisis, is now making cast-iron fireplaces coated with a porcelain enamel finish in brilliant blue, red, green, or ivory.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

WHAT The faux fireplace.
WHY After you've waited all day on lift lines, their push-button efficiency offers convenience and instant gratification.
LOCATION! LOCATION! LOCATION! With vent-free gas or electric fireplaces, you can quickly enhance the mood of almost any room in your house. "Ideally, a woodburning fireplace would be the most romantic option," says California designer Matthew White. "But the fact that you can come and go without worrying makes gas fireplaces great."
WHERE THERE'S SMOKE THERE'S well, smoke. With woodburning fireplaces, jammed flues and untended hearths can smoke out a room if proper, regular maintenance is not kept up.
HEARTH REALITY Says Sausalito, California, designer Stephen Shubel, "I personally think gas fireplaces have no soul."

—BILL KEITH

"I opt for late-20th-century andirons. I like the graphic shapes in the black box"

—David Kleinberg, interior designer

"The most important accessory is a folded paper screen. I hate looking into a black hole. My screen is made of red English bookend paper"

—T. Keller Donovan, interior designer

"Fire screens fill the void when there is no fire"

—Thomas Jayne interior designer

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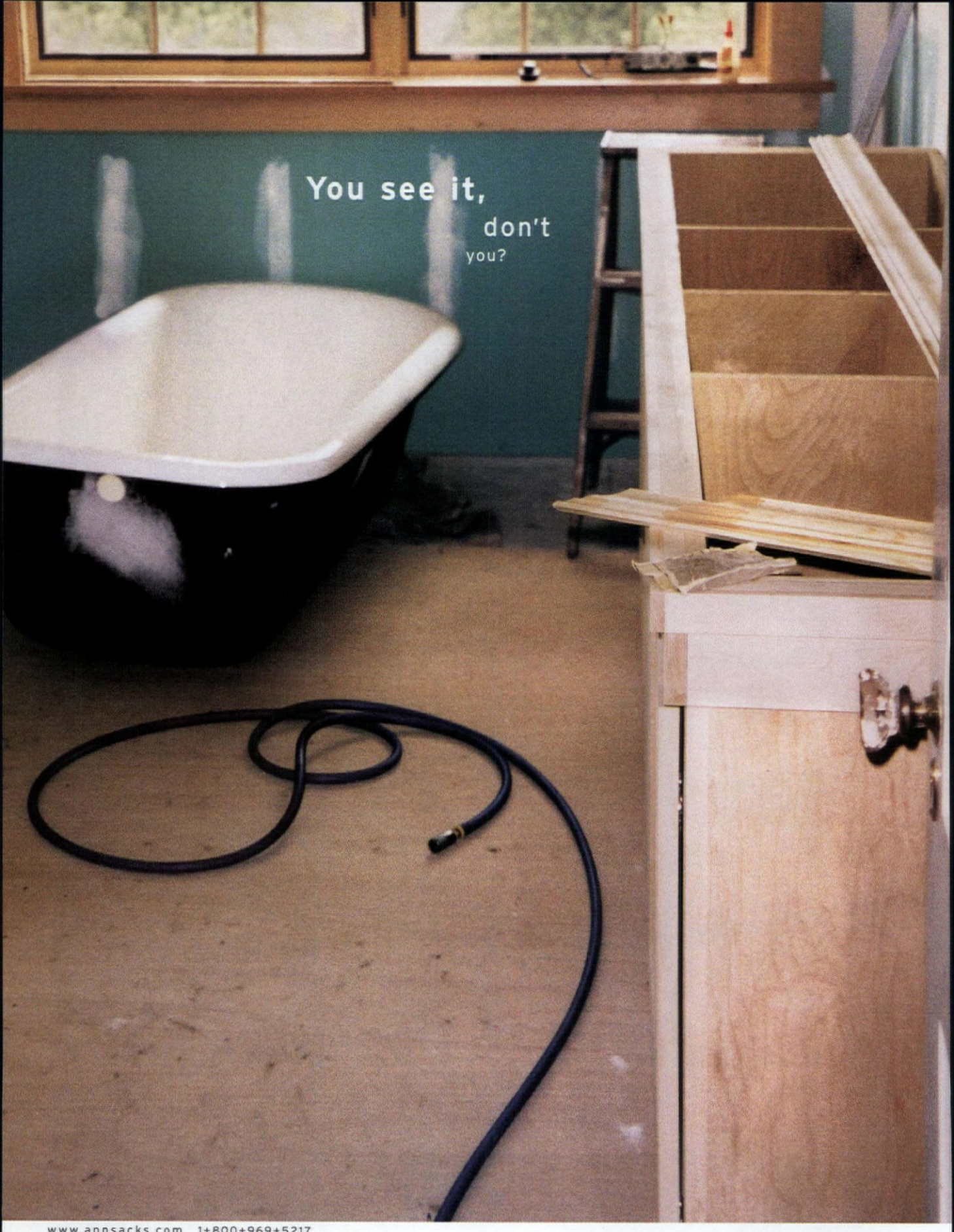

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tile and stone

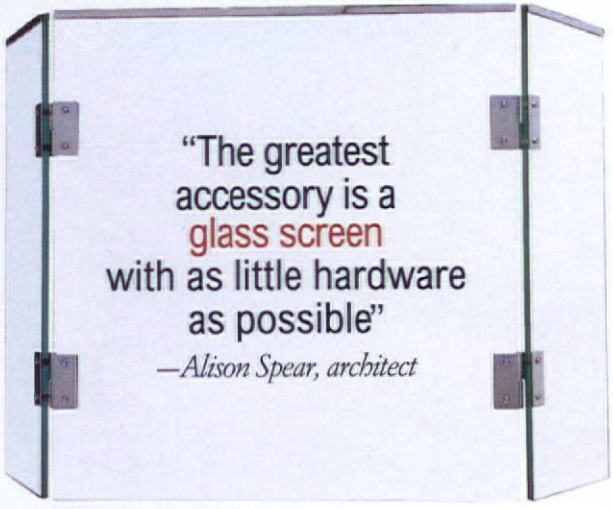
woodpile whimsy

House & Garden editor at large Judyth van Amringe can't stop stacking up great ideas. While less imaginative folk might keep material destined for their hearths in a simple woodpile, that's just not her style. Instead, van Amringe ordered six cords of birch and built herself a tiny, magical cottage, left, next to her house in Maine. Since no nails hold it together, you can slip a log out and throw it on the fire. Despite her protestations, we don't think she'll ever watch this baby burn.

—SABINE ROTHMAN

"When the fire's out, I like a stack of silver birch logs standing on end"

—Thomas Pheasant, interior designer



modern stone age

"It seems the larger the home, the larger the fireplace," says Bob Heath, vice president of the Cultured Stone Corporation (800-255-1727). This trend warms his heart, for his California company makes the stone and brick needed to build these new colossi, below. Heath's "designer stones" are cheaper and easier to install than the real thing. The lightweight clones are made in molds taken from natural rocks and then filled with a mixture of cement, pumice, and iron oxide pigments. The company offers 19 textures and shapes and 84 colors, and says consumers can redo their fireplaces themselves. "If you can lay tile," Heath promises, "you can certainly lay our product."

—JULIE GRAY

mantel magic

A woman's work is never done in Stephanie French's living room—not for the Philip Morris vice president, but for the doughy figures in her Tom Otterness mantel. "My apartment had a horrible rococo faux-gilt fireplace," the New Yorker explains. So she and her daughter commissioned Otterness to create a surround, below, depicting women workers struggling up ladders to meet their heroines at the top. "I had seen an Otterness frieze around a doorway, and I thought I'd love to have a mantel," says French. The Frenches selected two scenes from a series Otterness had exhibited about, among other things, humankind's triumphs and battles. "It tells a section of the story," says the artist. "It's the only one of its kind, and it was their invention."

BURNING STATISTIC *Sales of gas fireplaces and stoves have increased from 149,000 in 1992 to 680,000 in 1997; sales of woodburning stoves fell from 140,000 in 1992 to 82,000 in 1997.*

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the rural gourmet

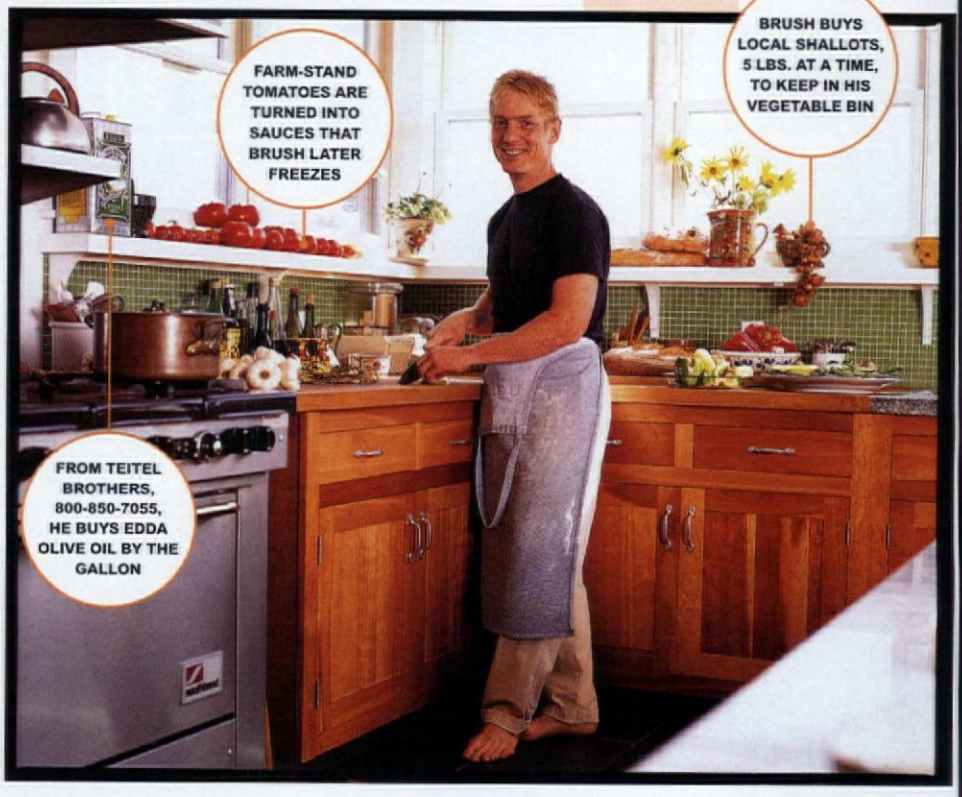
SHIP IT

It's not easy being a great cook in the boondocks. The key, explains Tony Brush, right, of Franconia, New Hampshire, is a well-stocked larder and a willingness to look beyond local markets for daily provisions. Though he lives 60 miles from a decent specialty store, this alumnus of New York's celebrated Gotham Bar & Grill and Berkeley's Chez Panisse can still whip up complex dishes like brandade de morue on short notice.

"Whenever I go on a trip, I keep a shopping list in my pocket," Brush says. On his semiannual visits to New York City, Brush stops at Arthur Avenue in the Bronx, where he stocks up on salt-cured anchovies, olive oil, salt cod, and country-style bread from Terranova's Bakery, which he double-bags and freezes. (Friends send reinforcement loaves when he runs low.) Monthly excursions to a food co-op in Hanover, New Hampshire, an hour and a half away, allow Brush to lay up vegetables and other staples—like Barilla pasta—in bulk. And, as befits someone whose spouse works for a catalogue (his wife, Diane, is director of merchandise for Garnet Hill), Brush also depends on mail-order for Peet's Coffee, Penzeys Spices, and baking supplies from King Arthur Flour.

An avid believer in seeking out special local resources, he also shops close to home. From a neighboring gardener who cultivates European vegetables, he buys chervil and cardoons. A woman in town shares with him the extraordinary eggs laid by her Araucana chickens. And from a nearby farmer, Brush purchases stock in half a sweet-corn–fed calf, which is butchered to his specifications in the fall and stored in his freezer. "I try to avoid commercially raised meat, which tends to have been exposed to steroids and antibiotics," he explains. "People who raise livestock themselves will usually feed them good food and won't use drugs. In the country it's easier."

When it comes to herbs, he's practically self-sufficient. "If you are going to have houseplants," says Brush, who grows basil, thyme, and rosemary in pots, "you might as well be able to eat them." —LYGEIA GRACE



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millennial television

Instead of spending $15,000 to hide the TV, why not spend $15,000 to look at it?" asks interior designer Myles Scott Harlan. He borrowed a Fujitsu flat-screen television ($11,000) from Bang & Olufsen to hang on the wall of his guest room, above, at a show house in Westhampton Beach, New York, last summer. (Philips makes a similar four-and-a-half-inch-deep model for $15,000.) "The room was supposed to be fun and beachy," says Harlan, who upholstered the pillows on the B&B Italia armchair in white terry. "It's a place to kick back and relax, so there was no need to hide the TV. In the future, it's the one thing *everyone* will want. Already, *my* clients are ordering them."

frequent buyers

Was it the pattern or was it the miles? That's bound to be the question now that Kravet has introduced its Rewards of Style program, allotting points to decorators and architects for their purchases of the firm's decorative fabrics, trimmings, wallpapers, and furnishings. Points in the frequent-flier-like program can be redeemed for prizes such as 1999 World Series tickets, five days at Canyon Ranch, or a Mark Hampton tufted-leather footstool.

DON'T BE S.A.D.

John McEllen, the founder of Microsun (888-526-0022), doesn't promise that one of his stylish lamps, left, will alleviate seasonal affective disorder. But outfitted with special halide bulbs (similar to those used to light night games in baseball stadiums), Microsun's lamps will definitely brighten your rooms, if not your mood.

HOUSE RULES

NAME Clodagh

PRIMARY RESIDENCE A penthouse loft with barrel-vaulted ceilings.

RÉSUMÉ: Irish-born interior designer based in New York.

CURRENT PROJECTS A major residence on Fifth Avenue; two houses in Malibu; the Elizabeth Arden Red Door Salons; the NYC offices of Elektra Entertainment Group.

I CAN'T GO TO SLEEP WITHOUT Reading from at least three books, and being comforted by aromatherapy candles.

I SLEEP ONLY ON Organic cotton and linen from Terra Verde.

MY REFRIGERATOR IS ALWAYS STOCKED WITH A United Nations of curry pastes and tofu in many shapes and forms. There is always champagne in case a celebration is in order—fortunately, a frequent occurrence.

THE FIRST THING I DO WHEN I WAKE UP Is make a cup of Irish tea, exercise, and meditate—one morning training and one morning yoga—otherwise I would degenerate into an amorphous blob. Then I fight with my husband about who is going to walk the dog. When I lose, I do a walking meditation, which is easy with an old dog who stops at every hydrant.

MY FAVORITE PLACE TO READ IS Everywhere. I am a bookaholic. I am probably the only person in the world who reads in the shower!

MY MOST RECENT FURNITURE PURCHASES Three hand-carved stools from Zambia.

A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME UNLESS It has demanding loved ones (either on two legs or four) and a meditation space to escape to.

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teenage wasteland? not!

As garden helpers, the kids are all right.

Twenty years ago, before Tom could learn to garden he first had to become fluent in Italian. In those days, it was southern Italian immigrants who provided the horticultural workforce, at least in the Northeast. But now Tom is, like, learning to talk teen-speak, you know?

The fact is, the only outdoor help you are likely to get in most American suburbs these days is from teenagers. Even if you can find a real gardener in your community (someone who knows how and when to divide a summer phlox, or even what that is), you probably can't afford the wages he or she charges. And if you could, you'd find that they aren't interested in doing the kind of mundane stuff you need done. A real gardener wants to tend the orchid house, not weed your petunias.

Your average teenager, Tom admits, may not know a summer phlox from a hole in the ground, but he maintains that if handled properly, a teenager is the greatest boon to gardening since the invention of the Weedwacker. Marty insists that these chronologically challenged individuals are unemployed because they are unemployable. But then Marty, as a proud parent, has ignored Tom's first rule of working with teenagers.

Rule #1: Never hire your own children. Who wants to eat dinner every night with a disgruntled ex-employee?

Rule #2: Hire friends' children. Embarrassed parents can deal with labor trouble in ways that would land *you* in front of a federal mediator.

Rule #3: Provide cheap tools. Your teenage employees are preoccupied with hormones, questions of what they will do with their lives, etc. Whatever tools they do not lose, they will wreck. A teenager cannot expected to check the oil level in your mower. If it is one that you despise, it will be easier to accept that its engine has seized up.

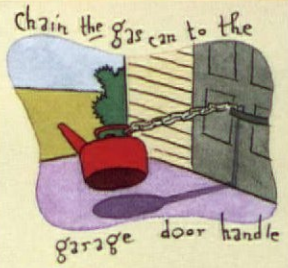
Rule #4: Never let a teenager use your chain saw. Remember, this is the age group the army recruits to jump out of planes and blow up bridges.

Rule #5: Foster paranoia. Periodically throughout the day, sneak up on teenage employees, each time approaching from a different direction. Appear suddenly, suggest how the work could be done better, then silently slip away. This unnerving jack-in-the-box demeanor may seem nasty, but former employees have told Tom that he helped them greatly in learning to focus on the task at hand—a crucial life skill.

Rule #6: Pay a bit more than the minimum wage. Teenagers do not yet grasp that the workplace is all about exploitation. Leave their naïveté intact, and you'll benefit from an enthusiasm as refreshing as anything else you are liable to encounter in your garden. Working with the chronologically challenged isn't an expedient. It is, as we au courant horticulturists say, "da bomb."

—TOM CHRISTOPHER AND MARTY ASHER

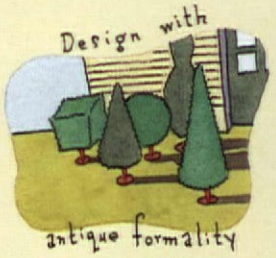
THE GAME PLAN



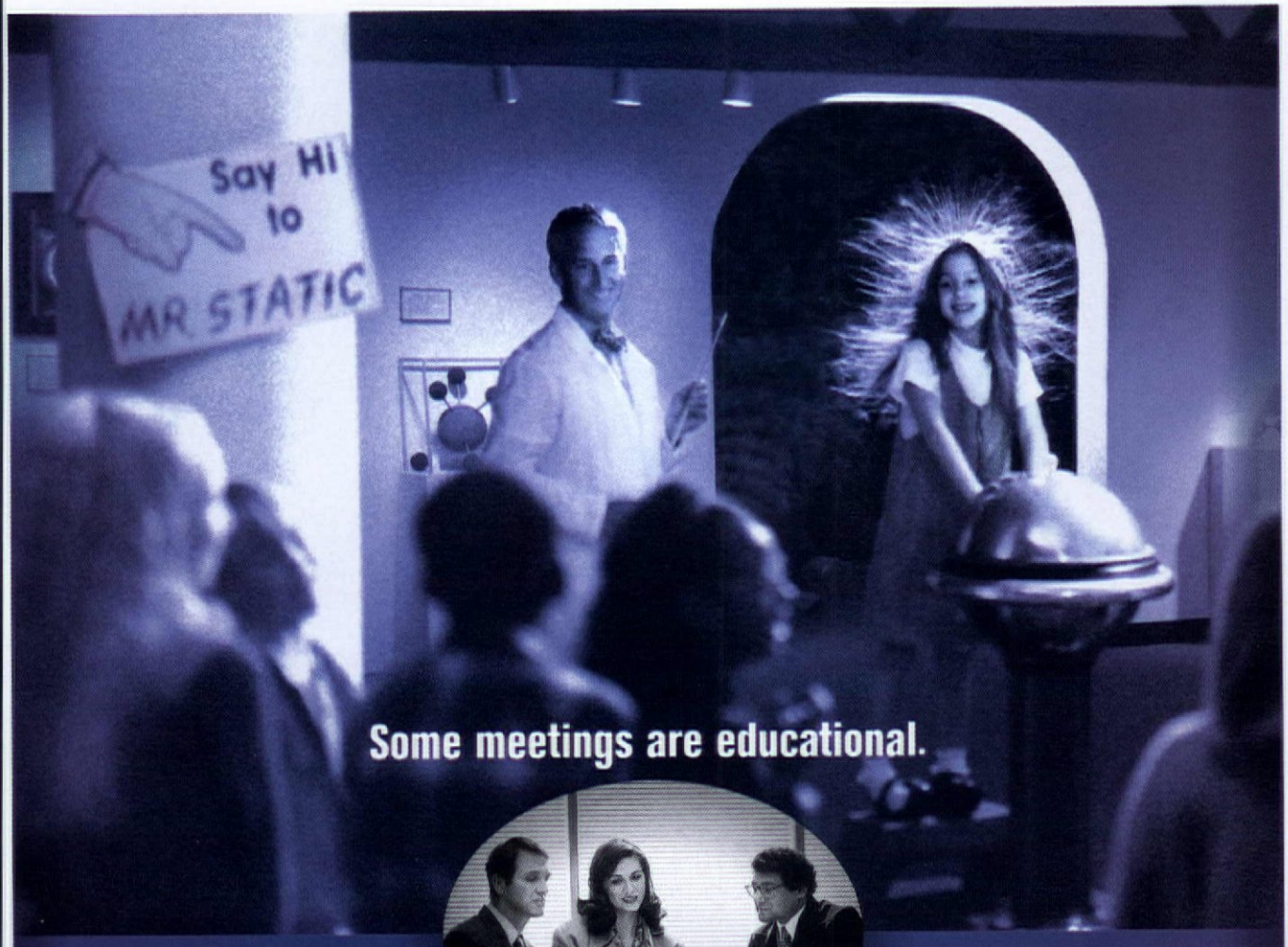
1 Chain the gas can to the garage door handle. Otherwise, instead of bringing the mower to the can, your employee will inevitably take the can to the mower, spill fuel on the lawn, and create large brown patches of poisoned turf.

2 Declare the flower beds off-limits. Indiscriminate enthusiasm is not an asset when one is weeding around choice perennials.

3 Clearly mark the edges of the lawn. To a 16-year-old, there may be no visible difference between ground cover and turf.



4 Design with antique formality. Teenagers trim shrubs into spheres, cones, turreted battlements, etc. with amazing facility. Their "naturalistic" pruning, however, recalls Diane Arbus rather than Ansel Adams.



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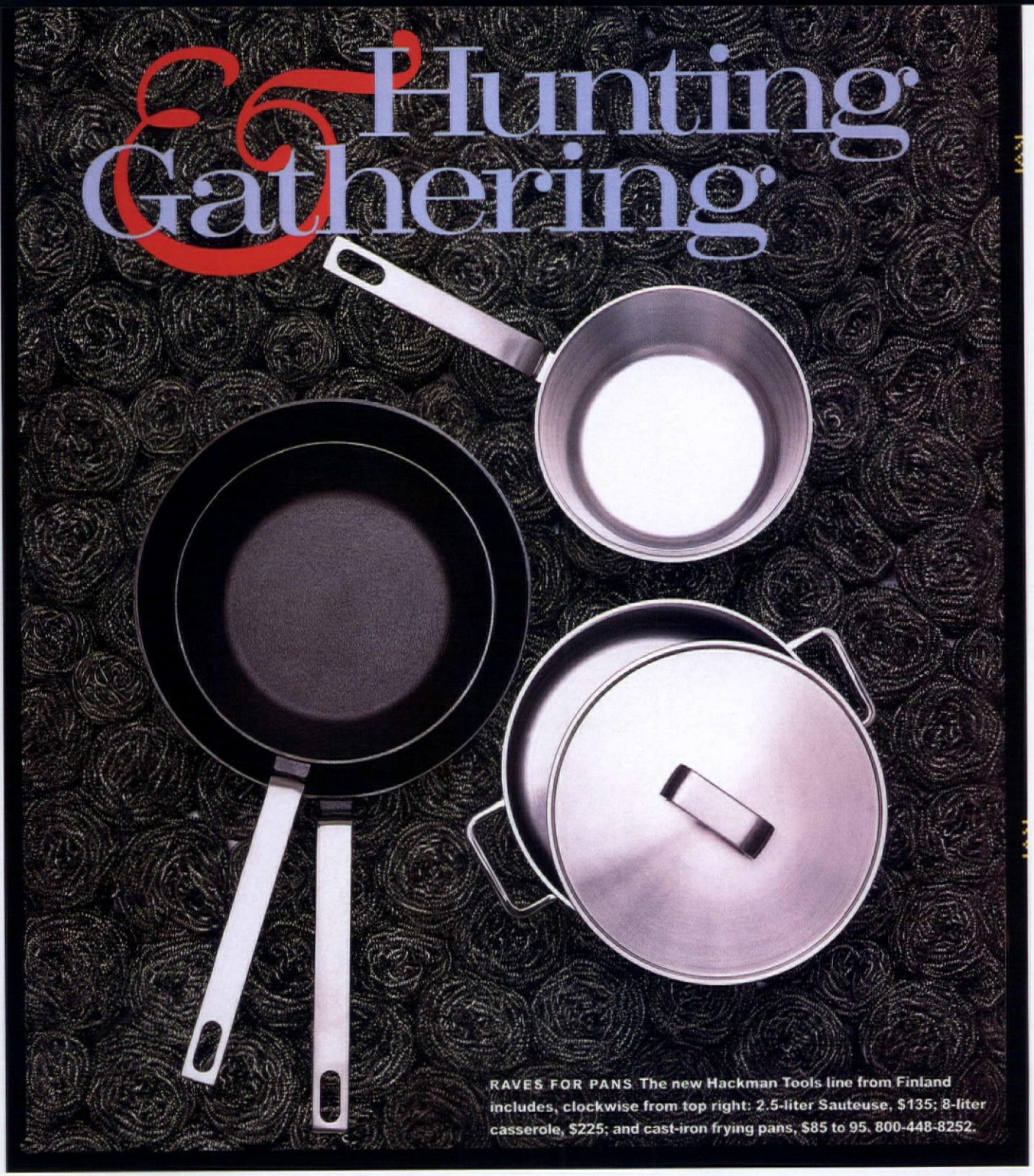

RAVES FOR PANS The new Hackman Tools line from Finland includes, clockwise from top right: 2.5-liter Sauteuse, $135; 8-liter casserole, $225; and cast-iron frying pans, $85 to 95. 800-448-8252.

pot luck

The view on the range just turned into a **pan-orama**. Pots and pans have never **looked so hot**. We've scoured the world and found the best from a chef in France and a designer in **Finland**. Also, the latest on the **kitchen cabinet** front: **new colors**, **finishes**, even a collection based on sacred geometry.

PRODUCED BY BROOKE STODDARD PHOTOGRAPHED BY JONATHAN KANTOR

WHATEVER YOUR CULINARY PROWESS, stylish pots and pans are one way to cook with flair. The cookware on these pages is as exquisite as any china pattern, and moves easily from stovetop to tabletop. But these pots are also serious tools that are turning up in the kitchens of top chefs. Alain Ducasse, the celebrated French chef, designed and tested a line of copper pots in his Paris restaurant, which are now available in this country. But which to choose: the artisanal hammered version or the smooth copper? Stockholm designer Björn Dahlström consulted with several European chefs while developing his new Tools line for Hackman, a 200-year-old Finnish

BEYOND RED **Le Creuset's cast-iron basics now come in fashionable colors like platinum and saffron. Clockwise from top: Windsor saucepan in platinum, $100; oval French oven in saffron, $150; soup pot, $170; and omelette pan, $40. 1-877-CREUSET.**

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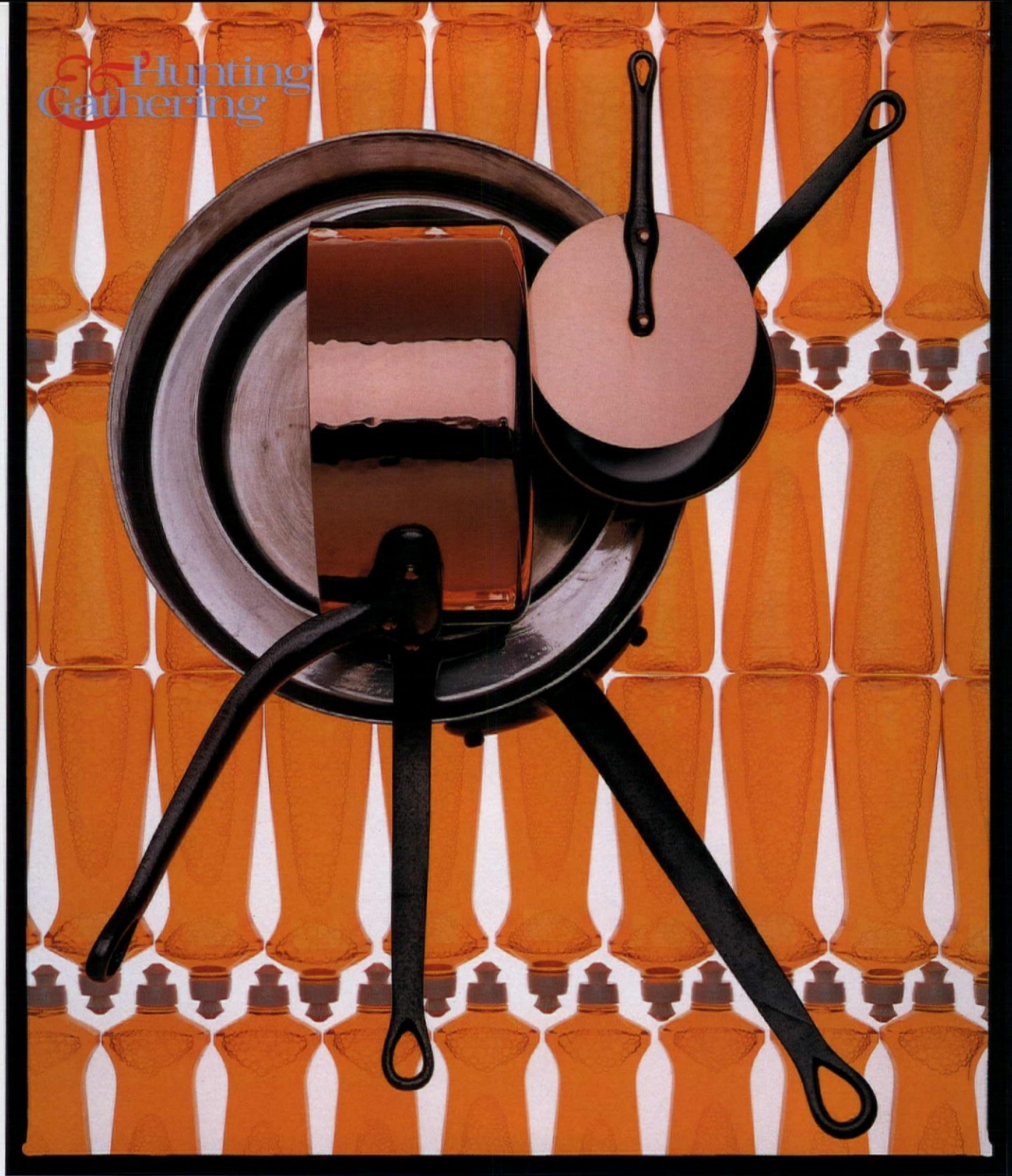

cookware company. With the pros' needs in mind, he cooked up a compound technique that sandwiches a core of aluminum, which distributes heat efficiently, between layers of stainless steel, a safe and long-lasting material. Le Creuset's cast-iron cookware isn't new: the company has been making its enamel-coated pots—a favorite of Julia Child and of chef Reed Hearon of San Francisco's Rose Pistola—since 1925. But even Le Creuset's famed French ovens are getting a face-lift. They have a fashionable new line, the Metallic Colors, and it's sure to go platinum.

CHEF'S SPECIAL **French master chef Alain Ducasse designed this copper cookware. The pots shown here range in price from $185 for a 16-centimeter saucepot to $550 for a 40-centimeter pot. Available at Bergdorf Goodman. 800-218-4918.**

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April 15

I've pretty much lost everything at one time or another. At school it was textbooks and scarves. At college, it was CDs, sneakers and jackets. On a recent trip to San Francisco, it was my wallet.

So there I was, miles from home without a dime, a ticket or a clue. Out of all the credit card companies I called, only American Express had an office where they could help me right then and there. What's more, they all stayed late to do it. Within an hour I walked out with a replacement Card and a new set of Travelers Cheques.

Naturally, I would like to have thanked them all personally when I got back but - you'll never guess what - I'm not quite sure what I did with their number.

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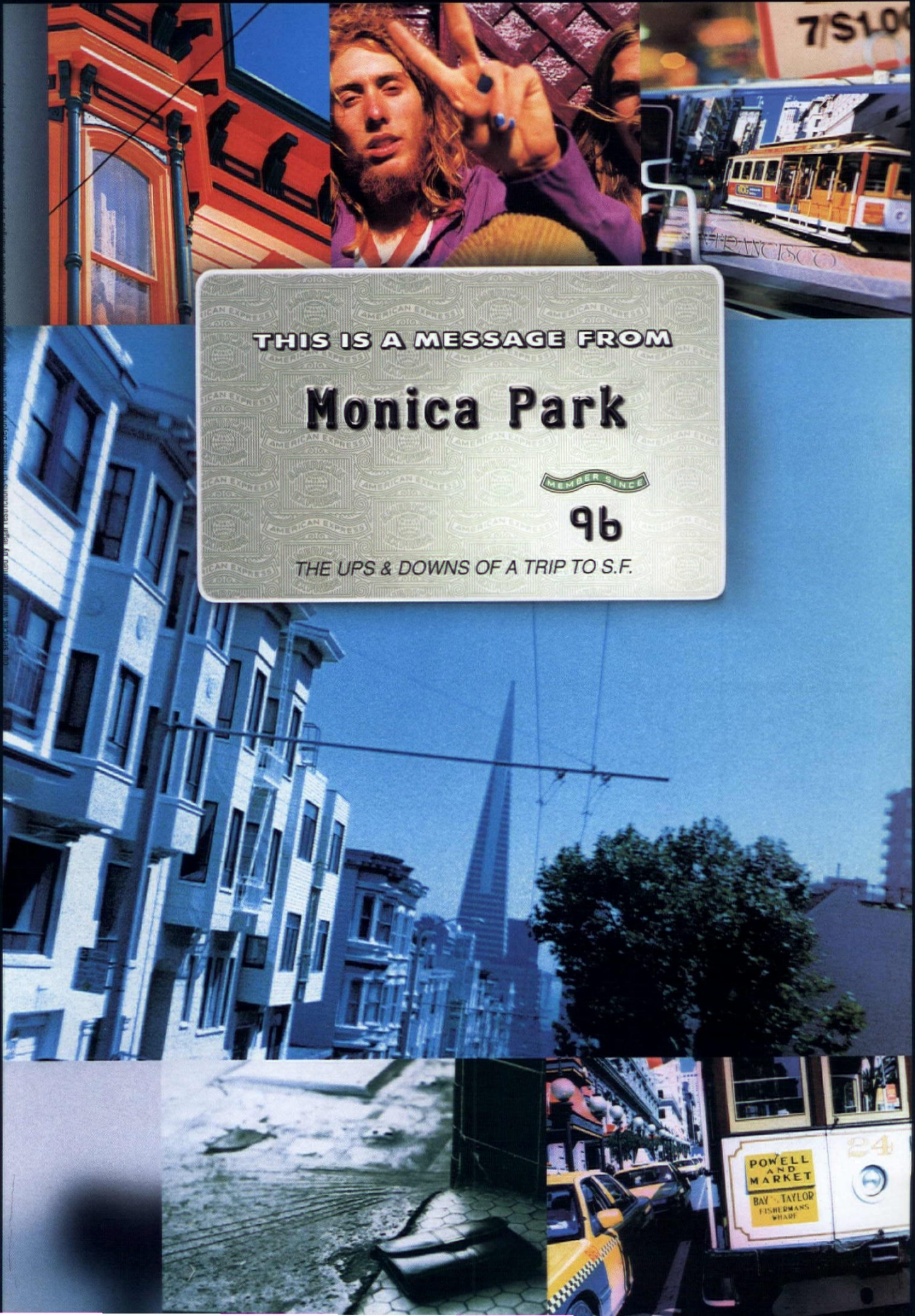
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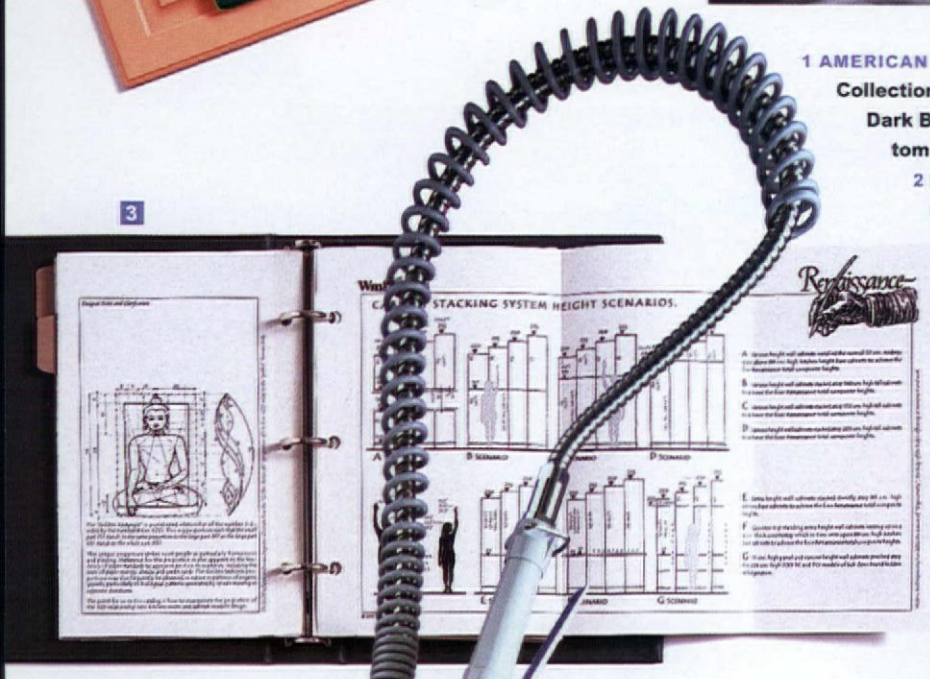
what's news

Farewell to white Formica: Color is the word in kitchen cabinets. Here's how to tap in.



1 AMERICAN CLASSICS Inspired by the Winterthur Museum Collection, from left: Gammon Room Pink, Dunlap Room Dark Blue, and Lancaster Room Mustard. Heritage Custom Kitchens, Inc., PA. 717-354-4011.

2 FRONT LINES The choices available in kitchens continue to expand with the opening of several new showrooms. The Bulthaup line, above, from Germany, will be available starting in March at Repertoire, Boston. 617-426-3865. Christians of New York, an English collection, is now on Madison Avenue. 212-570-6371. And Miele, from Germany, opened recently in Beverly Hills, CA. 310-855-9470.

3 PI CHEST William Ohs's Renaissance kitchen cabinetry is based on the ancient mathematical principles of sacred geometry. Wm Ohs, Inc., Denver, CO. 303-371-6550.

4 POUR IT ON Semi-pro chrome faucet, $585, from KWC Faucets. 888-592-3287.

5 THE DOORS Siematic cabinet fronts, from left: Red Painter's Collection, Citrus Yellow laminate, and European chestnut. 800-765-5266.

C H A N G E N O W

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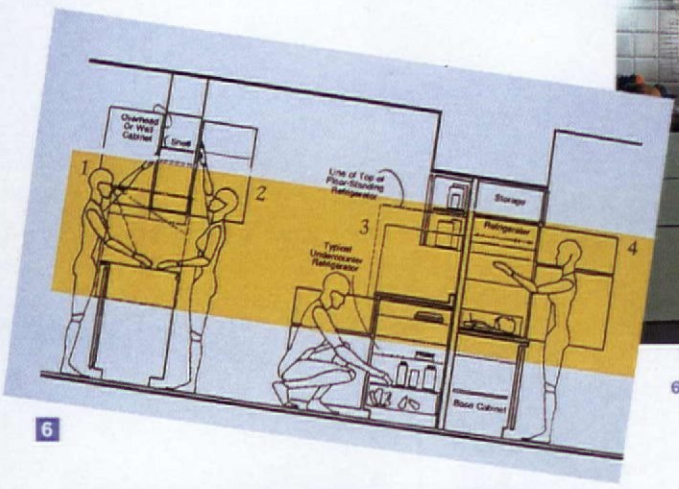

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...more news

6 UNIVERSAL PICTURES Students from the Rhode Island School of Design rethink the traditional kitchen. The Cooper-Hewitt Museum in NYC exhibits two ergonomic kitchens for tomorrow. Until March 21. 212-849-8400.

7 ITALIAN SLEEK Viva cabinets in laminate, wood veneer, and lacquer finishes. Created by Ferrari stylist Pininfarina for Snaidero. 1-877-SNAIDERO.

8 MIXED MEDIA From left: Europa cherry-veneer cabinet door in amber, Virginian maple in sandstone with punched-metal door, and Mira in iron cobalt blue. All from Canac Kitchens. 800-CANAC 4U.

9 TAP IN Professional Series stainless-steel sink, Franke. 800-626-5771.

10 MOVE IT Boffi Studio's The Works and WK6 lines, by Piero Lissoni, have movable components. Boffi Studio, NY. 212-421-1800.

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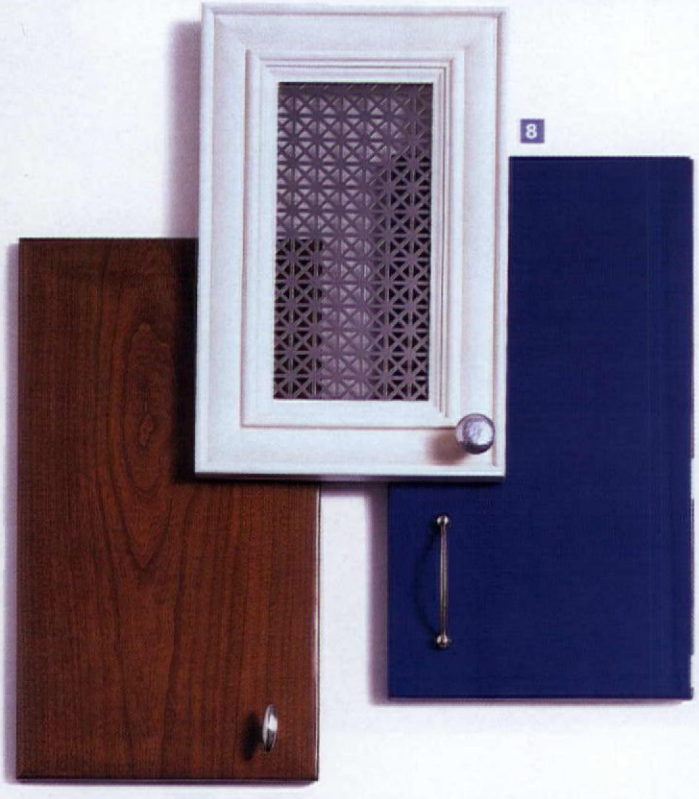

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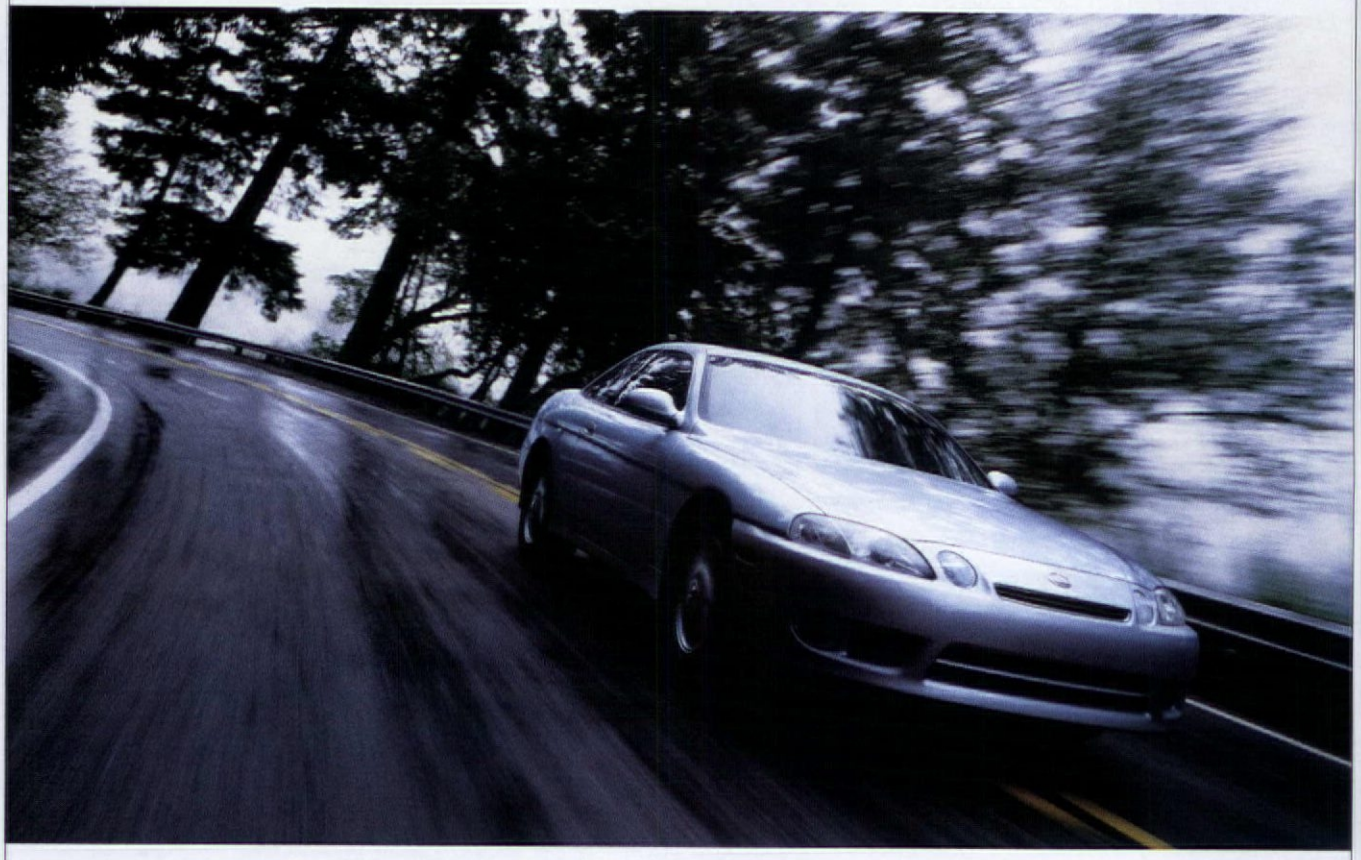

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Object Lesson

CUTTING EDGE **The latest word in knives, ceramic cutlery is costly, but, makers boast, lasts years without sharpening. A white 3.5-inch CeraStar paring knife, $85, at Moss, NYC. 212-226-2190. A black 6-inch ceramic chef's knife by Kyocera America, about $250. 800-537-0294.**

kitchen knives

It slices! It dices! It chops, carves, pares, peels, and trims! TV-pitch hype aside, **serious cooks** know that a good knife deserves **exclamation points**. In forged steel or the **new ceramics**, the best blade holds a **keen edge**. The grip feels sturdy in the hand. With **proper care** and storage (and **sharpening**), a good knife lasts years and simplifies cooking chores. It really, really works.

WRITTEN BY GREGORY CERIO PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAY ZUKERKORN

PRODUCED BY NEWELL TURNER

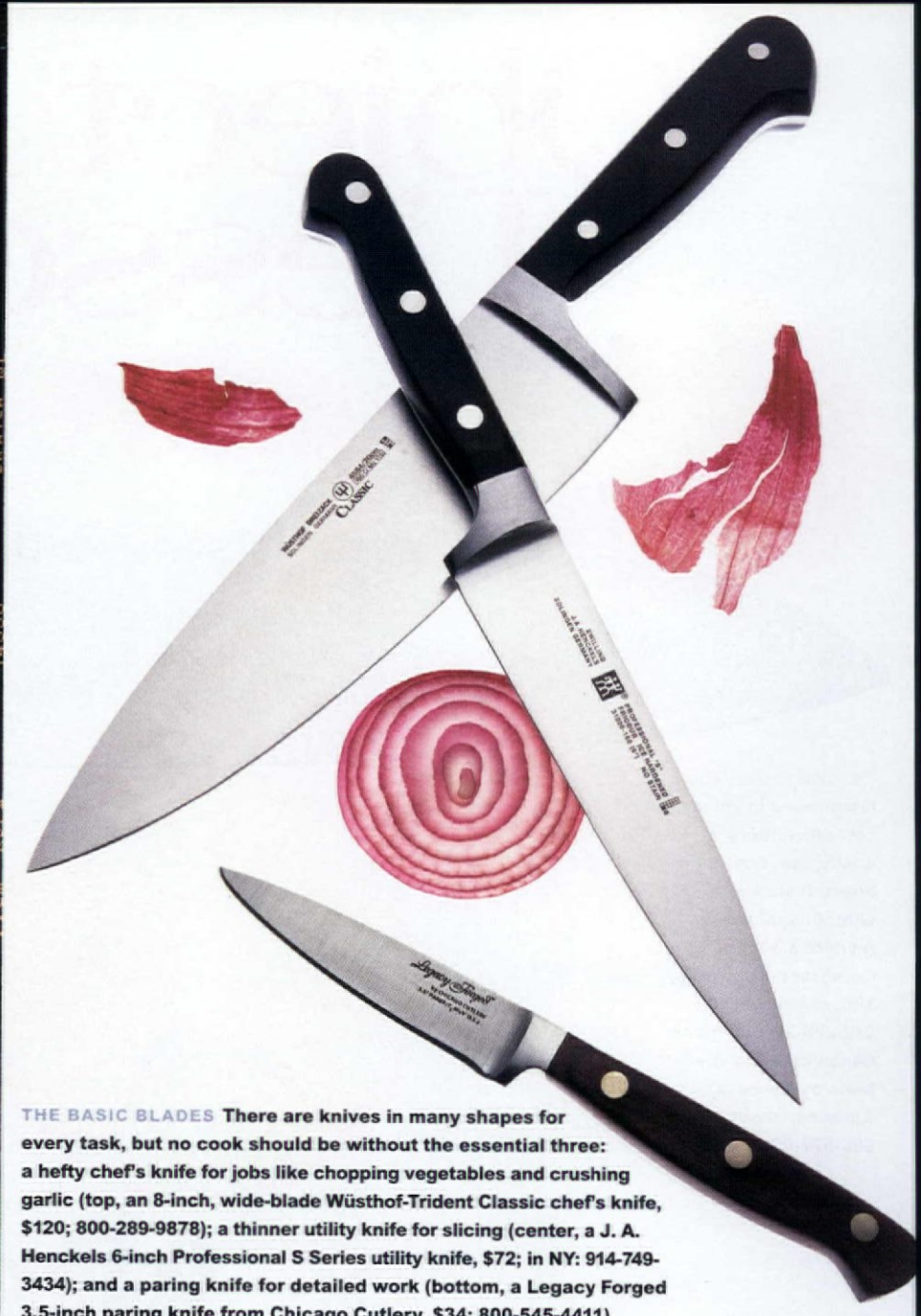
Object Lesson

Eric Ripert, the chef at the celebrated New York seafood restaurant Le Bernardin, is a nice man. Gracious, polite, he exudes all measure of generous bonhomie—unless the subject is sharing knives in the kitchen. Then, a trace of pique enters his voice. "You never give your knives to anyone. It's not being selfish. You just don't do it. I would share my toothbrush with my wife, but not my knife."

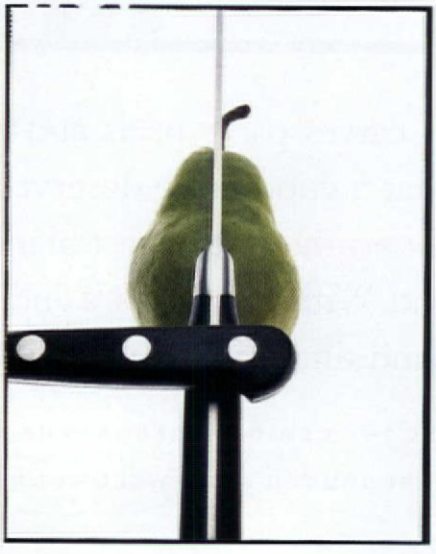
Ask Mark McGwire about his Rawlings Big Stick bat, or Anne-Sophie Mutter about her Stradivarius, and you are likely to get as impassioned a response as you do talking to cooks about their knives. To a cook, a knife has a kind of mystique. More partner than tool, it can alter your personality. Alice Waters, whose Berkeley, California, restaurant, Chez Panisse, is a gourmet landmark, talks about her "outrageous" Russian meat cleaver. "It's long and has teeth on the back; it looks dangerous as hell. When I use it, I feel powerful." For chef Rick Moonen, of New York's Oceana, a knife "should feel like a good pair of shoes." As Ripert sums it up: "A knife is very personal."

When it comes to choosing a high-quality kitchen knife, that is the primary point to bear in mind. Excellent blades are made worldwide, from Germany (the best brands include Wüsthof-Trident, J. A. Henckels Twin models, F. Dick), France (Thiers-Issard), and Japan (Global), to the United States (LamsonSharp, Chicago Cutlery). There are heavy knives and light knives, long and short knives, wide and narrow knives, knives with handles made of wood, metal, rubber, nylon, and plastic. But "best" comes down to individual taste. "The main thing is your comfort," says Jay Alpert, co-owner of the Professional Cutlery Direct catalogue. "A knife must feel like an extension of your hand."

Comfort does not necessarily mean



THE BASIC BLADES **There are knives in many shapes for every task, but no cook should be without the essential three: a hefty chef's knife for jobs like chopping vegetables and crushing garlic (top, an 8-inch, wide-blade Wüsthof-Trident Classic chef's knife, $120; 800-289-9878); a thinner utility knife for slicing (center, a J. A. Henckels 6-inch Professional S Series utility knife, $72; in NY: 914-749-3434); and a paring knife for detailed work (bottom, a Legacy Forged 3.5-inch paring knife from Chicago Cutlery, $34; 800-545-4411).**



Holding Patterns

The **handle** contributes almost as much to the quality of a knife as the blade, providing **balance, weight, and strength.** In the best forged knives, the flat piece of metal extending behind the blade—the **tang**—runs the length of the handle. You should feel no gaps between the tang and the wooden grips and **rivets** that hold them together. Because sanitary rules prohibit wooden-handled knives in **professional** kitchens (the fear is that bacteria will collect in the gaps), most knives now made for working cooks have polypropylene handles that are molded around a pencil-shaped "**rat-tail**" tang.

IT'S NOT JUST A KITCHEN,

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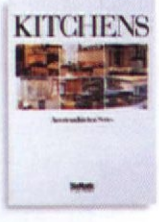

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Object Lesson

quality. Today, most superior knives are fashioned from high-carbon stainless steel, a corrosion-resistant alloy soft enough to take a sharp edge, yet strong enough to hold it. In France, many fine kitchen knives are still made from simple carbon steel (that is, with no chromium added, as in stainless steel). These soft steel blades can easily be honed to a razor edge, but they oxidize quickly, turn black, and can become pitted and corroded.

Historically, the best knives have been forged. The whole of the knife—blade, bolster (the blocky section of steel behind the blade that provides balance and acts as a finger guard), and tang (the extension around which the handle is formed)—is fashioned from one chunk of steel. A steel blank is fire-softened, then struck like a coin into a mold. The steel goes through two heating and cooling cycles. The first hardens it; the second tempers the steel, making it flexible. The blade is then ground, tapered, and finished.

"I have an outrageous cleaver from Russia. When I use it, I **feel** powerful" —ALICE WATERS, chef

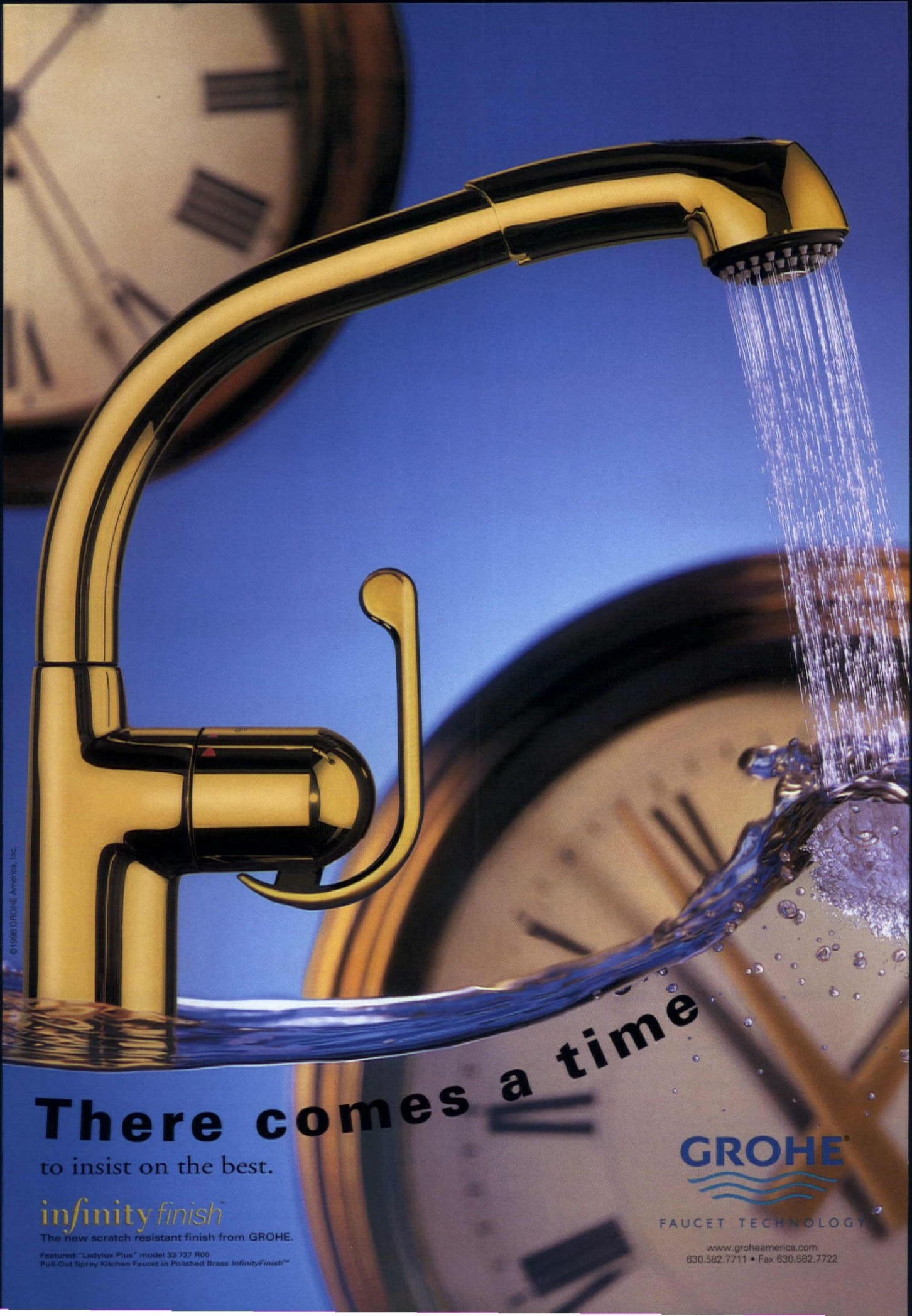
The biggest current buzz in blades is about ceramic knives—cutlery that reputedly never needs sharpening. Introduced from Japan some 12 years ago, ceramic knives are made of a press-molded compound of zirconium, the same element in fake diamonds, cubic zirconia. While the material is superhard, the knife edge will, in fact, become dull. Kyocera, the Kyoto-based firm that is the leading ceramic-blade maker, estimates that a ceramic knife will hold its edge for three to five years. A new edge can be ground on an industrial diamond wheel. But the knives lack the springiness of steel and can't take the horizontal pressure used, say, to crush garlic. "With the hardness comes a certain brittleness," says Alan Panton, Kyocera's U.S. sales manager. "We consider them slicers more than choppers."

Consumers won't consider them a bargain. The ceramic-blade-making process is expensive. While a typical high-quality forged chef's knife can cost $90 to $120, a ceramic knife of the same type costs around $250.

Still, ceramic knives are sharp, and sharpness is the only real measure of a knife. Cooks say that slicing a tomato is the best test of a blade edge. If you don't want to smuggle produce into Macy's, try writing paper. A sharp blade should easily slice a sheet held at arm's length.

Selecting the type of knife you need is the next step. There are dozens of varieties of blades, many

TASKMASTERS Specialty knives include: 1 a tomato knife (from LamsonSharp, $37.95, 800-872-6564); 2 a meat cleaver (from Thiers-Issard, $59.95; available through Professional Cutlery Direct, 800-859-6994); 3 a salmon slicer (Wüsthof-Trident Grand Prix model, $106); 4 an offset-handle bread knife (Good Grips, from Oxo, $10, 800-545-4411); 5 a boning knife (J. A. Henckels Professional S Series model, $68).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Object Lesson

HONE SWEET HONE Products to keep knives on edge. 1 Chantry Knife Sharpener, like a butcher's steel, hones a blade (about $40, 800-CHANTRY). 2 A flat steel by F. Dick handles light and heavy honing ($88, Professional Cutlery Direct). 3 A whetstone puts on a new edge (Arkansas Oil Stone, $30, Professional Cutlery Direct). 4 A traditional steel ($28, Chicago Cutlery) or 5 a ceramic steel (Global model, $80, Zabar's, NYC, 212-787-2000) readies an edge for each use. 6 Like a barber's strop, a leather hone gives blades a razor finish (Keith De'Grau model, $58, Professional Cutlery Direct).

sharpening skills

THE COOKING WORLD HAS A RULE OF THUMB—MANY a badly sliced thumb—that a dull knife is more dangerous than a sharp one. "A dull knife makes you work hard," Mark Lobel, of the famed Manhattan butcher shop Lobel's Meat Market, explains. "So mistakes happen." Safety is only one reason to maintain sharp knives. After each use, a blade loses efficiency, as the molecules of its edge are disarranged. Keeping a keen blade involves two procedures: steeling and sharpening.

Steeling Watching a chef flourish a steel—the metal rod that comes with most knife sets—is intimidating. But he's only jazzing up a routine task. Steeling simply realigns a knife edge; do it before every use. Hold the steel perpendicular to the countertop, with the tip anchored on a cloth. Draw the knife edge across at a 20-degree angle—think of a clock's minute hand at three past the hour—working from a blade's heel to tip at an even pace. Four or five swipes a side will do.

Sharpening About twice a year, a knife must be sharpened, which basically regrinds an edge. Sending knives to the sharpener is a great tradition, but purists prefer to use a whetstone themselves. Many natural stones are sold double-sided, with a coarse grit (for very dull knives) bonded to a fine grit (for general use). Lubricate the stone with water to keep friction from overheating the knife's edge (which makes it brittle). Work the blade from heel to tip at a 20-degree angle, until it is sharp.

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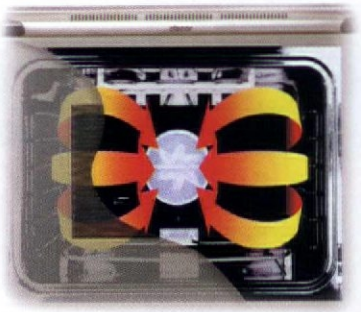

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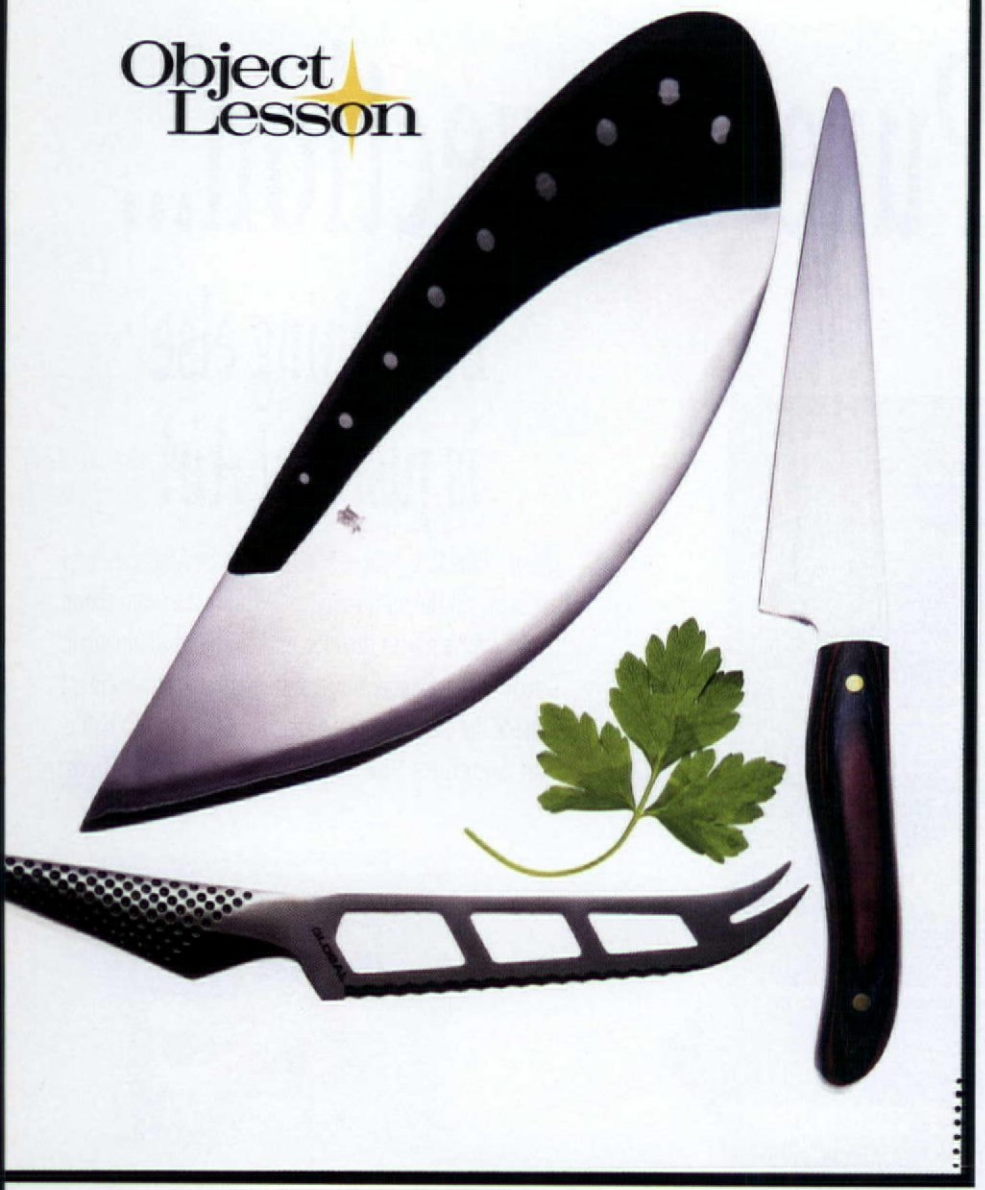

SLICE OF STYLE **Good looks don't make a knife better, but they don't hurt. Far left: A teardrop-shaped sterling herb knife from the John Hardy Collection ($180, 800-2-JHARDY) cuts up with a Michael Merriman chef's knife, left ($60, 888-439-8871), and a Global cheese knife, perforated to keep cheese from sticking to the blade ($50, Zabar's). Below: A Sur La Table pizza wheel ($11, 800-243-0852) sits by a Global sashimi knife ($79, Zabar's), and Lamson-Sharp poultry shears ($29.95 to $39.95).**

designed for special tasks. Wüsthof-Trident offers 55 knives in its Classic line alone. The one essential is a chef's knife—a weighty, all-purpose blade, 8 to 10 inches long. Most German- and American-made models are wide and curved, so the blade pivots or rocks near the tip. French chef's knives are narrower and more triangular in shape, for cooks trained to chop with a hopping, seesaw motion.

Other important knives are a thinner 8-inch utility knife for carving meat or poultry, and a paring knife for detailed work with fruits and vegetables. Serious cooks will want a boning knife, whose narrow, curved blade slips between meat and bones and sinew. A cleaver hews bones in large cuts of meat. Serrated knives are perfect for bread or tomatoes. (Serrated knives rarely get dull; if they do, they should be professionally sharpened.)

Finally, a high-quality knife comes with responsibilities. Good cooks are almost fanatical about following several rules:

- Treat a knife edge like crystal. Don't whack it against hard surfaces. Use a cutting board with give—one made of wood or plastic, not glass or stone.
- Learn to maintain a knife edge. An important point is to know the difference between honing and sharpening. Honing a metal blade with a butcher's steel before each use effectively realigns a knife edge, and will help it last much longer. (The new ceramic steels work particularly well.) When the blade does eventually go dull, sharpen it by having a new edge ground with a whetstone. Don't use an electric sharpener in lieu of a steel. This grinds off much more metal than necessary, and shortens a knife's life.
- Wash knives by hand in warm, soapy water, and dry them quickly. Never put knives in a dishwasher—even if the manufacturer says it's safe. Edges can get knocked around; handles may warp.
- Store knives in a wooden block or a slotted tray, never loose in a drawer. Magnetic strips are fine, provided they are powerful enough to hold heavy knives. Most professional cooks use a cloth knife roll. Available at cookware stores, it is a length of canvas with separate pockets for each knife that can be rolled up and tied.

Respecting knives can turn them into an investment. "A knife should be treated like a fine instrument—like a watch or any heirloom," says Norman Kornbleuth, owner of the New York cookware store Broadway Panhandler. "Properly cared for, a knife will last a generation."

"I'd share my toothbrush with my **wife**, but not my knife"—ERIC RIPERT, chef

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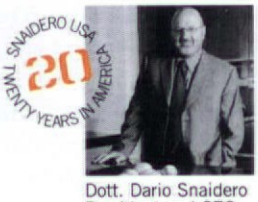

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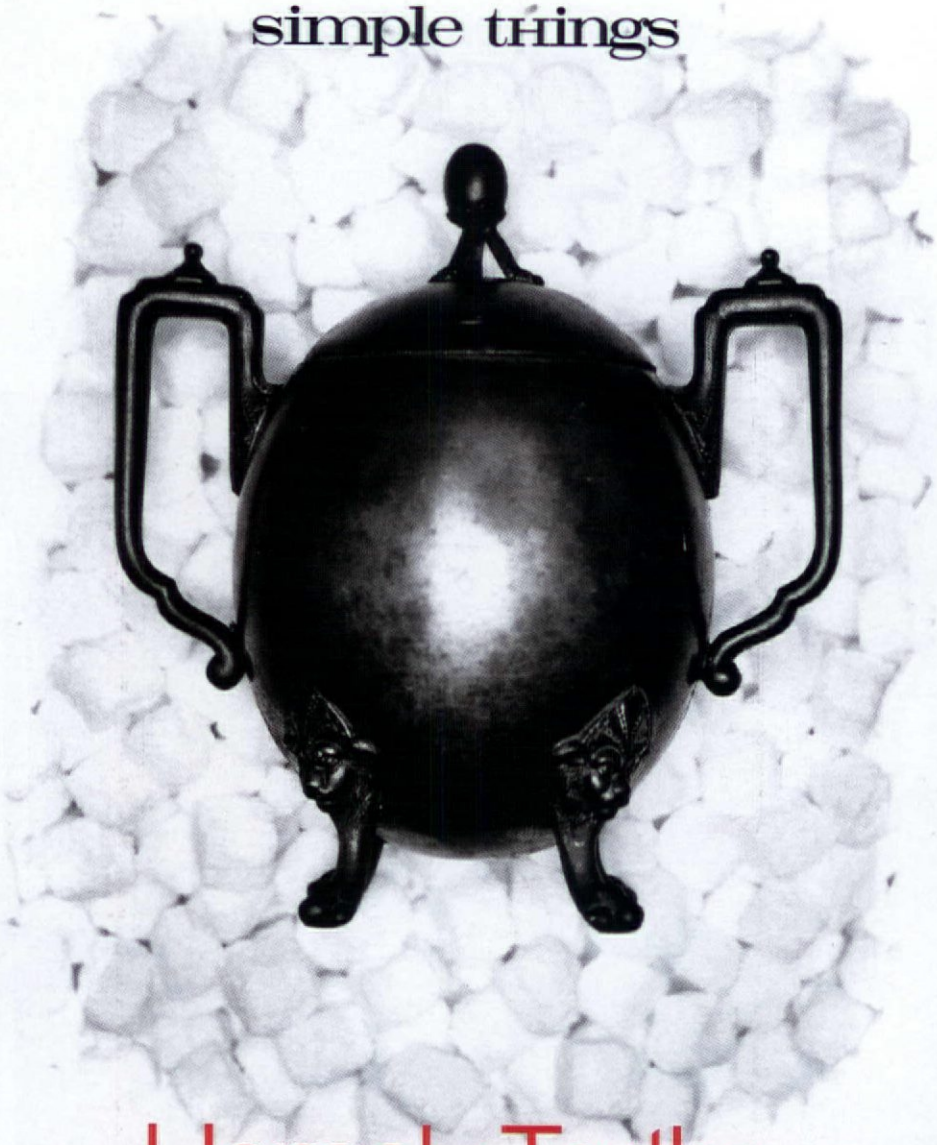

Homely Truths

Hail to the kitchen gargoyle—to the revelatory power of things not entirely beautiful

BY RUTH REICHL

"What is that ugly old thing doing in your kitchen?"

"It's not ugly!" I cry, leaping to the defense of my sugar bowl. Still, I can't help noticing that my friend has visibly recoiled and is now looking at me as if the object in my hand might bite her. Following her glance I look, really look, at the article in which I keep my sugar.

Okay, I'll admit it's an odd color. Once plated with silver, it lost its youthful glow sometime before I was born and is now a sort of mean, dull gray. I could replate it, I suppose, but then I'd be forced to look at all its other attributes. And frankly, I'm not sure I could stand that.

My sugar bowl stands about 6 inches high and has the shape of an egg. When I was kid, I thought it looked exactly like Buck Rogers's spaceship, and I sat at the breakfast table imagining it would take off at any moment and zoom out of the kitchen and into the sky. I wondered what the aliens would do with the sugar when it reached outer space.

The thing that makes it look like a spaceship, instead of, say, an egg, is its handles. They're funny things that look rather like skinny arms akimbo, as if the sugar bowl were perpetually questioning your judgment. It's got attitude; it sits there on the counter, a gray, gloomy thing, endlessly inquiring whether you ought to be eating so much sugar.

And why anything with legs like these should have attitude is beyond me. Each one, you see, is a sort of lion's paw with a demon's face on top. And if that were not enough, this ridiculous

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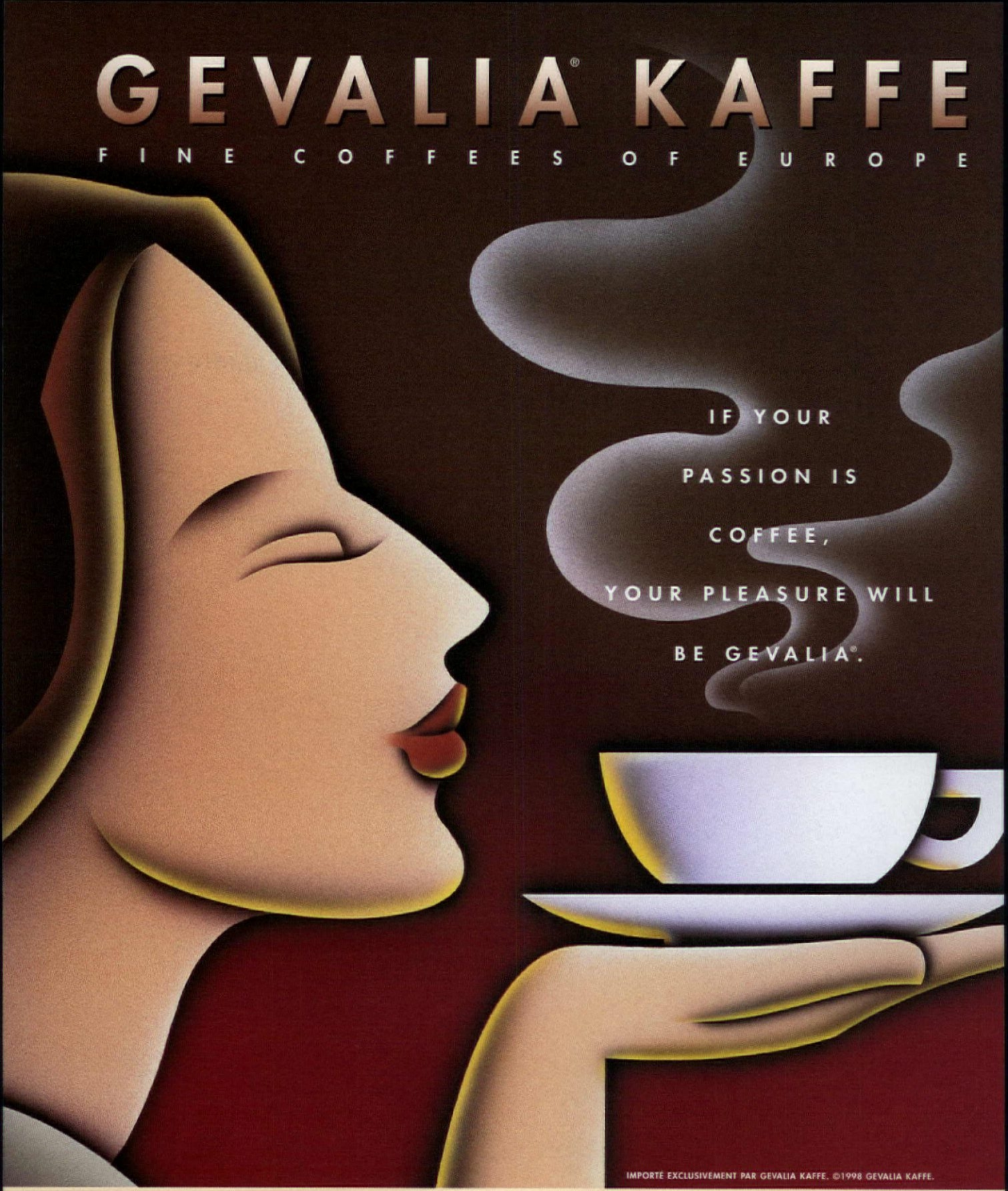

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creature has a third handle on its head, a sort of tiny egg set on a tripod of paws. It looks like a hat that doesn't quite fit, like something that will fall off the next time someone breezes through the kitchen in search of cookies.

I have to admit that it is remarkably, wonderfully, spectacularly ugly, ugly enough to make you question why anyone would have created such an object. What possessed him to do it? And then, of course, there is the next question: Why did anyone buy it?

I imagine my mother, sometime in the early '50s, reading an instructive article on redecorating your kitchen for pennies. "Ladies," the author exhorts, "treasures are waiting around every corner. Seek them out. Don't neglect those rummage sales; even the least promising article is filled with potential!" I imagine Mom setting off for the P.S. 41 bazaar in a blaze of inspiration. There, hidden in a box, is the sugar bowl. Pouncing upon it, she considers its hidden possibilities.

Perhaps she bought it the winter she sprayed all the appliances with gold paint. (It was not a good idea; when you put a slice of bread into the toaster, it came out slightly gilded.) Or it might have been the year she decided bedrooms were irrelevant and forced the family to sleep on Castro Convertibles so she could use the entire apartment for parties; cocktails were served in my room. I suppose the sugar bowl presided in my brother's bedroom, which is where the guests gathered for coffee and dessert.

I'LL NEVER KNOW where, or when, Mom purchased the thing because she is no longer available for questions. But it's not too late to ask myself why I have chosen to look at this atrocious object every day for almost 50 years. Why does it sit on my kitchen counter while my grandmother's perfectly presentable silver is relegated to a bottom drawer?

The truth is that until that moment when my friend recoiled, I had never even considered the question. But now I have. And I have an answer: Any object as peculiar as this one has a special message.

Beautiful things are easy. They purr at you, providing pleasure, improving the world and making you happy to be alive. If they are natural, they make you thankful to be on earth (and if you are so inclined, to ponder greater purpose). If they are man-made, they make you proud to belong to such a clever and creative species. My sugar bowl, on the other hand, is a constant reminder of the great human urge to transform the world. And a warning that this is not always wise.

This is not a bad thing to remember when you are in a kitchen. As I flip through cookbooks, considering what to make for dinner, my sugar bowl stands there like a gargoyle, cautioning me not to try too hard. "Remember me!" it cries as I contemplate the creation of some four-day concoction that will look like a Florentine paperweight if I manage to do every step just so. I glance over at my sugar bowl, shake my head, and make meat loaf instead.

Sometimes, of course, I ignore its warnings. And so it watches, skeptically, as I whip egg whites and formulate fancy sauces. And when the béarnaise breaks, the sauce separates, and the soufflé falls, my sugar bowl has something else to say. It sits there in its terrible beauty reminding me that the worst mistakes sometimes turn out to be lovable.

My sugar bowl is a constant reminder of the great human urge to transform the world. And a warning that this is not always wise

RUTH REICHL *and her sugar bowl reside in Manhattan, where she is the restaurant critic for* The New York Times. *Her memoir,* Tender at the Bone *(Random House), was published last year.*

Oh, Reason Not the Need!

The extravagant, the useless, and the deeply cuckoo all beckon with the promise of transforming our culinary lives

BY TOM CONNOR

We've seen them on the cooking shows and infomercials. They call to us from the pages of kitchen catalogues and leap out from the shelves of specialty food stores: Olive oil sprayers, pasta rakes, bûche de Noël molds, radish decorators, 12-slice toasters, 50-piece pastry decorating sets, obsessive-compulsive juicers, attention-deficit espresso makers.

What we really need to do, of course, is use the gadgets we already own, and actually cook something—anything—new. But in the meantime, what we want is kitchen equipment so exotic, so visually appetizing, so absolutely unnecessary that simple possession will somehow transubstantiate our culinary lives.

In our quest for nonessential kitchen items, we leafed through a week's worth of catalogues and strolled through a handful of retail stores in New York City, where we found we weren't alone in our amazement. "I'm constantly walking around the store thinking, 'This is *really* nonessential,' " says Paige Watson, vice president of retail sales at Broadway Panhandler. "There are things here that will make you a better cook, but probably none of the gadgets you've selected."

Some quintessential nonessentials:

Vintage Enhancer

This handy little nonessential changes the pH level of alcoholic beverages, making them "taste mellower and more mature," according to the packaging copy. Which sounds absolutely necessary for the kinds of immature wines we've been known to drink. But for a '79 Haut-Brion or '86 Margaux? "If you pay $100 for a vintage bottle of wine, I don't think it needs to be enhanced," says Melen Ham, the buyer for Zabar's block-long Housewares Mezzanine on Broadway at Eightieth Street. Nevertheless, if you've bought all the impressive vintage wines you want, and still have money left over, hell, you might as well buy this, too.

Price: $49.98 (Zabar's)

Nonessential use: Suggests to guests that you are an oenophile.

Essential use: Said to improve wines brought by cheap dinner guests or cheap wines you've bought for relatives.

KitchenAid White Diamond 5-Quart Stand Mixer

A competition-quality piece of equipment, this 10-speed, 325-watt dynamo can mix it up with any piece of machinery in the house or garage. Standing a foot and a half high, it will also intimidate other kitchen gadgets into toeing the line.

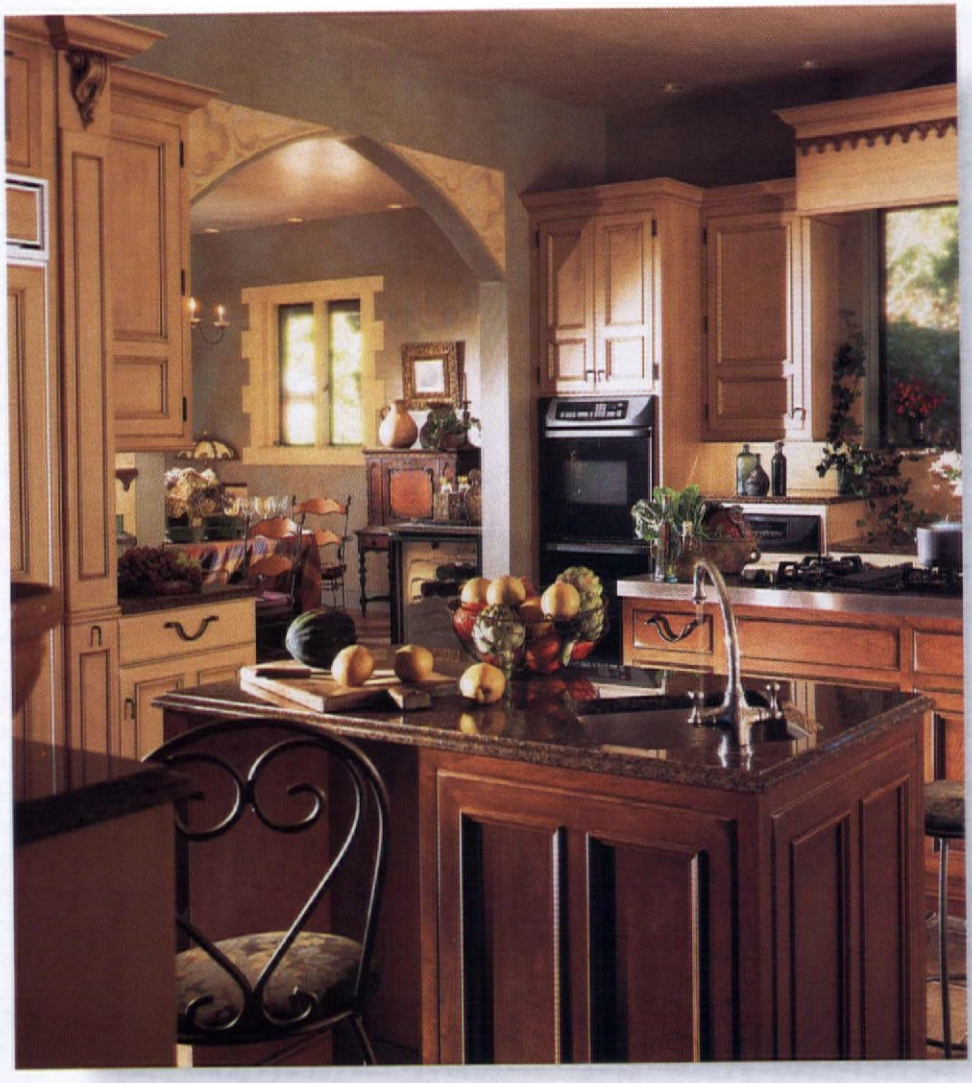
Price: $399.99 (Chef's Catalog)

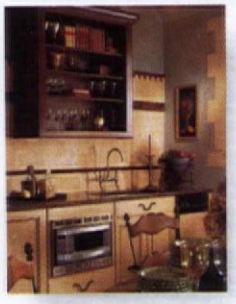
Nonessential use: Mixes more stuff than we could possibly use, faster than we could possibly need it.

Essential use: Probably could mix grout or cement for use in kitchen re-tiling or home foundation repair.

Decoretto Radish Rose Cutter and Zig-Zag Cutter

The Decoretto is the ideal nonessential, in that it compels you to acquire many more nonessential gadgets so that every root, fruit, and legume can be





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carved to resemble something else.
Price: $18.95 (Broadway Panhandler)
Nonessential use: Turns tubers into flowers.
Essential use: Turns tubers into flowers.

One Hundred Three and Nine Tenths-Quart Copper Stockpot

Now it's possible to reduce the entire contents of your refrigerator into 103.9 quarts of soup using just one pot. But the real beauty of this "Mother of All Copper Pots" is that, weighing in at 63 pounds, it's really too heavy to lift to the stove top.
Price: $1,755.00 (Bridge Kitchenware)
Nonessential use: A decorative kitchen item suggesting massive entertainment commitments.
Essential use: Can render a whole adult emu or small water buffalo into stock.

Pasta Rakes

Forks are fine for twirling a few strands of linguine No. 11. But if you want to transfer *all* the pasta on your plate to your mouth at once, then these implements are indispensable. Developed by landscapers in Tuscany during a lunch break, this set is also useful for raking up crumbs and fallen centerpiece petals, or for engineering roads through mashed potatoes.
Price: Set of two, $25 (Williams-Sonoma catalogue)
Nonessential use: Eat twice as much in half the time.
Essential use: An efficient means of removing large quantities of vermicelli from the lawn.

Kitchen Torch

Professional pastry chefs use butane torches to caramelize sugar on tarts and crème brûlées. We could do this, too, if we felt like it and if more challenging tasks didn't await us.
Price: $34 (Williams-Sonoma catalogue)
Nonessential use: Burning the tops of things.
Essential use: Reheating take-out, loosening old cereal on breakfast bowls.

The Adjustable-Slice Bread Knife

With its Teflon-coated guide and high-carbon-steel serrated blade, this knife is capable of slicing bread as thin as a sheet of Strathmore 20-pound bond. "If you wanted to have a little pad of bread paper, yes, you could do that with this knife," confirms Bob Kieffer, store manager of Hammacher Schlemmer.
Price: $29.95 (Hammacher Schlemmer)
Nonessential use: Can vary bread thickness according to luncheon guests' girths.
Essential use: Can be used as a knife.

The Treviglio Cappuccino Manufactory by Gaggia

This little baby really . . . well, we actually don't know how well it does what it's supposed to, because we haven't figured out how to hard-wire it to the 220 power line or connect it to the main water pipes.
Price: $7,799 (Hammacher Schlemmer)
Nonessential use: Can brew enough cappuccino for everyone in the Gaggia factory in under ten seconds.
Essential use: We don't know.

Gourmet Outdoor Cooking Island with Wood-Fired Pizza Oven & Professional 53" Grill with Infrared Rotisserie

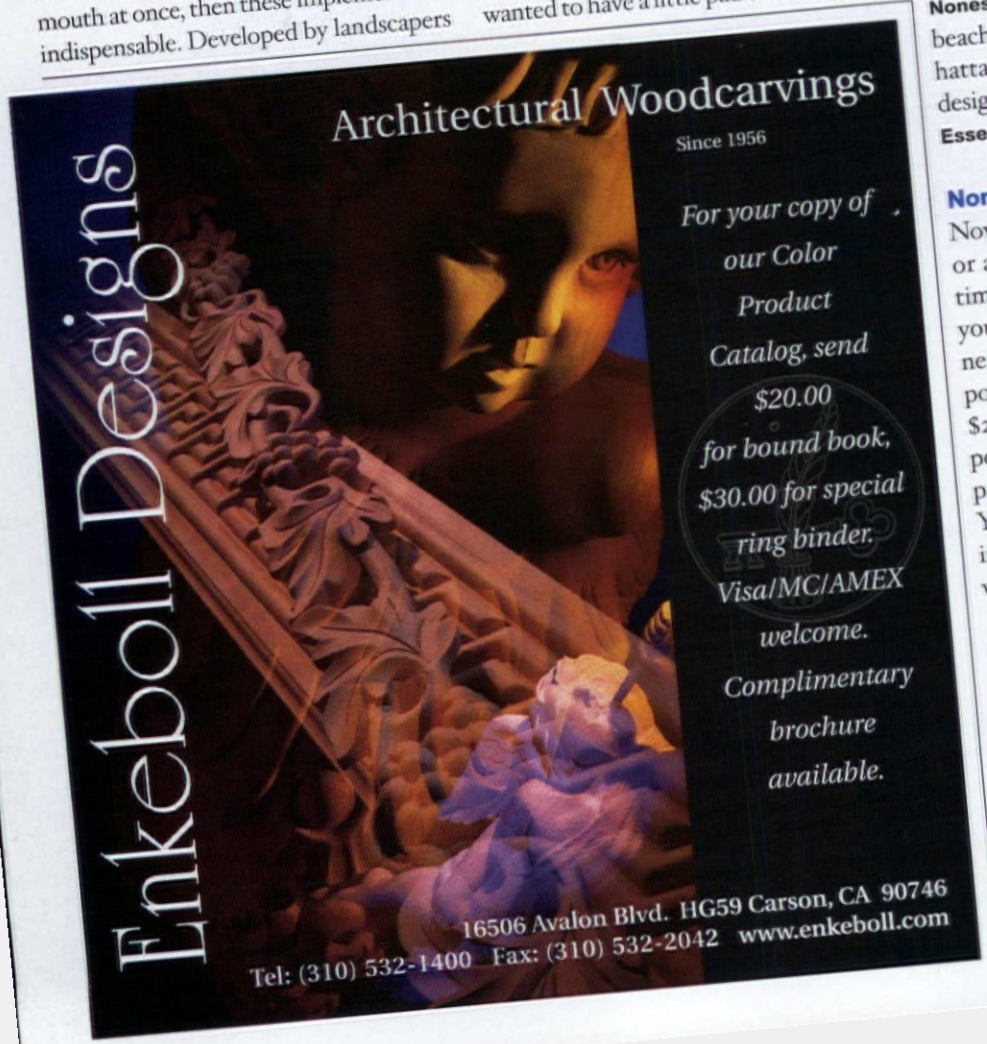
This unit is essential for those who spend a lot of time out-of-doors, especially those who have no kitchen. Otherwise, it is an absolute nonessentiality.
Price: About $12,000 (Frontgate catalogue)
Nonessential use: Ideal for the pool and beach, or for setting up in midtown Manhattan as a base from which to vend designer pizzas and slow-roast squab.
Essential use: None that we're aware of.

Nonessential Foods

Now that you've bought or ordered one or all of the above items, it's probably time to cook something nonessential. If you're in a hurry, a wild selection of dinner ideas including: beaver tail ($31 a pound); caribou saddle (6-pound pack, $21.95 a pound); cock's comb ($23.95 per pound); kangaroo leg bone (9-pound pack, $7.95 a pound); and squab, New York–dressed (meaning, perhaps, a pigeon in a suit, $11.95 each) can be found at www.overnitegourmet.com.

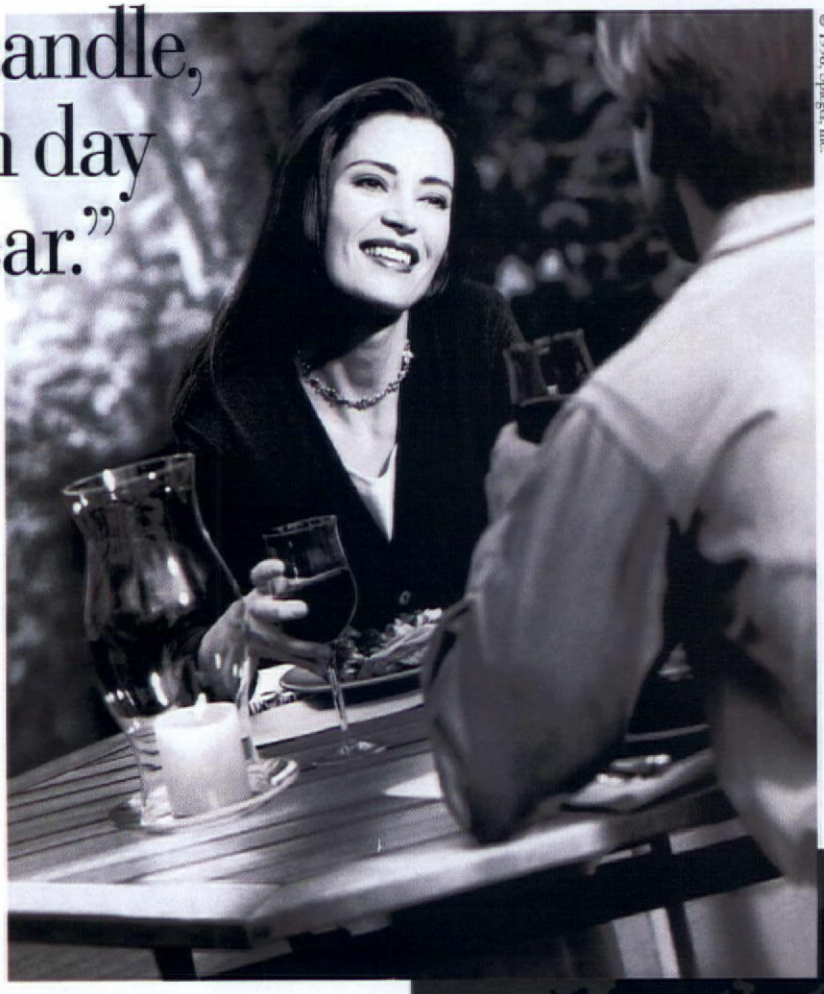
While somewhere on the planet the above items may be essential for survival, not to worry—on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, or in East Hampton, or Greenwich, Connecticut, they probably aren't. Bone appetite!

TOM CONNOR *is the co-author of* Martha Stuart's Better Than You at Entertaining.



"The moment you light a candle, even a rotten day can disappear."

~ Karen Stone
Police Officer,
Mother of 2



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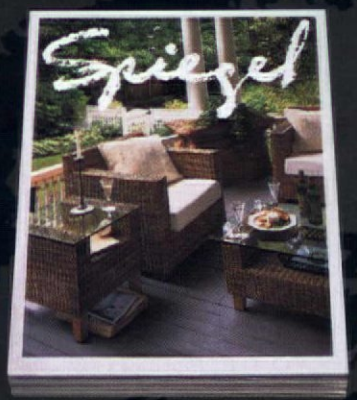

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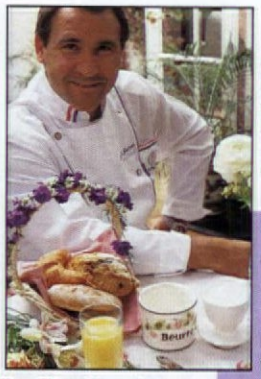

—Chef Patrick Jamon, Executive Chef at the Regency Club in Los Angeles, California. shares one of his favorite flavored butter recipes.

Roasted Hazelnut Butter:

4 oz. fresh hazelnuts
1 stick unsalted butter
¼ tsp. lemon zest

Directions: Allow butter to soften. In a hot oven (400°), roast hazelnuts for 10 minutes. Remove skin after roasting and coarsely chop them. Mix with the butter and add the lemon zest. Serve on breakfast rolls or with afternoon tea on country breads.

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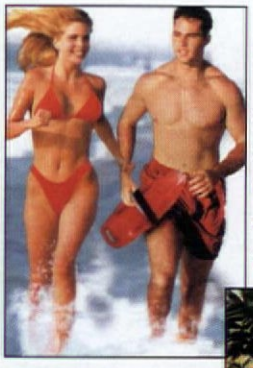

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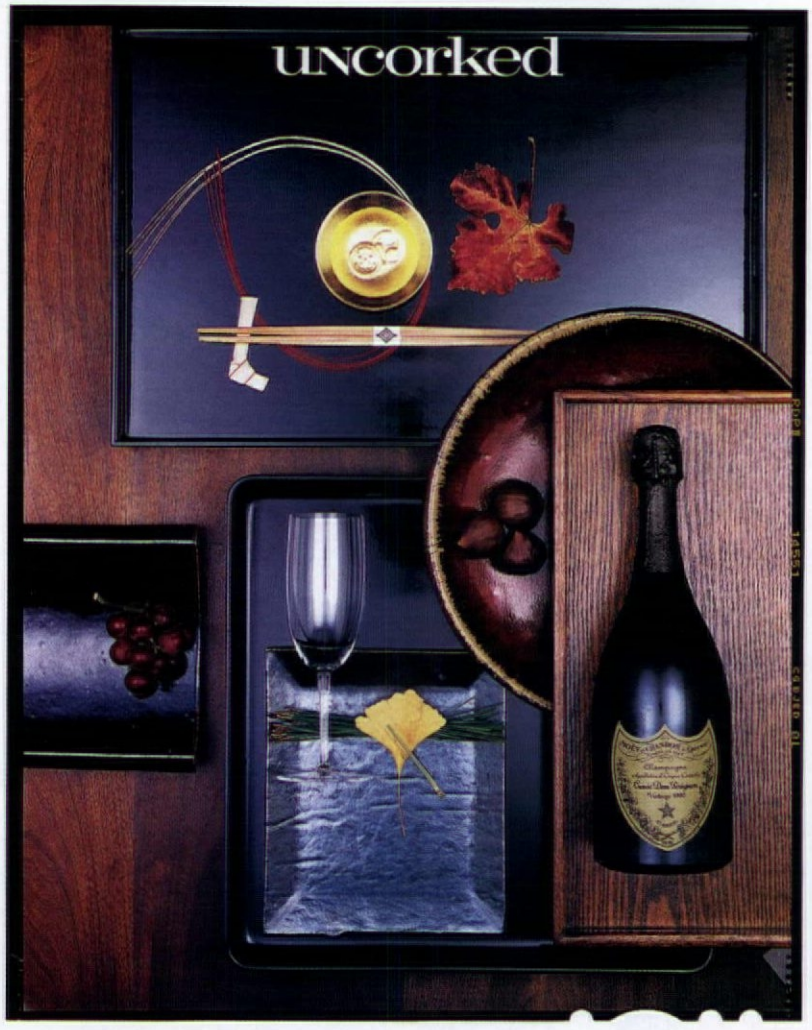

Continental Twist

Kaiseki, the ethereal cuisine of Japan, finds its perfect partner in vintage French champagne

BY JAY McINERNEY

MASTER chef Joël Robuchon, who recently retired from his eponymous three-star Paris restaurant, was skeptical. He had been invited, along with other food and wine buffs, to Château de Saran, an eighteenth-century manor owned by Moët & Chandon, to experience an evening of Dom Pérignon champagne and Japanese kaiseki cuisine. The experiment was the brainchild of Richard Geoffroy, the effervescent *chef de cave* for Dom Pérignon. When he's not in the Moët cellars beneath the town of Épernay, Geoffroy travels the globe as an ambassador for the world's most famous luxury beverage, and his culinary exploration has led him to an obsession with the affinities between champagne and Asian cuisine. He became particularly interested in kaiseki, the ethereal haute cuisine of aristocratic Kyoto, which ultimately derives from Zen temple cooking. Last November, he convinced Yoshihiro Murata, one of Japan's most accomplished chefs, to come to Épernay for a week to explore the synchronicity of kaiseki and bubbly.

According to Geoffroy, Robuchon's skepticism faded fast: by the third of eleven courses, he was furiously scribbling notes, and by the end of the meal, he announced that he had experienced an epiphany. Having lived in Japan and washed down a fair amount of champagne with sushi, I was probably less skeptical when I arrived a few days later. But still, I was unprepared for the revelations that awaited me.

It's hard to imagine two cuisines less alike than French and Japanese. "French cooking has more in common with Chinese," says Geoffroy. "Both are about the fusion of elements and processing. Italian is closer to Japanese—they are about the purity of ingredients. Especially in kaiseki." However, Japanese cooking and champagne have one important ingredient in common. "It's the yeast," says Geoffroy, presiding over the table in the dining room at the Château de Saran.

The harvest was completed a few days ago; the hillside vineyards outside have

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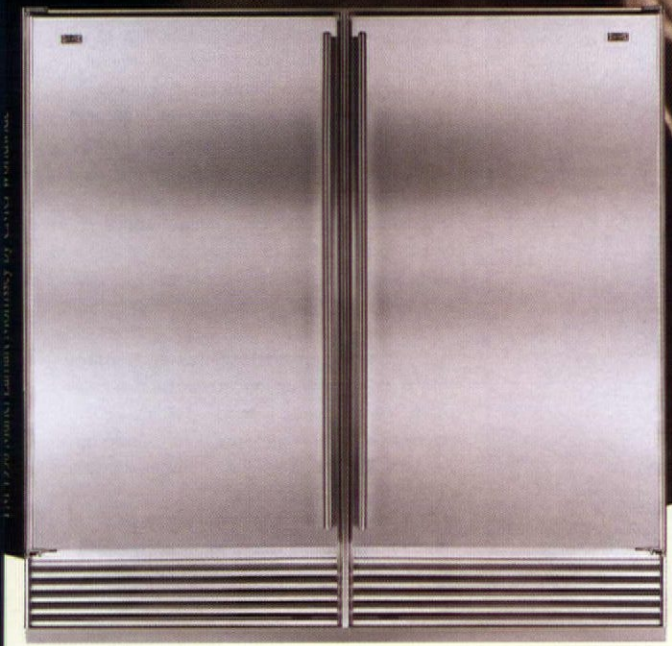

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turned to gold. Although this is the last of a week's worth of such dinners, Geoffroy seems ridiculously excited by the prospect of the meal ahead—like a matchmaker who believes he's about to unite two royal families. His perpetually surprised-looking hair and the irregular line of his front teeth add to the impression of eager boyishness. "Japanese cooking is based on fermented foods—sake, soy sauce, miso, and daizu. Yeast is the key." And no wine is quite so prominently yeasty as twice-fermented champagne. ("Bread" and "toast" are among the most frequent notes cited by champagne tasters.) Other sparkling wines, including those from California, seldom show their yeasty quality so prominently as those from the cool-weather Champagne region. "In California," says Geoffroy, "the fruit character is so strong that the yeast can't get through the door. For me, champagne is about the marriage of fruit and yeast."

The first marriage of the evening involves matsutake mushrooms and 1985 Dom Pérignon. The Portobello-sized matsutakes are the truffles of Japanese cooking. Like the ingredients for this dinner—as well as Murata's staff and all of the dinnerware—they have been flown in fresh from Japan. The matsutakes are grilled over charcoal braziers as we watch. More ethereal than truffles, they are served on creamy-glazed earthenware trays with a wedge of sudachi, a tiny Japanese lime. The earthy, smoky taste of the grilled mushroom and the bite of the lime are amazingly similar to the flavors of the '85 DP. Other courses involve more contrapuntal relationships. I'll never forget the fourth-course toro—the most desirable cut of the tuna, from the belly; its fatty richness made the '85 DP seem slim and racy. I can't even begin to describe the relationships involved in the fifth-course "transgressive fusion" dish: a lily-bulb-paste dumpling wrapped around a ball of foie gras, and sprinkled with truffles and crushed quail skull. Nice try—but I prefer the traditional kaiseki dishes, like the monkfish liver, and the abalone and uni (sea urchin) cooked in seaweed and salt. I also like the grilled fugu (poison blowfish), which always adds a certain Russian roulette frisson to a good kaiseki dinner. The coup de grâce, however, is a simple bowl of perfectly cooked short-grained sticky rice, topped with Beluga caviar. Washed down, of course, with more '85 Dom Pérignon.

It's difficult to find real kaiseki cooking in the States, and most of us can't afford to drink Dom Pérignon very often, but the principles of the Château de Saran dinners are transferable to your local sushiya. Miso, like soy sauce, is very champagne friendly. And champagne somehow holds its own against all but the largest doses of wasabi, the piquant, pale-green horseradish-like root that generally accompanies sashimi. Vinegar, however, is a wine killer: those Japanese dishes which rely on it should be accompanied by sake.

"It's about suggesting and opening doors," says Geoffroy of his grand experiment, as he pours 1959 Dom Pérignon in the parlor after dinner. Sipping the shockingly youthful beverage, I am thinking that Kipling may have been wrong about East and West. On this particular rainy night in Champagne, the twain have met.

THE OENO FILE

All of these wines are available; finding the three early vintages, which have been recently disgorged and re-released from the château, may require perseverance.

'90 CUVÉE DOM PÉRIGNON An exceptional vintage. The fruit (58 percent Chardonnay) is very ripe, but it's balanced by a limy acidity that makes it bright as a bell on a cold morning. Best since the '82? I can't help drinking it now, but like the '75, it will last forever. Drink with hamachi and go easy on the soy sauce. $110

'88 CUVÉE DOM PÉRIGNON ROSÉ The newest rosé release has more candied fruit than its predecessor—my all-time favorite—the sublime '86. Gorgeous salmon sashimi color. Despite the high acid of the vintage, it's very well-balanced and ready to drink. $200

'85 CUVÉE DOM PÉRIGNON More delicate than the '90, an autumnal beauty just starting to show the dried fruit and earth flavors of mature champagne. A haiku of a champagne. $400 for a set of three bottles.

'75 CUVÉE DOM PÉRIGNON This is, by DP standards, a blockbuster. Geoffroy thinks it shows what the '90 will be like eventually. Yeasty baked bread and fruitcake flavors and a long, very dry finish. Bring on the toro. $900 for a set that includes a bottle of the '78 and '66 vintages.

'66 CUVÉE DOM PÉRIGNON Very svelte and elegant, with a mineral core and a wonderful slippery texture. For some reason it makes me think of Ariel in *The Tempest*.

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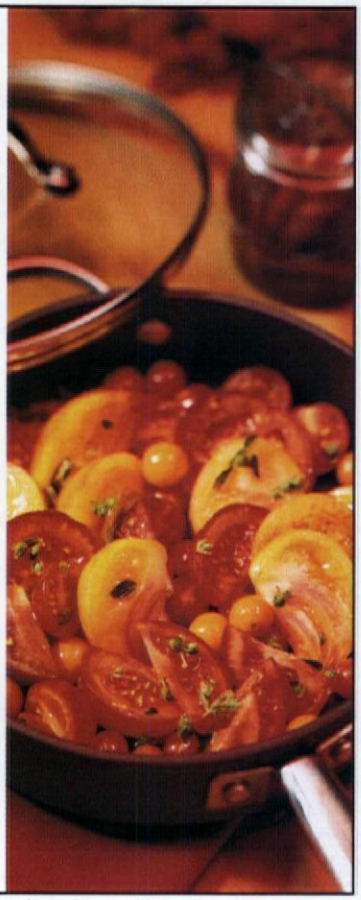

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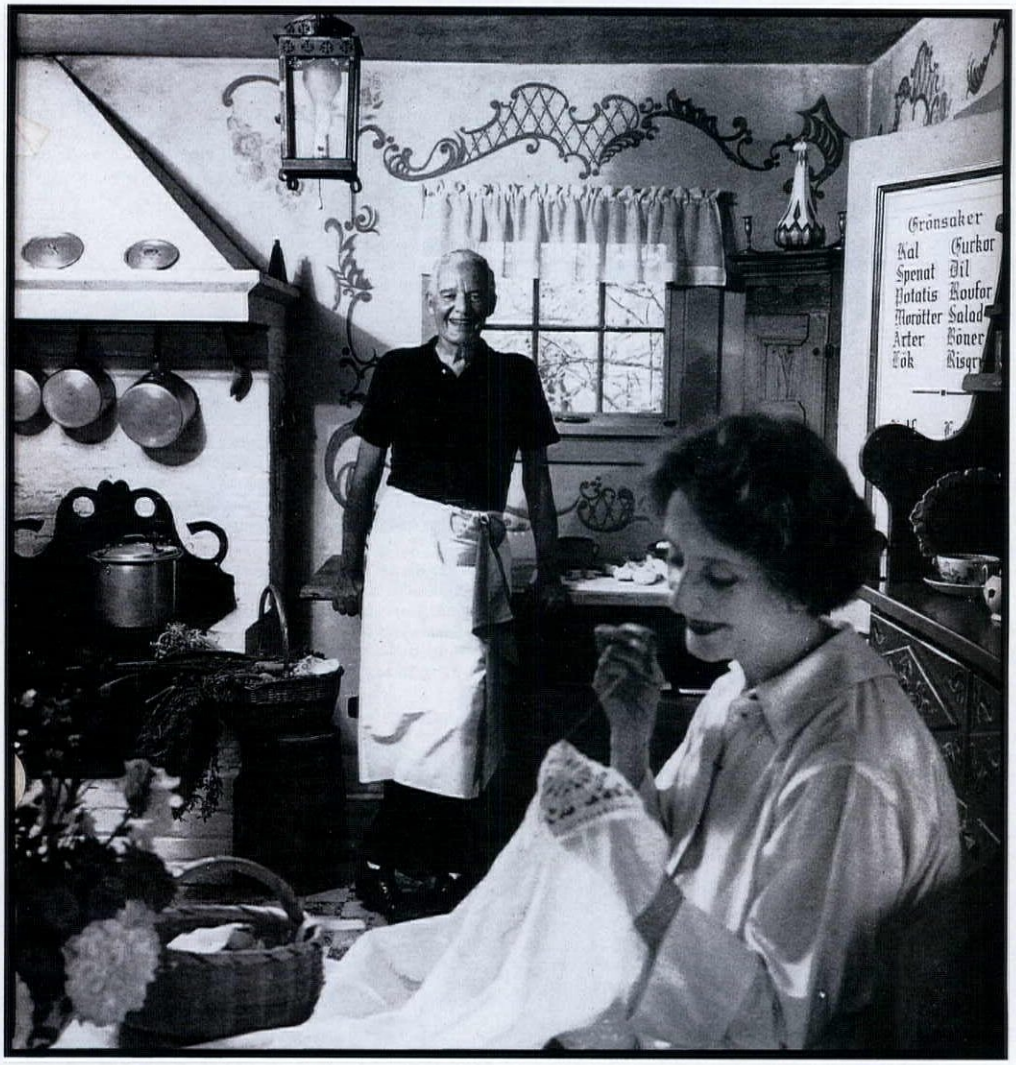

October 1959

Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, the First Couple of the American stage, act up in their Wisconsin kitchen

BY VÉRONIQUE VIENNE

Actor Alfred Lunt taught himself to cook in order to encourage his wife to eat. And indeed, under the culinary care of her husband, the once painfully skinny British-born actress Lynn Fontanne became a shapely beauty. By 1959, when this picture was taken for *House & Garden,* the Lunts, whose witty love scenes were great box-office successes, had performed together for 37 years—appearing in plays from *The Guardsman* in 1924 to *The Visit* in 1958. Though she was 71 and he was 66, their dazzling careers were still on the upswing.

During their long marriage, their impromptu offstage performances were as entertaining as their orchestrated tit for tats. Every summer between theatrical seasons, friends like Noël Coward and Carol Channing could catch the Lunts' husband-and-wife act in their Wisconsin farmhouse, decorated by production designer Claggett Wilson.

Each room was a set. Walls and ceilings were covered with cheerful murals, often painted by Lunt himself. The kitchen, with decorations right out of a Scandinavian folk tale, was Alfred's shrine and the main stage for their marital intrigue. Here, while Lynn affects a demure pose, seemingly absorbed in her embroidery, Alfred, in one of his favorite roles as the chef, proudly looks on. But readers familiar with the pair's onstage act knew better. In this picture, as was often the case, Ms. Fontanne's coy demeanor is only a disguise, a way to insure that her usually reserved husband got his share of the limelight. For all their playful repartee, the Lunts were famous for the wordless eloquence of their devotion.

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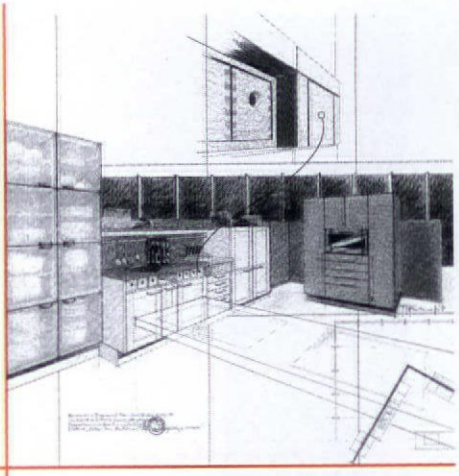

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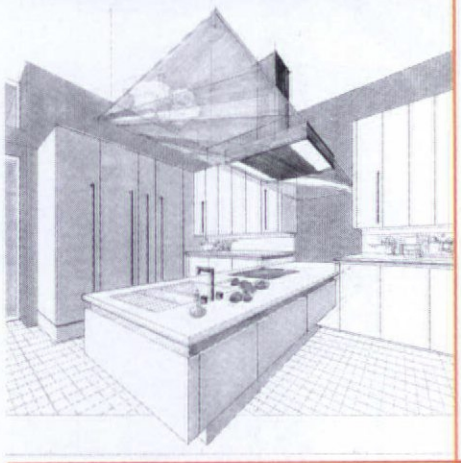

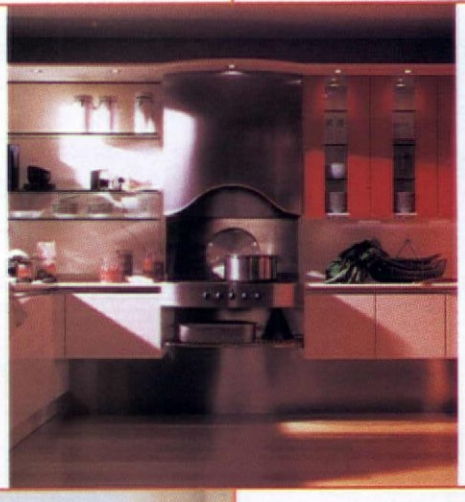

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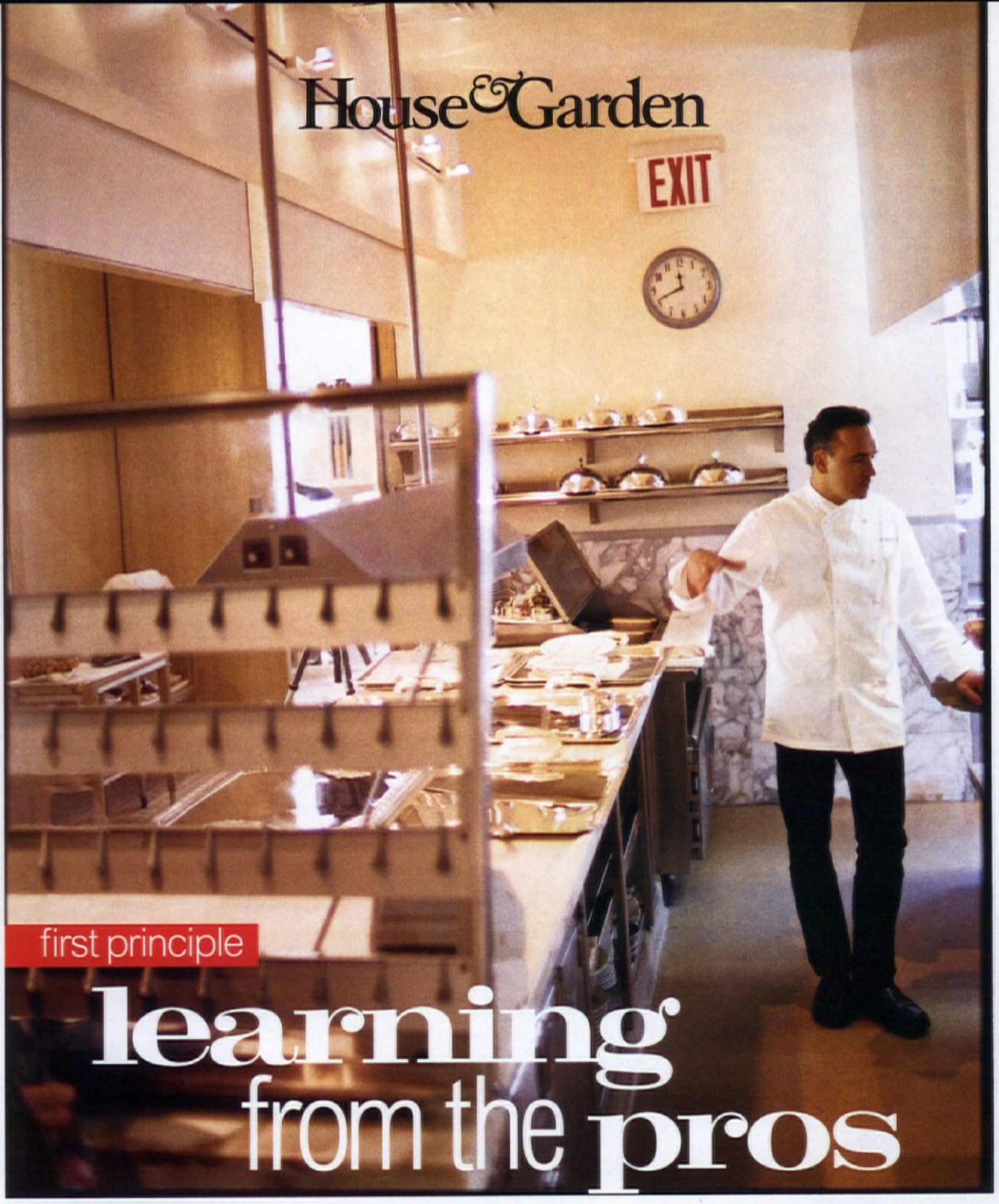


first principle

learning from the pros

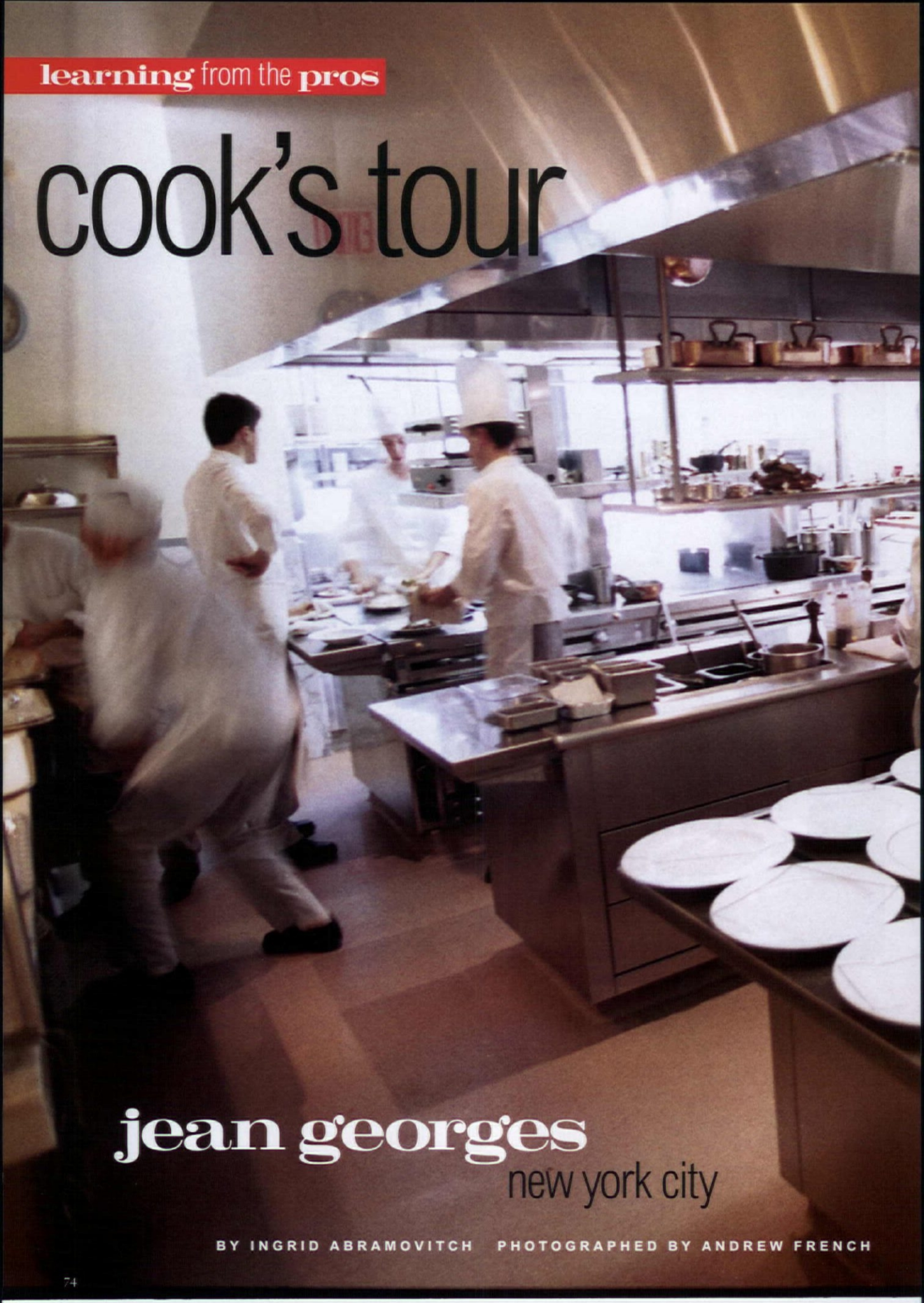
We've seen what a difference a Viking stove makes. Now we're hungry for more. What else do the pros have to teach us?

jean georges new york city • **citronelle** washington, d.c.
Two of the top chefs in the country take us on a tour of their kitchens.

a pro at home **the chef stops here**
Celebrated restaurateur Michel Troisgros remakes his home and kitchen.

bringing it back home **personal touches**
Even grandma's kitchen has six professional-caliber burners nowadays.

cook's tour



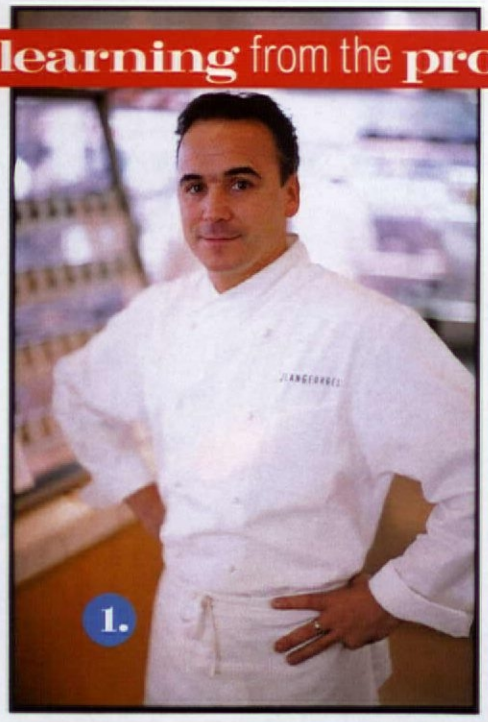
jean georges
new york city

BY INGRID ABRAMOVITCH PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW FRENCH

WE'VE RAIDED restaurant kitchens for their refrigerators and stoves, but there's a lot more cooking in the nation's top dining establishments. The latest chef's surprise is the kitchen itself—a stainless-steel showpiece filled with state-of-the-art equipment, where the sautéing and braising is on view from the dining room. We visited two restaurants, Jean Georges in New York City and Citronelle in Washington, D.C., and got the chef's tour of each kitchen. We also went behind the scenes at restaurants across the country, from Al Forno in Providence to the French Laundry in Yountville, California. Now we're bubbling over with ideas, from the sublime (a Bonnet rotisserie) to the ridiculously inexpensive (a revolutionary $3.99 cutting board). What's on the front burners for these chefs? Top-notch tools, cleanliness, good lighting, and convenience.

PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN

learning from the pros



1. chef's view **"Hygiene is the future in kitchens," says Jean-Georges Vongerichten. At his restaurant, Jean Georges, the counters are stainless steel, which is non-porous and doesn't absorb bacteria. This immaculate kitchen also has separate sinks for washing food and washing hands.**

2. memo boards **We're not suggesting that you take orders during dinnertime ("Make mine an egg-white omelette"), but we do like this spring-wire memo board, which keeps pushpins out of the kitchen. Use it for grocery lists, invitations, and car-pool reminders. From Commercial Kitchen Design, $200 to $400. In NY, 718-386-1086.**

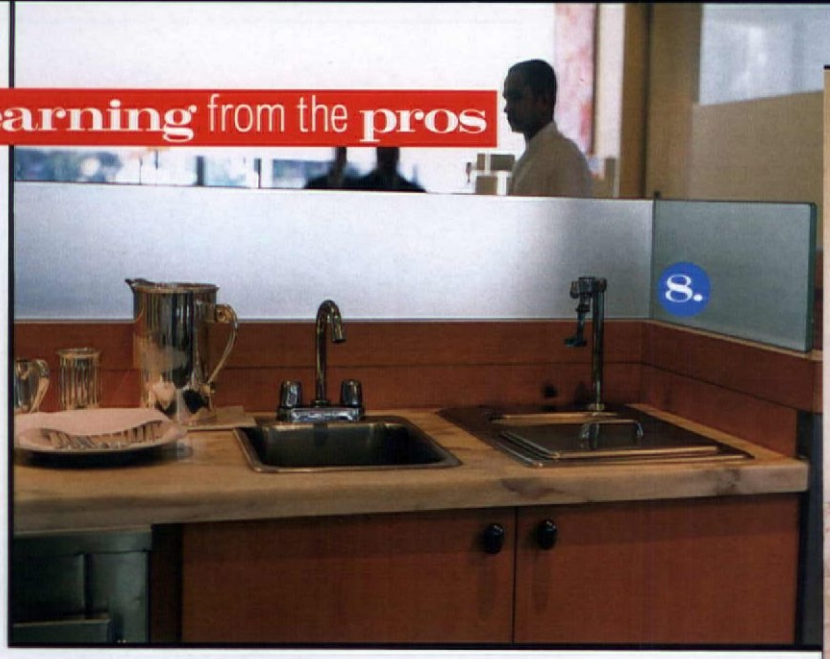
3. cooking island **Installing the oven and stove top in an island means your back isn't to the room and you aren't facing a wall.**

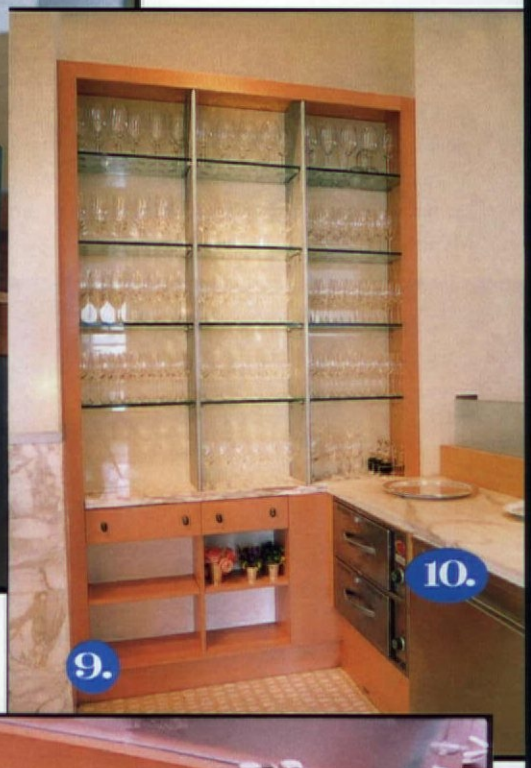
4. a tunnel oven **While you're at it, put in a tunnel oven, which has doors at either end. He does the turkey on his side, while you slide the fixings in from yours: no more kitchen collisions. To custom-order, contact Commercial Kitchen Design.**

5. open shelves Open stainless-steel shelves are mounted on the wall to make it easy to get to serving pieces. Where there is no wall space, create extra storage with shelves that hang from the ceiling. At Jean Georges, stainless-steel shelves were suspended on pipes in front of windows and over cooking islands, and positioned low enough for pots and pans to be within reach.

6. copper pots Vongerichten loves the even heat he gets with copper pots. While most are lined with tin and must be relined often, he uses pots designed by Jacques Pepin for Bourgeat, which have stainless-steel interiors that last forever. Pepin's pots also have rounded rims. "You can really go with a whisk," Vongerichten says. Chef's Catalog, 8 pieces, $899.99. 800-338-3232.

7. tap on stove Think how much simpler it would be if, instead of lugging 8-quart pots of water from the sink to the stove to boil pasta, you had a tap right over the range. It would also make thinning sauces and stove-top cleanup easier. Pot-filler faucet, Chicago Faucets. 800-323-5060.





8. frosted-glass partition **Open kitchens are great, but not if you have to look at dirty dishes while you dine. This low partition with frosted glass elegantly shields the view of the kitchen from the eating area.**

9. a butler's pantry **Service pantries, once considered old-fashioned, are back in style. Removed from the immediate fray of the kitchen, the Jean Georges pantry has a small refrigerator for butter and chocolates, an ice bin, a bread warmer, and a small sink. The crystal stemware is stored safely in a built-in cabinet with open shelves that provide easy access and display the glasses nicely.**

10. polished marble **The industrial appearance of stainless steel was balanced with luxurious Carrara marble, which was polished and used for counters and wainscoting. "We did it for the look," says Vongerichten, who warns that marble stains, so he doesn't prepare food on it.**

11. refrigerated drawers **Keep prepared ingredients fresh in a Sub-Zero refrigerator drawer (888-962-9979) under a work counter, where they can be reached while you cook. At Jean Georges, the drawers are subdivided with plastic portion-control containers, a staple of restaurant-supply stores.**

12. tea tray **The chef's brother, Philippe, selects teas from T Salon Emporium, NYC (212-358-0506). These are presented in containers reflecting each tea's origins—Egyptian chamomile is in a box from Egypt. Use antique or new boxes to create this treat for your own guests. Containers, Urban Outfitters, NYC. 212-688-1200; William-Wayne & Co., NYC. 212-737-8934.**

13. cocottes Enameled cast-iron pots, known as *cocottes* in France, cook efficiently on top of the stove and in the oven. Vongerichten likes the look of them so much that he sends them right to the table. Matte black *cocottes* are the hot pot of the kitchen crowd right now, and can be custom-ordered from France through an authorized Le Creuset dealer. 1-877-CREUSET.

14. natural light Perhaps the biggest luxury in the Jean Georges kitchen is natural light. The chef placed the work space near a large set of existing windows, rather than using this prime area for extra tables. Something to consider if you're planning to do a lot of dining in your kitchen.

15. hidden garbage One reason this kitchen looks so clean is that there is no visible garbage. Instead, the stainless-steel work counters have built-in garbage chutes. Trash receptacles are hidden underneath, behind closed doors.

16. nonslip floor The chef, in his trademark Prada shoes, and his staff move surefootedly across the nonslip floor: a poured epoxy resin into which tiny porcelain glass beads have been mixed for grit. This surface is harder than steel, and much more comfortable. Available from Stonhard. In NJ, 609-779-7500.

17. a rotisserie Vongerichten roasts everything from pheasant to lobster on his Bonnet Labesse-Giraudon rotisserie from France. It has cast-iron grids that reflect heat, resulting in moist and flavorful meats and fish. If you love to roast chicken at home, a smaller version of the Bonnet is available through Commercial Kitchen Design. It costs $5,000 and will roast up to four chickens at a time. The unit runs on standard 110-volt wattage, but requires a gas hookup and venting hood.

18. a griddle Are you a breakfast fanatic? Or doing tons of short-order cooking—burgers, franks—for the kids? Since it's virtually impossible to make a tall stack of pancakes in a single frying pan, you might want to invest in a griddle. This one is a Japanese *teppanyaki* (like the kind they use at Benihana), manufactured by Keating of Chicago (800-KEATING). Vongerichten uses it to caramelize fruit for dessert toppings. The equipment in the Jean Georges kitchen can be ordered through Greg Rowehl, Commercial Kitchen Design, NY. 718-386-1086.

citronelle

washington, d.c.

19. chef's stage **Just as the home cook doesn't want to be hidden away in the kitchen while everyone else is having a good time, Citronelle's chef, Michel Richard, also wants to be in on the party. A glass wall separates the kitchen from the dining room, so diners can peek in, and the chef can wave at his fans. How hot is the kitchen? There's a premium to sit in it: the privilege will set you back $100 a person for seven to ten courses (wine is extra).**

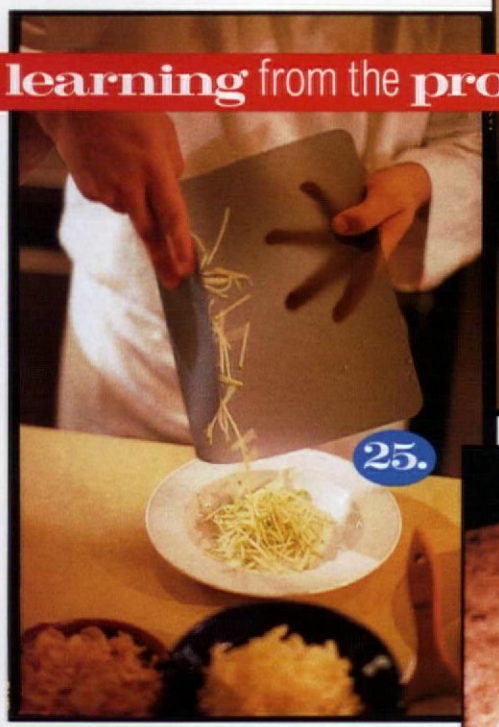
20. glass fronts **At home, under-counter space is increasingly being used for extra cabinetry. Richard shows how to keep contents clean below decks: protect them with glass doors. Lit from within, these glass-fronted cabinets have another advantage: "They show off my beautiful plates," the chef says.**

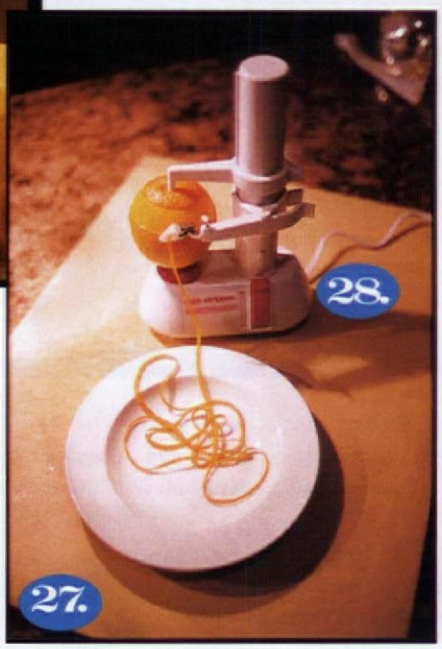
21. kitchen-cam **Richard uses a video camera and TV monitor for close-ups during classes, and you can hang a TV set to keep your counters clear.**

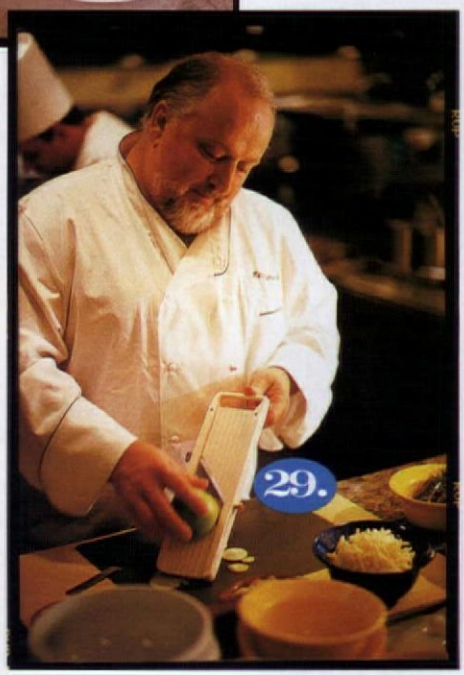
22. look like a chef **Forget technique. What you need is an Egyptian-cotton chef's jacket from France, designed by Joël Robuchon with hand-covered buttons, sleeves to protect from spills or burns, and cuffs that won't fall into the soup. Joel jacket, $116 (plus $10 for your name on the pocket). Bragard, NYC. 212-982-8031. Cooks' jackets, $49 to $76, Williams-Sonoma catalogue. 800-541-2233.**

23. adjustable heat lamps **The aluminum warmer lights over the chef's area hold 250-watt infrared bulbs and can be adjusted to any height. The Contempo series, Merco/Savory. 800-547-2513.**

24. wine on display **Visible from the dining room, the wine cellar has separate chambers for white and red. Each is cooled to the perfect temperature (47 degrees for white; 64 degrees for red). To show off and chill wine at home, try the GE Monogram Wine Chiller (800-626-2000) or the Viking Undercounter Wine Cooler (888-845-4641).**







chef's toys

Not every kitchen tool has to be expensive. This endlessly inventive chef is a hardware-store junkie, always looking for the gadget that will bring his next creation to life. "I buy everything and try it," Richard says. Here are some of his recent favorites.

25. flexible cutting board **Surely the least expensive tool in the million-dollar Citronelle kitchen is Richard's latest discovery, a $3.99 flexible antibacterial cutting board. Chop on this cardboard-thin vinyl sheet, then lift the sides and diced veggies slide right into the pot. Dishwasher-safe, too. Bo-Nash cutting board, Jordano's Marketplace, Santa Barbara, CA. 805-569-6262.**

26. fry babies **Richard often sprinkles lightly fried garnishes such as garlic chips, thinly sliced leeks, or apple fries on entrées. Rather than splatter his stove top with sizzling oil, he relies on that dime-store staple, the two-quart electric deep fryer. He keeps several fryers, each for a different kind of fat, from clarified butter to grape-seed oil. Presto Fry Baby, $33.99. 800-877-0441.**

27. polished granite **Like marble, granite is cool enough for working with pastry (this is where Richard executes his crunchy napoleon with apricot-ginger sauce). Granite is ten times more abrasion-resistant than marble, but because it can stain, the stone should be polished to seal it; all that's needed to clean this counter is a light solution of water and soap. Buff it with a clean cloth to make it shine.**

28. the stripper **Anyone who has ever tried to peel an orange or a potato into one continuous strip will appreciate the Rival Stripper, an electric tool that takes it all off for you. Chef's Catalog, $49.99. 800-338-3232.**

29. plastic mandoline **One sign of a serious home kitchen is the presence of a mandoline, which slices, waffles, and juliennes. While the classic French steel variety costs at least $150, Richard found this plastic version from Japan, which is just as effective, at $29.95. Benriner mandoline, Broadway Panhandler, NYC. 212-966-3434.**

30. stove-edge bar **A stainless-steel bar along a stove's edges protects its users from the burners' heat.**

tips from other restaurants

induction cooktop At his new showpiece, Daniel, in NYC, chef Daniel Boulud is using a $60,000 induction stove top from Grande Cuisine Systems. With this method of heating, an electromagnetic field attaches to the metal of the pot to warm its contents. The cooktop stays cool—you can touch it any time and not burn your hand. "It's more efficient than gas, more precise, and easier to clean," says Boulud. The company just introduced a smaller version for home use: two induction burners and a griddle cost $15,000 (but you'll save on the vent, which isn't necessary). Grande Cuisine Systems, Toronto. 888-233-2862.

plastic-wrapped walls If you are a messy cook, take a lesson from New York's Le Bernardin: the walls of the fish-cleaning area are covered with plastic wrap that is simply thrown away at the end of the day.

a stone oven If you are a fan of the perfect loaves that emerge from the volcanic-stone oven at the Bouley Bakery in NYC, consider investing in a stone-lined oven for the home. New Hearth's Breadstone Oven, $1,650, is lined with firebrick and turns out crusty loaves and crisp pizza crusts. New Hearth. 800-785-7835.

baker's table At Boston's No. 9 Park, chef Barbara Lynch rolls dough on a small wooden table she found at a flea market. Roll-out carts under the table store bins of flour and sugar.

size matters To whip up soufflés for 20 or more, you'll need KitchenAid's (800-422-1230) most commodious mixer, the 5 quart, says kitchen designer Mark Stech-Novak, who is installing the new kitchen at the French Laundry in Yountville, CA.

pasta shortcut If your family is divided between rigatoni and penne, try an idea from Al Forno in Providence, RI: Cook pasta in a metal basket fitted into a pot. Lift out the basket and the boiling water is ready for the next batch. Try the Everything Pot, $59.99, Chef's Catalog. 800-338-3232.

frozen delight Danny Meyer's Tabla in NYC has a PacoJet that whips up ice cream and sorbet in three minutes. A mere $3,600. Naturally, Microsoft executive Nathan Myhrvold already has one. 877-4-PACOJET.

happy ending The Four Seasons in Manhattan gets silly on your birthday. A cotton-candy machine turns out fluffy white balls of the sugary confection. Order your own: Floss Boss, $525, from Gold Medal Products. 800-543-0862.

31. yellow tile When the kitchen was remodeled, Richard chose yellow tile to warm up a space that had limited natural light.

32. pocket doors Cabinets over counters were designed with doors that slide into the frame, so no one knocks his head. Custom-made by Carbone Metal Fabricator. In MA, 617-884-0237.

33. steam-kettle stockpot The double wall fills with steam, so stock cooks quickly. Groen's 2.5-gallon version boils in 10 minutes—but drains your wallet of $3,500 (800-676-9040). Or try Williams-Sonoma's Piazza stockpots, $59 to119: stainless steel and triple-layered, with good heat conductivity. 800-541-2233.

34. a deep sink Rather than cooling hot stocks in a refrigerator, where the steam will wilt other ingredients, chill them quickly in a deep sink filled with ice.

35. infrared broiler Called a salamander, this open electric broiler is a favorite tool of Richard's (he has three at Citronelle) and Vongerichten's (he has one at home). It uses quartz infrared rays, which generate heat high enough to brown a meringue or melt the cheese on potatoes au gratin without cooking the entire dish. The top adjusts to several heights. For the home, Viking offers a built-in infrared broiler, the Gourmet Glo. 888-845-4641. Citronelle equipment can be ordered through Peter Huebner, Alto-Hartley Inc., in VA. 703-883-1448.

36. into the cool (Not pictured) With 9 ovens going 16 hours a day, Richard keeps cool with powerful air-conditioning and ventilation systems. To be comfortable and safe at home, use professional appliances approved for residential use. For ranges wider than three feet, consult a dealer certified by the North American Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers. In Chicago, 312-644-6610.

Tradition and modernity come together *chez* Michel and Marie-Pierre Troisgros. **A VINTAGE AUSTIN MINI**, this page, sits behind the iron gate of their charming house in Roanne, France. Architect François Champsaur had part of the early-20th-century building painted a deep terra-cotta and designed the white clapboard addition. **MICHEL'S CHEF UNIFORM**, opposite page, hangs by a window.

a pro at home

the chef stops here

TROISGROS

Aided by architect François Champsaur, Michel and Marie-Pierre Troisgros remade their house so it resembles his celebrated cuisine: beautiful and simple

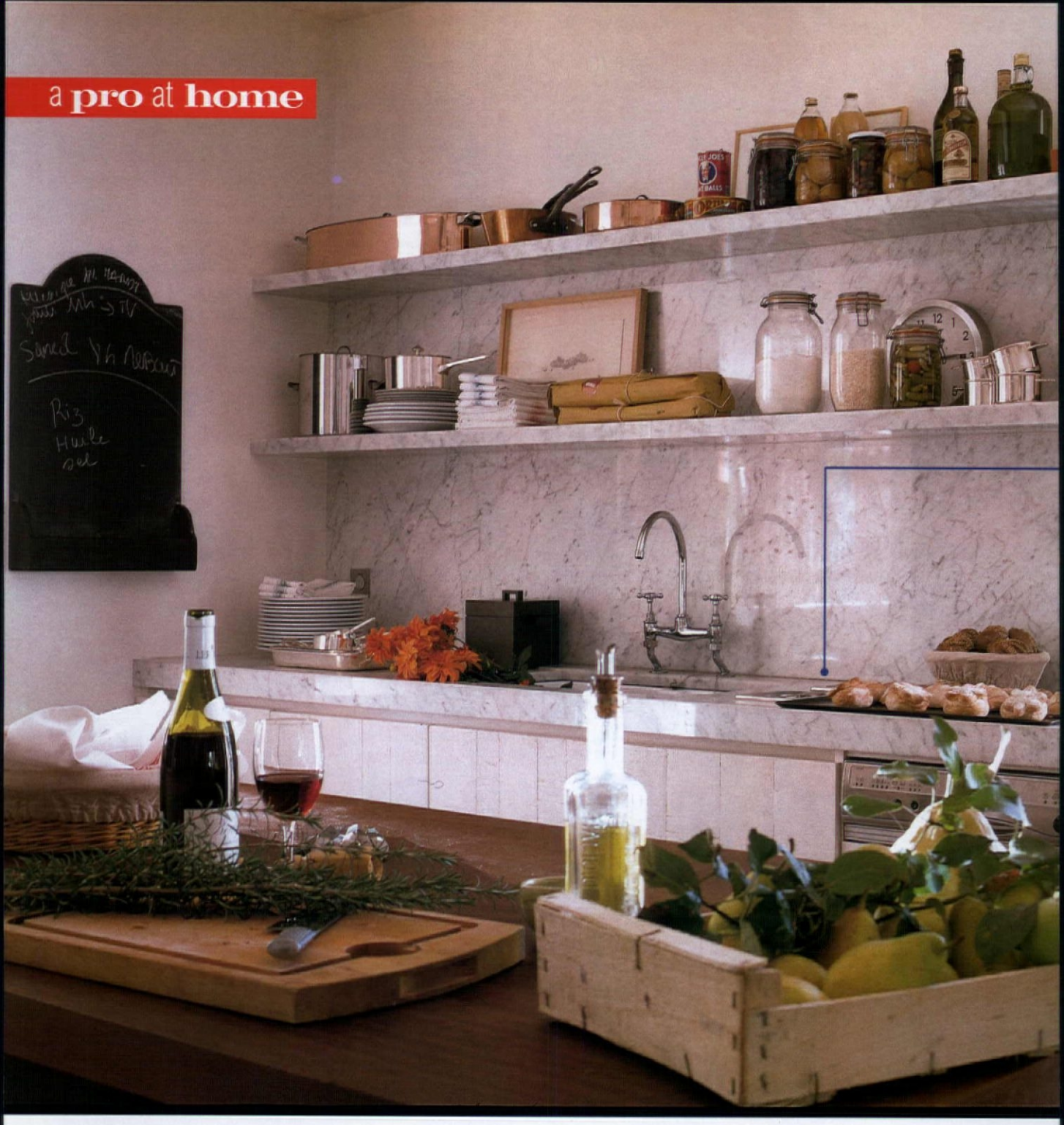
BY SUZANNE SLESIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW WOOD

THEY'VE KNOWN EACH other since they were teenagers, in hotel school together in Grenoble. Now, nearly 25 years later, Michel and Marie-Pierre Troisgros are slowly and surely assuring the evolution of one of the most famous gastronomic traditions in the world.

The couple has taken on the day-to-day operations of the famous Troisgros restaurant in Roanne, a small town near Lyon in eastern France, that has had the coveted three-star Michelin rating for 30 years. They are also redesigning the rooms in their small hotel and have just overseen, with 34-year-old architect François Champsaur, the renovation of the charming house, in which they live with their children, Marion, 14, César, 12, and Léo, 5.

"The famille Troisgros has always been a modern family," explains Marie-Pierre, "and modern is what we really like." The couple's passion for modern art, architecture, and dance is reflected in Michel's approach to cooking. "Cooking is an artistic expression that is both very sensitive and very generous," he explains. "But it is also very ephemeral. All that remains is the memory. That's why we strive that it should be the best it can be." For Michel, that means that dishes must be both delicious and beautiful to look at. "I want dishes to be comfortable, and never too complicated," he says. In cuisine and design, the Troisgros approach is to marry

MARIE-PIERRE INSISTED on keeping the combination living/dining room open to the kitchen, opposite page. Champsaur designed the cotton-upholstered sofas and low table in the living room, as well as the table and chairs in the dining area. **A DIPTYCH LANDSCAPE** in wax by Mitja Tusek, this page, who shows at Galerie Nelson in Paris, punctuates the white living room walls. Gérard Traquandi, who created the pigmented resin painting of a jar, is represented by the Galerie Idem in Paris.

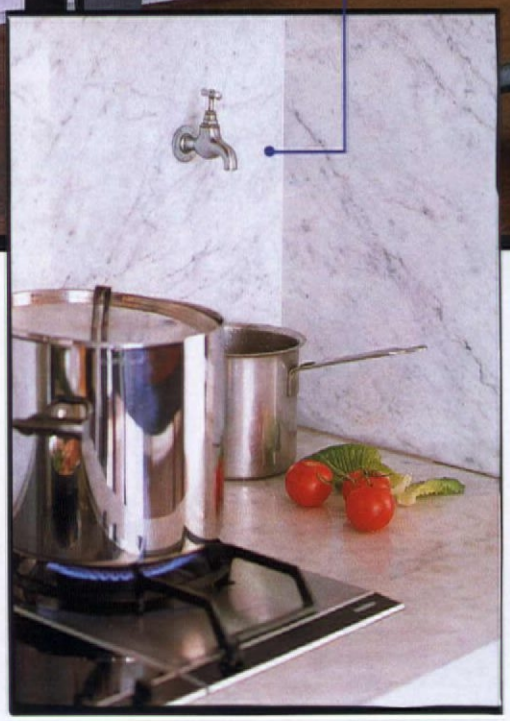


the beautiful and the easy-to-live-with.

Two years ago, on a visit to Paris, the couple happened on the work of Christian Liaigre, the celebrated modernist of French design, and hired him to start redesigning the restaurant. "We respected his talent; he respected my cuisine," says Michel. Later, when it came time for the couple to renovate their house, they asked Champsaur, who had opened his own office after four years with Liaigre, to help them with the project. "Michel and Marie-Pierre are part of a new generation," Champsaur says, "who have traveled a lot, and who have the dynamism to bring new ideas to a heritage that can sometimes be heavy."

So does he. Champsaur felt that the strict and monochromatic look of many modern interiors was ready to be challenged. "Everything was tone on tone," he says, "and after a while, I felt that there was no life left." Champsaur adopted a more playful color palette, and what he calls a sportswear system of furnishings—pieces that work well together but are not rigidly matched.

In the Troisgros house, he completely changed the spaces on the ground floor, combining the living room and the dining area, and opening the dining area to the kitchen. A floor-to-ceiling double door in the kitchen leads to a comfy art- and book-filled study with sofas and chairs upholstered in soft leather and velvet. "I like for there to be differences in a house," says Champsaur, "to go from small to large rooms, from light spaces to cozier, darker ones." Even without



MICHEL, left, wants his dishes to be "comfortable and never too complicated." His home kitchen—though his wife cooks here more often than he—is equally straightforward. **A STAINLESS-STEEL** sherbet canister, inset top, with the bottom cut off, was dropped into the counter, and acts as a garbage chute; another is for sponges. **A FAUCET NEAR** the Gaggenau stove, above, is handy. **MARBLE SHELVES** line the wall over the sink, opposite page. The counter-height worktable is in the center of the room, so children can gather around as food is prepared.

"Michel and Marie-Pierre are part of a generation that has the dynamism to bring new ideas to a heritage that can sometimes be heavy"

—ARCHITECT FRANÇOIS CHAMPSAUR

THE WARMTH AND COZINESS of the study is in deliberate contrast to the coolness of the rest of the house. François Champsaur designed the banquette, upholstered with a velvet from Nya Nordiska, a German company. The fireplace surround is made from volcanic stone. **AN AFRICAN CRAFTSMAN** in Dakar, Aissa Dione, wove the bedspread in daughter Marion's room, opposite page. The striped fabric on the headboard is from Nya Nordiska. Sources, see back of book.

partitions, each room in the house takes on a distinct personality. In the study, the combination of almost neon-hued draperies and rich aubergine upholstery creates a warm, womb-like environment that one can't resist curling up in. In the living room, boldly colored contemporary paintings seem to float on a generous expanse of white walls, giving the room a sparkling, fresh look. And in the kitchen, the coolness of the thick marble shelves is tempered by the warm appeal of a dark oak floor.

Because Champsaur sees his work as "not only about listening to but about feeling" what is in the minds of his clients, he is sensitive to his clients' particular idiosyncrasies. The Troisgros house is, of course, centered around the kitchen, which is deceptively simple in design. On one side, long marble shelves—inspired by those in old-world butcher shops—hold cooking essentials over the single deep sink. Across the room, a majestic stainless-steel hood hangs over the cooktop, and an oven and a microwave stand close by.

But the star of the kitchen is the large counter-height iroko table. Its position in the center of the room is not only practical but extremely important. "There is nothing more pleasant than working not facing a wall," says Michel. "This is like it was in the old farmhouses. And when the table is in the middle of the room, children gather naturally around it. It becomes part of a game, a piece of theater." The famille Troisgros, or at least its third generation, has found the setting that suits it to a T.

personal touches

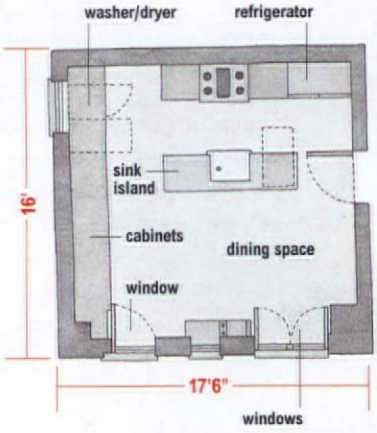
Learning from the pros doesn't mean designing a home kitchen that looks industrial. The influence is more subtle. For the gourmet cook, it might mean splurging on a restaurant-caliber appliance. Or you might mix the cool, efficient look of stainless steel and glass-fronted cabinets with richer materials. The three kitchens featured here strike the right balance.

COUNTRY AND CITY
A farmhouse sink and faucet contrast with a sleek Kirkstone volcanic ash counter. Domestic Marble & Stone, NYC. 212-343-3300. Sink and faucet, Waterworks. 800-927-2120.

actor's lab William Baldwin, of the acting Baldwin brothers, and his wife, Chynna Phillips, of the singing trio Wilson Phillips, wanted their kitchen in New York City to be—in the words of their architect, Nate McBride—at once "uptown and out of town." His solution was to merge two very different looks: English country meets industrial. So, white paneled walls and a farmhouse sink coexist with a commercial refrigerator and Viking stove. "The aesthetics don't clash," McBride feels. "They meet in their simplicity."

CLEAR VIEW Transparent glass not only lets you see inside cabinets, it also reflects light, giving the room an airy feel.

CLASSIC WOODWORK English country kitchens inspired the wall paneling and cabinetry, custom-made by Petersen-Geller, Hudson, NY. 518-828-2608.



KITCHEN PLAN

A maid's room, bathroom, pantry, and kitchen were gutted and combined into one larger 280-sq.-ft. room for casual entertaining.

WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? The refrigerator was ordered with a glass door so it would look less bulky than the all-steel version. Although this one is no longer available, Northland makes a similar model. Contact Alan Cohen at Felix Storch Inc. In NY, 718-893-3900. Sources, see back of book.

PRODUCED BY NEWELL TURNER; FLOOR PLANS BY JOHN SEGAL

WRITTEN BY INGRID ABRAMOVITCH

PHOTOGRAPHED BY FRANCINE FLEISCHER STYLED BY PAULA FOX

bringing it back home

BEECH NUTS With the kitchen visible from the dining room, the architects wanted cabinetry with the look of well-made furniture. They chose beech, which they admired for its grain. They warmed up the wood's color with a light cherry stain.

DOUBLE DUTY The island is at counter height, so it can double as a family table and an extra work surface. The owner likes to roll dough for apple pies at one end of the granite surface, while her grandchildren color at the other. Island by Warner + Cunningham, Inc., Boston. 617-566-1644.

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL This kitchen got a touch of metal in these drawer units, which tie in visually to the stainless-steel appliances, including a Gaggenau cooktop. 800-828-9165.

TILES Matte and polished floor tiles from Buchtal stand up to all the traffic coming and going. Buchtal Corp. In GA, 770-442-5500.

KITCHEN PLAN

All the action in this 460-sq.-ft.-kitchen revolves around a central island.

HONED GRANITE For counters and the wall behind the stove, the architects chose dark granite, which contrasts well with the warm color of the cabinetry. Rather than having the stone polished, they chose a honed matte finish, which hides scratches well and doesn't dull over time.

SEPARATE SINKS The kitchen has two sinks. This one, located next to the stove, is used to wash vegetables and to clean large pots. A second sink, near the dishwasher, is for rinsing dishes. Sinks and faucets from Kroin. 800-OK-KROIN.

TRANSLUCENT, NOT TRANSPARENT As in a restaurant kitchen, glass inserts on the cabinets make it easier to find what you are looking for. But the glass here is translucent, softly veiling the view of the cornflakes boxes inside. Sources, see back of book.

hello, grandma

With eight grandchildren who show up often for her applesauce, the cook needed a more functional kitchen in her 1912 Georgian house in Brookline, MA. Her daughter, architect Lisa Cunningham, and Lisa's husband and partner, architect George Warner, got the assignment. They merged several smaller rooms, including a maid's room and pantry, into one large, welcoming space. This elegant kitchen belies its strength: Grandma's pies now come out of a Thermador double wall oven, while her applesauce simmers on a six-burner Gaggenau range.

NOW YOU SEE IT The cabinetry costs were kept low with frames and glass shelves from IKEA's Abstrakt line. To customize them, the designers added doors made from acrylic by Ain Plastics, NYC. 212-265-4200.

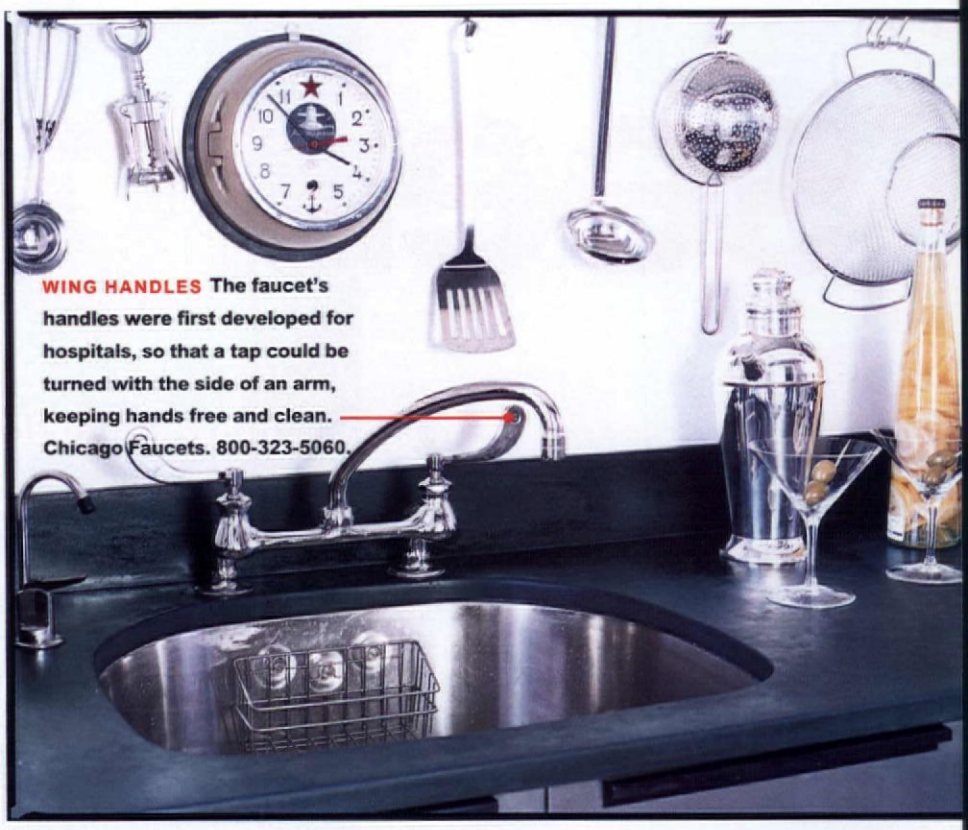
STEELING TIME To get an industrial look in a residential kitchen, acrylic laminate cabinets from IKEA were sent to a metalsmith's shop to be clad in stainless steel. Abstrakt cabinets, IKEA. 800-434-4532. Custom stainless-steel work, Heer Metal Works. In NY, 718-784-7110.

THE PRO LOOK The appliances have the appearance of commercial-grade equipment, but not the price tags (or the power). All are stainless-steel Frigidaire Gallery Professional Series. 800-FRIGIDAIRE. Microwave, $469, dishwasher, $509, range, $1,299, from Bloom & Krup, NYC. 212-673-2760.

plastic fantastic

The assignment was no short order: Turn a tiny New York City apartment kitchen into an airy work space and give it the look and feel of an industrial kitchen. With a $30,000 budget, David Leven and Stella Betts—a young design team—got creative. They economized by buying IKEA cabinets and then went on to customize them: the ones under the sink were clad in stainless steel to match the Frigidaire appliances, while those overhead were refitted with acrylic doors, which lighten up the entire space.

PRODUCED BY MARGOT NIGHTINGALE

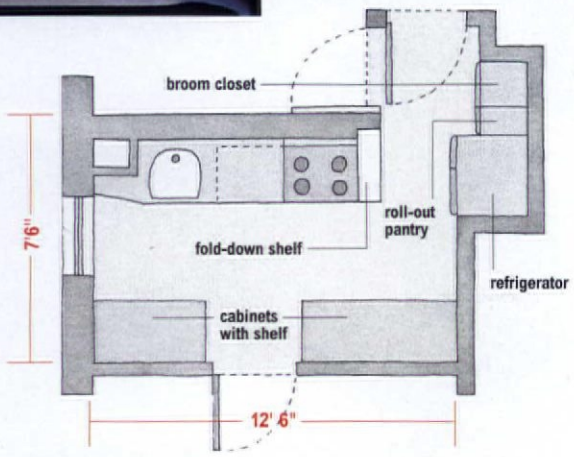


WING HANDLES The faucet's handles were first developed for hospitals, so that a tap could be turned with the side of an arm, keeping hands free and clean. Chicago Faucets. 800-323-5060.

FAUX SLATE To offset the industrial materials used in the kitchen, the designers chose a German-made synthetic slate in charcoal gray, which has a soft, worn look. It's available in several colors, $18 to $31 a sq. ft., from Fireslate 2. 800-523-5902.

KITCHEN PLAN

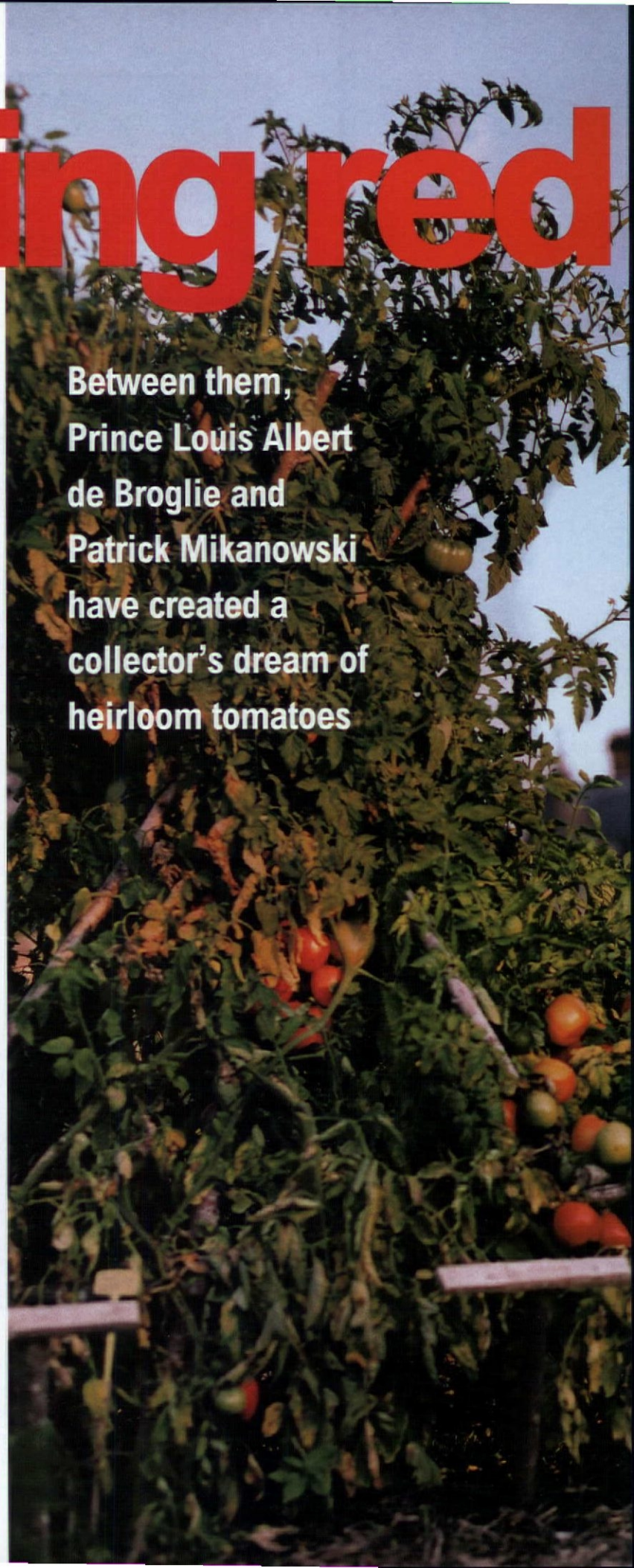
Every inch of this 120-sq.-ft. space is accounted for, with appliances lined up opposite cabinets and counters.



RUBBER BASEBOARDS For easy cleaning, the vinyl tile floor has a black rubber baseboard, inspired by those in commercial kitchens.

HOLE IN THE WALL An unused garbage chute was fitted with a custom-made stainless-steel box, which holds recipe books. Sources, see back of book.

seeing red



Between them, Prince Louis Albert de Broglie and Patrick Mikanowski have created a collector's dream of heirloom tomatoes

In a way, the stone-walled kitchen garden at the Château de la Bourdaisière qualifies as a folie à deux, for it is the extravagant obsession of an unlikely pair of Frenchmen. On two acres in the Loire Valley, Prince Louis Albert de Broglie and Christian Dior executive Patrick Mikanowski have created a highbrow tomato theme park, in which 420 varieties of the sacred fruit clamber up a rustic battalion of chestnut frames.

Six years ago, when the prince bought the sixteenth-century château, the potager was a ruin. "It looked like a war field with no war," says de Broglie, who set about restoring it and filling it with heirloom vegetables. Mikanowski's wife, Lyndsay, was the prince's landscape designer for the project. Once food fanatic and tomato enthusiast Mikanowski got a look at de Broglie's unconventional plants—the vintage and rare cucumbers, cabbages, salad greens, and herbs, the 30 tomato varieties—he threw down a challenge. "Why don't you grow the whole collection, every variety of tomato you can find?" he asked.

"It didn't take more than five seconds for me to agree," says de Broglie.

What began almost as a joke soon took on a sheen of high purpose. "The whole idea," explains de Broglie, "was to help people discover the immense variety of tomatoes, all the colors and shapes and flavors." Heirloom seeds were requisitioned from various collectors, including the French equivalent of America's Seed Savers Exchange. On weekends, Paris-based Mikanowski would shed his businessman's garb for gentleman-tomato-farmer gear, toiling with de Broglie's gardeners to replant the potager.

From mid-June to late September last year, de Broglie had a collector's paradise of fruits

PRINCE LOUIS ALBERT DE BROGLIE, wearing one of the gardening waistcoats he designs, pauses during the harvest of his heirloom tomatoes. The prince's Château de la Bourdaisière is in the background.

WRITTEN BY ALISON COOK PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL McDERMITT

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

'Brandywine'
'Raisin Vert'
Patrick Mikanowski
'Barbanakia'
'Corrogo'
Tomate des Andes
'Nova'
'Ponderheart'
'Evergreen'

EDIBLE PLANTS in the form of leeks and spinach are nestled companionably among sunflowers and amaranthus. **A HAZEL TRELLIS**, below, holds runner beans and is surrounded by cosmos.

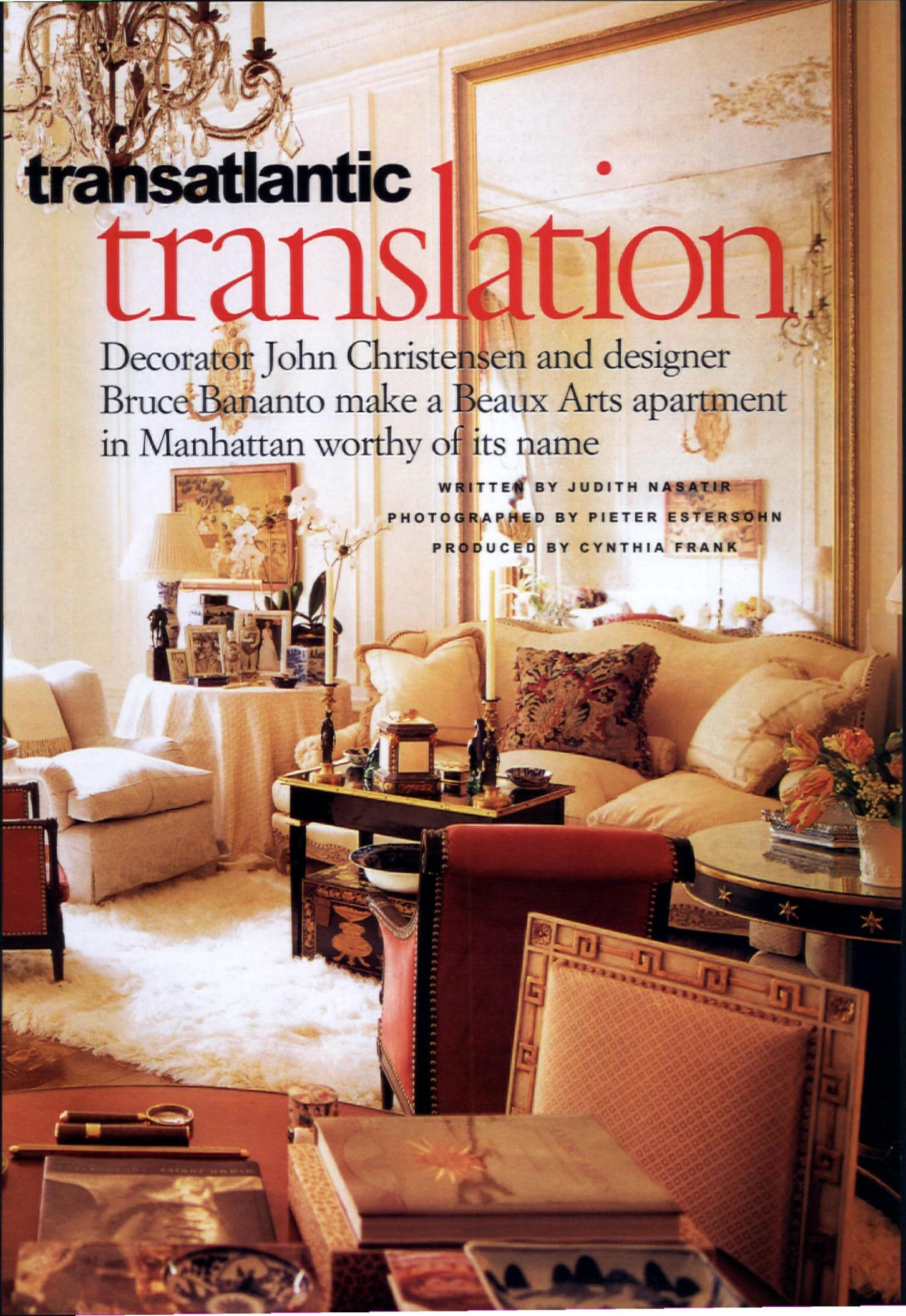
in a spectrum of colors and a sculpture gallery of shapes. Among his pets are the 'Black Prince,' the 'Red Togo,' the stripy 'Green Zebra,' and the nearly transparent 'Ivory Egg.' Paying guests at the newly restored château are invited to tomato tastings and to dinners based on the fruit, from appetizer to dessert.

Now, the twentieth century being what it is, comes the book: a Mikanowski tome titled *Le Grand Livre de la Tomate*. They hope an American edition of the volume will appear within the year.

The poor beleaguered tomato, which devolved into tiresome F1 hybrids in the 1940s, could hardly have found shrewder champions than these two. Mikanowski directs ad campaigns for Christian Dior's skin care and makeup products; and de Broglie, under his logo, Le Prince Jardinier, markets a line of gardening tools and apparel sold in such high-end boutiques as Morgan Terry in Florida. He designed these wares as picturesque trappings for his own gardeners. "They never wore them, and they never used them," says a wry de Broglie. "But we showed them to the press and everyone wanted them."

May the tomato be so fortunate.

THE LIVING ROOM CURTAINS, a confection of pink, blue, and cream, were the inspiration for the airy apartment. The striped fabric is from Coconut Company, NYC, with Scalamandré silk fringe; the shades are a Christopher Norman silk taffeta. Flokati rugs give a modern twist and define the seating areas. French touches abound: the gueridon table with gilt stars, ca. 1820, and the Second Empire mahogany bench, ca. 1850, are from Lee Calicchio, Ltd., NYC. Italian marble busts sit atop French mahogany-and-bronze columns from Kentshire Galleries, Ltd., NYC.



transatlantic translation

Decorator John Christensen and designer Bruce Bananto make a Beaux Arts apartment in Manhattan worthy of its name

WRITTEN BY JUDITH NASATIR

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PIETER ESTERSOHN

PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

NECESSITY IS the mother of every move. When New York decorator John Christensen decided to leave his perch in the West Side's eccentric landmark Ansonia (picture a round dining room and living room) for Manhattan's East Side, he did so for convenience. He had just launched his own design firm. His clients, favorite shops, and showrooms were on the East Side. Soon so was he, with Ivy and Cactus, his cairn terriers. They occupy one floor of an elegant town house built in 1876 and renovated in 1903 by famed New York architect and Beaux Arts adherent Ernest Flagg.

When Christensen first saw the apartment, which his assistant, Annabel Royden, had found, it had been bastardized beyond recognition. "It was a disaster—the result of a horrible 1960s renovation to commercial office space. It was painted army green. The rooms were dark, the ceilings low. There was a really cheesy chandelier," Christensen says. "But the instant I saw it, I knew I'd have boiserie on the walls and the living room would be white." With architectural designer Bruce Bananto, an associate in the firm of Nasser Nakib Architect and a former colleague, Christensen set about implementing his idea of the suitable, seemingly immutable interior: eighteenth-century French meets twentieth-century New York.

Some artifacts of the house's earlier glory remained, including windows with original brass cremone bolts and a marble mantel in the living room. Once stripped of hanging ceilings, the 13-feet-high rooms revealed wonderful plaster relief details. Then the real work began, Bananto says. "John wanted to make it look as though it had always been there, to take something French and make it more French. We're both obsessed with French detail, he decoratively and I architecturally."

Form, of course, followed function. Christensen asked Bananto to frame the living room with architectural detail. "Bruce designed the walls, the window arches with neoclassical heads, the two bookcases, and all the doors." Once the volume was refined, Christensen began to choreograph the decor: "The curtains were the inspiration for the whole apartment," he says. A confection of raspberry silk-taffeta balloon shades with silk-taffeta drapes in white and a color the designer calls "Russian blue-green" established the palette for accents in a room painted four shades of white.

AN ANTIQUE MIRROR and an iron and lead-crystal chandelier from Bagues, Paris, opposite page, help lighten the living room. An antique sofa from Christie's is covered in Beaufort Blanc from Pierre Frey. Christensen upholstered the 19th-century Directoire mahogany bergères—a flea-market find—in a custom leather from Costello Studio, Inc., NYC. The lacquered coffee table is from Lars Bolander, Ltd., Palm Beach. The trunk, from John Rosselli Ltd., NYC, is Chinese lacquer over pigskin. EVERY SURFACE holds "accessories," like gilt-bronze French candleholders with Nubian figures, this page, above, that Christensen has collected. ON THE MANTEL, left, a selection of 18th-century blue-and-white china sits with an Empire clock.

"I don't think a room should look too much like A SHOWPLACE, or not enough" –JOHN CHRISTENSEN

To add sparkle to the hallway that connects the private and public rooms, this page, Bananto constructed French doors with mercury glass. **IN THE DINING ROOM**, chairs covered by Jonas Upholstery in a goffered leather from Daniel C. Duross, Ltd., surround a Russian mahogany table with brass bands, ca. 1800, from Florian Papp, NYC. The 19th-century French Samson plates and silver chargers are from Gump's, San Francisco. **A STATUE OF MARCUS AURELIUS** and Cactus, a cairn terrier, guard the hallway, opposite page. A Swedish 19th-century mirror hangs above a Second Empire commode. The wallpaper is from Zoffany, London.

Christensen has acquired his collection of furnishings and accessories over time. "I've had four apartments in the sixteen years I've been in New York," he says. "I think this is the last. Each gets a little bigger, so I get to use more things." The entire apartment has been filled to the comfort level with eighteenth- to twentieth-century objects: French, Chinese, Russian, and English originals and reproductions culled from auction houses, antiques dealers, showrooms, and craftspeople.

Christensen used white flokatis in the living room to give it "a little modern twist. I like to stick with traditional, but I don't think a room should look too much like a showplace, or not enough." He threaded the Greek key pattern through layers of detail: "It's one of my favorite motifs. I used it on the chair rails, as trim for upholstery, on the bookcases." He placed two French nineteenth-century terra-cotta sphinxes on high to guard the room. "They weigh a lot. It took five men to hoist them up."

To add sparkle to the dark areas of the hall and foyer, Christensen had Bananto construct three sets of French doors with mercury glass. He also made concealed doors to hide the

SWADDLING the master bedroom in a custom fabric turned it into a luxurious cocoon. The black lacquer sleigh bed has goffered-leather upholstery and is made up with linens from E. Braun & Co., NYC. The French gilt-bronze bedside table and Charles X gilt-metal column lamps are from Lee Calicchio, Ltd. The steel and brass chandelier is from David Barrett, Inc., NYC. The Empire mahogany chest is from Niall Smith, NYC. The Leopard Rose carpet is from Stark.

Keeping the FRENCH TWIST a constant,
Christensen chose an ikat with a fleur-de-lys
pattern to tent the bedroom

THICK WALLS in the foyer, left, accommodate a niche for a statue. Chinoiserie wallpaper in the powder room is from Osborne & Little. THE BEDROOM, above, has a 19th-century French desk and chair. Bananto designed the armoire after Russian palace doors.

powder room, storage space, and fire exit. "Every inch of space is used for storage," Christensen says. "Bruce constructed jib doors here to create as much room as possible. The walls in the hall are about ten inches thick, so there was enough depth to do it, and to carve out the niche where my terra-cotta statue from Newport stands."

INSPIRATION came from a variety of places: the ideas for the niche from a Swedish pavilion and the hidden doors from the movie *Dangerous Liaisons*.

The floor plan provided a natural symmetry, with the hall connecting the two main rooms. The bedroom originally had the same 22-feet-square dimensions as the living room, but Christensen chopped 5 feet off one end, and built a false wall to create a hallway to the closet. "That threw everything off center, which inspired me to tent the entire space, hiding a beautiful plaster ceiling," he says.

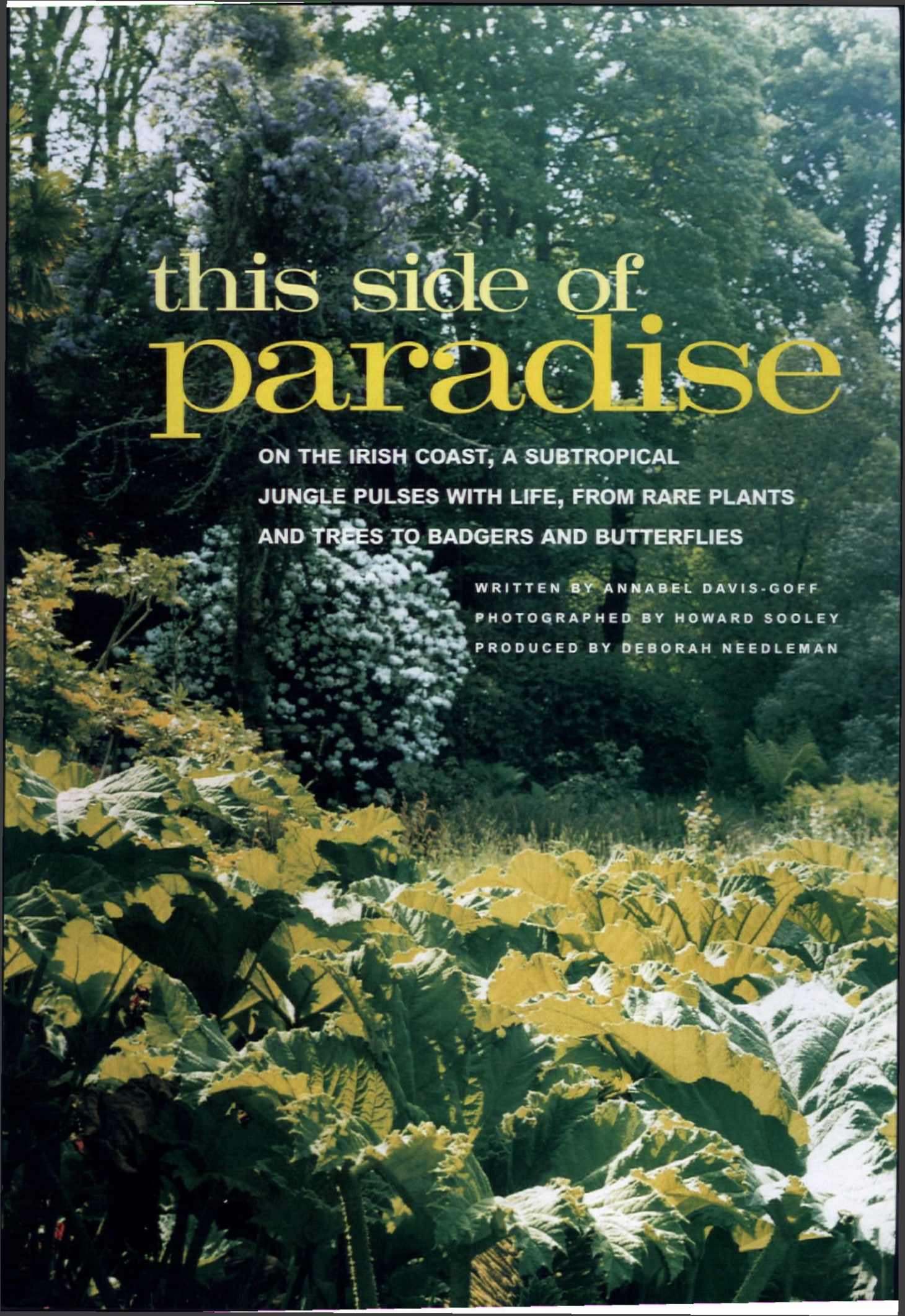
Keeping the French twist a constant within the exoticism, he chose an ikat with a fleur-de-lys pattern for tenting that conceals abundant storage space. The black lacquer copy of an Empire bed was upholstered with leather goffered in an Empire design. The green velvet chairs taught him that "when you go to get a bargain, you have to deal with the consequences. The upholsterer said the frames had bugs and had to be fumigated."

Did he do anything for himself that he wouldn't for clients? "I wouldn't put so many accessories out," he concludes. *C'est la vie.* Having created a residence that now seems as if it has always been here, he's already planning its next incarnation. To work it out, he doesn't have far to go: his office is just one flight below.

JUDITH NASATIR *is a writer based in New York.*

FIRESIDE CHATS are the order of the day (or evening) in the master bedroom—and the accent is decidedly French. The brass pedestal table from John Boone, Inc., NYC, the 19th-century lamps from Guinevere, London, and the gilt-bronze planters with faux fur from Florian Papp are all French. Armchairs upholstered by Jonas Upholstery are covered in an F. Schumacher & Co. linen velvet. The throw pillows are covered with leopard silk velvet from Old World Weavers. Sources, see back of book.

THE ELUSIVE IRISH SUN rakes across palms, tree ferns, and flax, and makes the giant gunnera leaves seem nearly translucent. A grassy path cuts through this loose arrangement of subtropicals, giving the garden a wild, romantic, 19th-century air.


this side of
paradise
ON THE IRISH COAST, A SUBTROPICAL JUNGLE PULSES WITH LIFE, FROM RARE PLANTS AND TREES TO BADGERS AND BUTTERFLIES
WRITTEN BY ANNABEL DAVIS-GOFF
PHOTOGRAPHED BY HOWARD SOOLEY
PRODUCED BY DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL Irish gardens are those in which the past blends with the present, where nature has begun to regain the territory ceded to man. In the struggle between nature and art lies a touching aesthetic perfection. The gardens at Creagh, near Skibbereen, in County Cork, not only contain this admirable quality but reflect the ideas, tastes, cultures, and economics of three centuries in the landscaping, planting, and maintenance.

Creagh, standing on twenty acres of informal gardens and another of wild, unlandscaped fields and woods, overlooks the Ilen estuary. There is a distinguished history of gardening in Ireland, and the more affluent landowners of the past tended to be competitive about exotic plants and trees. On a latitude north of Newfoundland, but warmed by an extension of the Gulf Stream, the subtropical garden at Creagh combines the traditions of the English Ascendancy with the current financial support of the European Union; plants and wildflowers indigenous to Ireland grow beside shrubs and trees brought back from Asia by bounty hunters more than a century ago. Past and present, north and south, east and west, all have their place in a garden that combines the evocative beauty of the past with the hard-minded practical reality of the present day. The landscaping dates back

APPEARANCES TO the contrary, the Baluba hut, opposite page, top, was never a hermitage. It was built in the 1960s as a summerhouse and often accommodated an afternoon card game. THE RED-FLOWERING telopea tree nearby, which is also seen beyond mixed conifers, opposite page, bottom, is the garden's rarest specimen. OLD RHODODENDRONS, this page, flank the entrance to the walled garden.

to 1945, and is the work of Gwendoline and Peter Harold-Barry, the previous owners. The current owners modestly describe themselves as custodians. Theirs is a labor of love.

Creagh was built in 1820, but the walled garden predates the house. The largest cultivated area, it contains a newly restored late-1940s greenhouse and a cottage garden full of lupines and delphiniums. In the vegetable garden, almost as pleasing, are artichokes, ruby chard, and sea kale (grown without cloches). The entrances, the wooden gate set into the overgrown and crumbling wall and surrounded by white and scarlet rhododendrons, and the hazelwood arbor, planted with sweet pea and white roses, leading to the working end of the garden, are lovely in a way not possible in a less soggy climate.

The serpentine pond provides one of the most beautiful vistas

in Ireland. Trees, bushes, shrubs, ferns, candelabra primulas, and arum lilies are rooted in the water, and a combination of lush greens, from the deepest and darkest to the palest, almost white, are reflected there. The reflection is broken only by water lilies, watercress, and the occasional moorhen. The folly by the pond—a reception house—is now overgrown and largely ruined. Inside, there are the remains of a fireplace: beside it teas were once served, and a staircase led to a roof and a view of the estuary.

The Baluba hut looks, from a distance, as though it should

A walled garden from the Georgian period predates the house. OPPOSITE PAGE, clockwise from top: High walls protect an herb garden, an ornamental cottage garden with lupines, and an organic kitchen garden. ROWS OF SEA KALE, ruby chard, and artichoke, top and inset left, grown without cloches, are handsomely productive. "HENS' HILTON," a luxurious fowl compound built along the lines of a Czechoslovakian mountain hut, above, is also here.

A PAINTING by Henri Rousseau inspired the lush pondside scene, opposite page. A DONKEY grazes in Malachy's Field, above, which was named for him. A ROUND-FLOWERED butterfly bush, *Buddleia globosa*, left, grows in the pesticide-free garden.

once have housed an eighteenth-century hermit. This is not the case. It is a Congolese thatch and plaster hut built by Peter Harold-Barry during the 1960s as a summerhouse. He was an enthusiastic bridge player, and the hut often accommodated a game on fine summer afternoons. A telopea, the rarest tree at Creagh, stands to one side of the hut. In front there is a stone and slate well with wisteria and ferns growing beside it. The well is fed by one of the several springs at Creagh. Underground pipes from the well feed the pond, which once provided all the water, carried up in buckets, for the house.

The gardens, meadows, strand, and vistas, varied but always harmonious, are connected by avenues and walks. The walk to the boathouse is planted with silver birch and in spring is ablaze with azaleas. Another leads through twenty species of magnolia, and yet others are lined with rhododendrons, montbretia, and gunnera. Cupressus, cordyline, and wisteria, climbing a dead fir pine, overlook the fields, ferns, and lawns.

Wildlife abounds at Creagh. No chemical sprays are used, and the meadow bordering the avenue is cut only once a year. The meadows, the woods, and the mile and a half of benignly neglected waterfront are home to badgers, partridges, pheasants, and nightingales, as well as the more usual birds and animals. The buddleia throughout the Robinsonian grounds attracts clouds of butterflies.

The local church at Creagh is deconsecrated, and the churchyard is not often cut back. Occupying more than two overgrown acres, it too is a sanctuary for small animals, and a pleasant and peaceful place for human visitors. Peter and Gwendoline Harold-Barry and their daughter, Christine, are buried there, where violets and wild cyclamen grow.

ANNABEL DAVIS-GOFF's *most recent novel,* The Dower House *(St. Martin's Press), will be published in trade paperback next spring.*

WRITTEN BY JEAN BOND RAFFERTY PHOTOGRAPHED BY PIETER ESTERSOHN

STYLED BY GAIL ROBERTS PRODUCED BY NEWELL TURNER

sparkle plenty

The splendid eighteenth-century Château de Baccarat is brought back to crystalline perfection by stylist Marie-Paule Pellé

THE FORMER DIRECTOR'S RESIDENCE faces the Baccarat factory across a shady square. When Marie-Paule Pellé took on the task of redoing the interior of this château, she was determined to banish the dark, heavy furnishings and make it a "house of delicate colors." AS IN THE HALLWAY, right, pastel hues dominate the rooms because they play up the effect of the crystal.

ALTHOUGH PELLÉ SAYS she was unaware of it, the soft colors she chose for the salon echo the hues of the glassworkers' houses on the square. The curtains and linings are made from a silk by Rubelli. The velvet-striped tablecloth fabric is from Lelièvre. The rug is an Aubusson.

THE STORY OF the Château de Baccarat is a Renaissance tale—the restoration of the venerable director's house to its eighteenth-century glory. Steeped in history, the Baccarat crystal firm dates back to the original Lorraine glassworks, founded in this town near Nancy in 1764. More a manor than a grand château, the former director's residence dominates the tree-shaded square of greenery bordered on both sides by craftsmen's houses, with the bell-towered factory opposite.

Remodeled in the nineteenth century with a New Orleans–style ironwork portico, the house has played host to a regal roster of guests, from France's Charles X to America's General Pershing.

But by the end of the twentieth century, the decor, which was meant to personify the sparkling image of Baccarat, labored under a confusion of styles. The Taittinger champagne family, who bought a controlling interest in Baccarat seven years ago, asked French stylist Marie-Paule Pellé to redo the interior, to restore what Baccarat CEO Anne-Claire Taittinger terms, "*la douceur de vivre à la Française*—the French way of combining simplicity with refinement."

"I went to Baccarat like a doctor visiting a patient," recollects Pellé, whose credentials include being at the creative center of many publications, among them *Décoration International* magazine in the

IN CONTRAST with the rest of the house, the colors in the conference room, right and opposite page, are strong. The red wool used on the walls and for the curtains is from Manuel Canovas. The green fabric on the tables was created by Pellé and inspired by an 1830s green-topped desk. The wall brackets display plaster molds of Baccarat designs.

1980s, and stints at American *House & Garden*, and *Condé Nast Traveler*. "When I looked at the old lady I thought, 'God, she needs a lift.' But not a revolution—just to be put back like she was when she was young."

In six months and on a small budget, much of which went to updating the electricity and plumbing by creating new bathrooms, Pellé has achieved a grand transformation by mixing sumptuous furnishings with less costly ones and by using ingredients already at hand. In the salon, out went the brown wallpaper, dark velvet curtains, somber paintings, mahogany furniture, and Louis XVI-style fauteuils. In came soft grays and pastels in silks, velvets, and cottons, turning a gloomy salon into an inviting, light-filled drawing room.

"The major thing to be respected was the crystal," Pellé says. "If you play with strong, hard colors, they kill the effect of the crystal. This house had to be transparent." And although she says she was

means of production

Man and machine at Baccarat

The Kessler, far left, named for its inventor, a chemist from the Lorraine region, is one of the oldest machines at the Baccarat factory. First used in 1864, it speeds the process of engraving crystal. Holding 14 pieces at a time, the Kessler traces uniform patterns into a wax and turpentine coating on the crystal, which is then placed in an acid bath. The acid eats away at the exposed areas to etch the designs. Left: One of Baccarat's maîtres verriers, *or glass masters, uses a wheel cutter to engrave a wineglass.*

THE FOCAL POINT OF the dining room is the exquisite Baccarat chandelier, sparkling with crystal bells. The red-and-white-striped cotton curtain fabric is Marie-Paule Pellé's own design. The glasses on the antique table, the sconces, and the vases are all Baccarat.

unaware of it, the salon's shades of pale green, rose, dove gray, bronze, and soft violet are uncanny echoes of the hues of the glassworkers' houses on the square.

If Pellé's first visit was to the house, her second was to the attic. "Most of the superb furniture was sitting quietly up in the attic; that's where I found the sofas," she says with a smile. "I reorganized all the furniture, brought pieces from the attic and the bedrooms, and did new marriages in every room."

The secretary and marble-topped commode were sent from the living room up to the bedrooms. A heavy mahogany armoire in the dining room went up to the attic, and another cupboard was brought down and painted to match the ivory, gray, and white boiseries.

RESPLENDENT Rubelli silks and velvets and an Aubusson rug in the salon contrast with the simple red-and-white-striped cotton on the *méridiennes*. Like the other furnishings, they must be effective backdrops for the shimmering crystal that stars in every room: in the entrée and salon, tablescapes of antique and contemporary vases; in the dining room, a grand crystal chandelier sparkling with exquisite crystal bells; in the bathrooms, small beaded chandeliers called *crinolines*; in every bedroom, frosted crystal dolphin lamps and contemporary carafes. "All that glitters is Baccarat," notes Pellé, right down to the crystal door handles and stair finials.

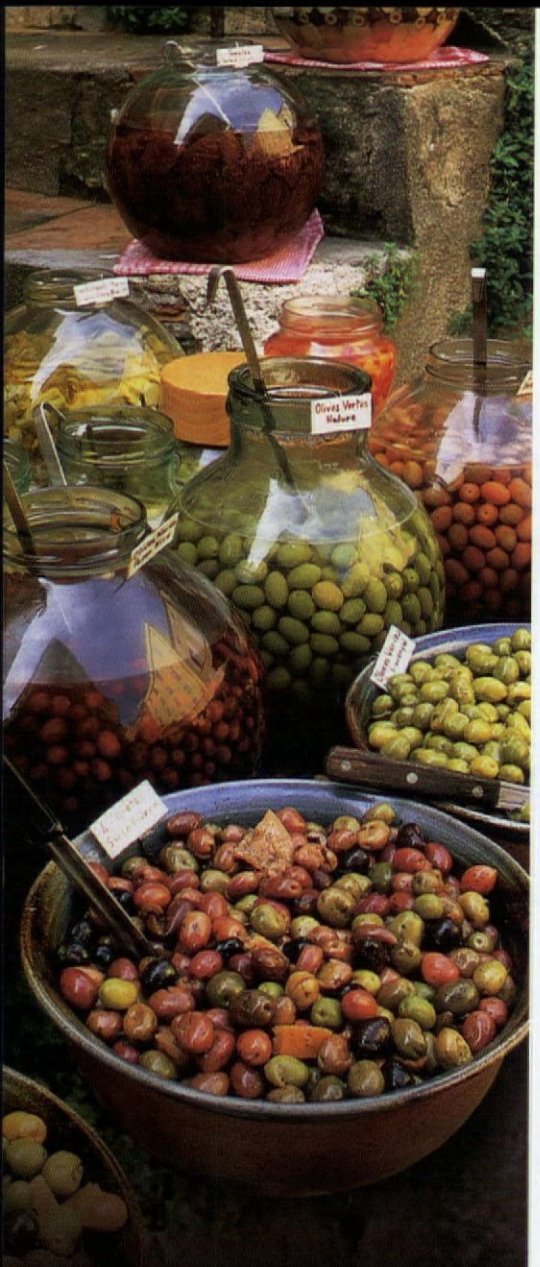
And in the neo-Egyptian ambience of Mme. Taittinger's bedroom, with its Monuments of Egypt wallpaper by Braquenié & Cie and Empire bed bought in Bourges, the museum-piece Charles X opalines inspired the cream, violet, and turquoise curtains.

In contrast, the conference room is characterized by its strong colors, inspired, Pellé says, by an 1830 green-topped desk of a French notary. "People want to be serious, so they think conference rooms must be dull," she remarks. In Pellé's eye-opening version, Canovas's red limousine wool is splashed over the walls and curtains, while green wool skirts the tables. Wall brackets displaying plaster molds of Baccarat designs alternate with portraits of past directors.

Vibrant color appears in the twelve bedrooms upstairs, too. "We wanted to have the atmosphere of a house, not a hotel," Pellé says. So she mixed Comoglio, Rubelli, and Canovas prints in separate red, blue, and yellow schemes to personalize each room.

The stylist calls the overall result "a modern interpretation of the eighteenth century. It's timeless, one of my goals, and classic, but with a flavor of today." And Mme. Taittinger deems the atmosphere right on target: "The house incarnates the French *art de vivre*," she says approvingly. "You experience that *douceur* when you are there."

Marie-Paule Pellé redid the bedrooms, creating fresh marriages between antiques from the château and new fabrics. IN MME. TAITTINGER'S BEDROOM, opposite page, the Monuments of Egypt toile wallpaper and bed-curtain fabric are from Braquenié. The toile bed coverlet and silk curtain fabrics are from Rubelli. IN A BEDROOM, above, the wall fabric is from Rubelli; the Mandarin cotton on the armchairs is from Manuel Canovas. The rug is from Brunschwig & Fils. IN THE BATHROOM, left, Pellé mixed an antique copper tub with a contemporary mirror and sink. Sources, see back of book.



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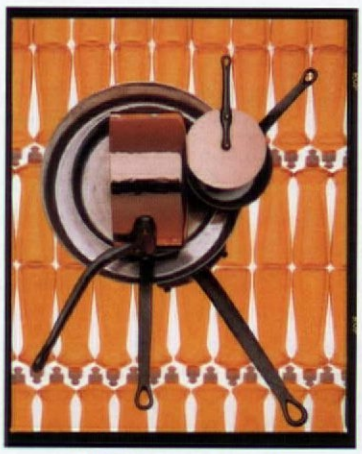

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617-566-1644. **Flowers,** Winston Flowers, P.O. Box 933, Boston, MA 02117. 800-457-4901. **Wall oven,** Thermador. 800-735-4328. **Kitchen chairs,** Adesso, 200 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116. 617-451-2212. **Electric mixer,** Kitchen Aid, available through Williams-Sonoma. 800-541-2233. **Ceramic vase and bowl on table,** Wolfman Gold & Good Company. **Vintage silverware baskets,** Aero, Ltd. **Pages 96-97, Design team,** David Leven and Stella Betts, Leven Betts Studio, 135 Grand Street, NYC 10013. 212-941-1958. **Stainless-steel sink,** Franke. 800-626-5771. **Backsplash railing system and hardware on cabinets,** Hafele America Co. 800-423-3531. **Martini mixer and glasses,** Wolfman Gold & Good Company.

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Christensen Design Group, Ltd., 39 East 67th Street, NYC 10021. 212-396-2020. **Architectual designer,** Bruce Bananto, Nasser Nakib Architect, 306 East 61st Street, NYC. 212-759-1515. **Pages 102-103,** Coconut Company, 131 Greene Street, NYC 10012. 212-539-1940. Scalamandré, NYC. 212-980-3888. Available through architects and designers. Christopher Norman, Inc., NYC. 212-647-0303. Available through architects and designers. Lee Calicchio, Ltd., 134 East 70th Street, NYC 10021. 212-717-4417. Kentshire Galleries, Ltd., 37 East 12th Street, NYC 10003. 212-673-6644. **Swedish mahogany secretary,** H.M. Luther, Inc., Antiques, 61 East 11th Street, NYC 10003. 212-505-1485. **Gilt-bronze wall sconces,** Quatrain, 700 N. La Cienega Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90069. 310-652-0243. **Pages 104-105, Bagues,** 37 avenue Pierre-1er-de-Serbie, 75008 Paris. 33-1-47-20-61-17. Pierre Frey, NYC. 212-213-3099. Available through architects and designers. Costello Studio, Inc., 315 East 91st Street, NYC 10128. 212-410-2083. Lars Bolander, Ltd., 375 South County Road, Palm Beach, FL 33480. 561-832-2121. John Rosselli, Ltd., 255 East 72nd Street, NYC. 212-737-2252. **Nubian figure candleholders,** Newel Art Galleries, Inc., NYC. 212-758-1970. www.newel.com. **Pages 106-107,** Jonas Upholstery, 44 West 18th Street, NYC 10011. 212-691-2777. Daniel C. Duross, Ltd., 5 North Melcher Street, Johnstown, NY 12095. 518-762-1910. Florian Papp, Inc., 962 Madison Avenue, NYC 10021. 212-288-6770. Gump's, San Francisco. 800-766-7628. Zoffany, London. 44-1923-712455. **Pages 108-109,** E. Braun & Co., 717 Madison Avenue, NYC. 800-372-7286. David Barrett, Inc., 131 East 71st Street, NYC 10021. 212-585-3180. Niall Smith Antiques, 96 Grand Street, NYC 10013. 212-941-7354. Stark Carpet Corp., NYC. 212-752-9000. Available through architects and designers. **Custom upholstery on walls and ceiling** by Versailles Drapery & Upholstery, Inc., 37 East 18th Street, NYC 10003. 212-533-2059. **Pages 110-111, Cathay wallpaper,** Osborne & Little, NYC. 212-751-3333. Available through architects and designers. John Boone, Inc., NYC. 212-758-0012. Available through architects and designers. Schumacher. 800-332-3384. Available through architects and designers. Old World Weavers, NYC. 212-355-7186. Available through architects and designers.

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Baccarat, 30 bis rue de Paradis, 75010 Paris. 33-1-47-70-64-30. **Pages 122-123,** Rubelli, 6 bis rue de L'Abbaye, 75006 Paris. 33-1-43-54-27-77. Lelievre, 13 rue du Mail, 75002 Paris. 33-1-42-61-53-03. **Pages 124-125,** Manuel Canovas, NYC. 212-752-9588. Available through architects and designers. **Pages 128-129,** Braquenié, 111 boulevard Beaumarchais, 75003 Paris. 33-1-48-04-30-03. **Warwick Tapestry rug,** Brunschwig & Fils, NYC. 212-838-7878. Available through architects and designers. **Fleurs Bleues bed linens,** Porthault Linens, 18 East 69th Street, NYC 10021. 212-688-1660.

PHOTO CREDITS

Page 70, *House & Garden,* October 1949, courtesy of CNP archives.

CORRECTION

On page 46 of the December 1998 issue, the Brickwork rug is predominantly wool, not cotton, as was stated. On page 98 of the December 1998 issue, the sterling silver soup tureen and service plates are from S. Wyler, Inc., NYC. 212-879-9848. The hand-lettering in "Bedtime Stories," beginning on page 88 of the January 1999 issue, was done by Todd Apjones.

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—PRODUCED BY KATHRYN TOWNSEND

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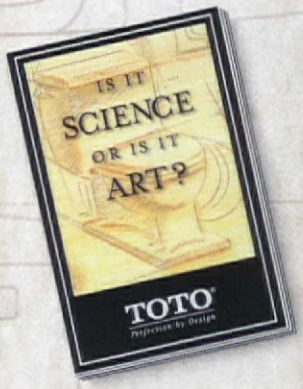

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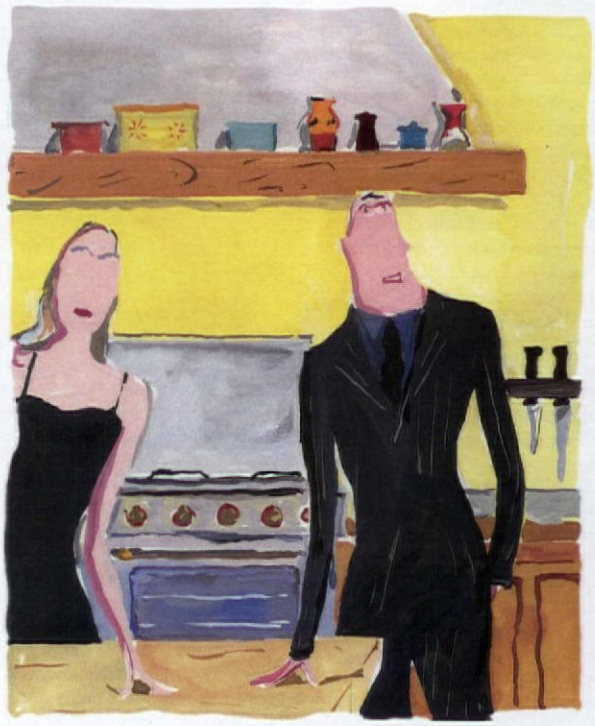
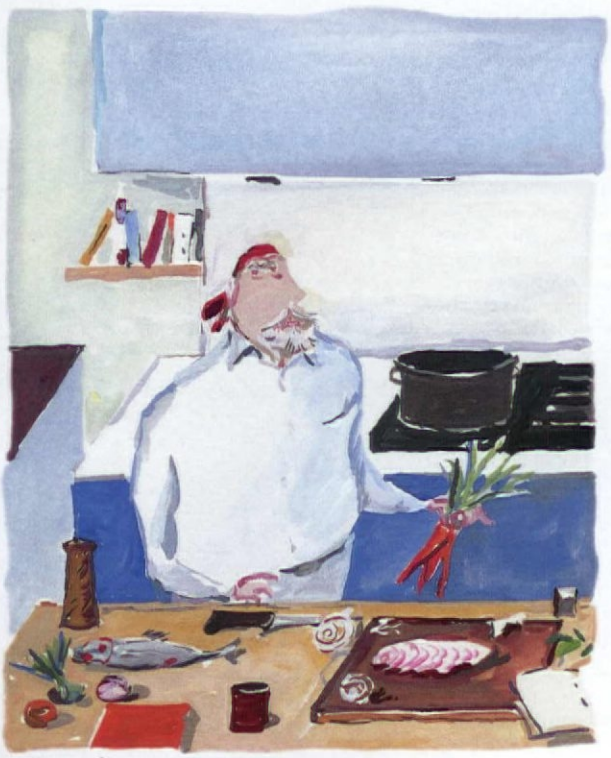
& another Thing...

designer meals by jean-philippe delhomme

Our new kitchen is so slick, it's hard to tell the fridge from the stove!



We never have the time to cook, but we wanted the kitchen to be as traditional as possible so we could call this place home.



I'd rather call this my laboratory than my kitchen. Right now I'm working on re-inventing Australian food.

Our kitchen is a minimalist masterpiece and we cook only conceptual food.

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