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Kitchen designer **Lois Kennedy** applies historical connections to three outstanding kitchens

Kitchens in context

By Heather C. Jackson

With a family background in building and architecture plus a degree in fine art, Lois Kennedy found that kitchen design was the perfect combination of her skills. Often the most complicated room to design, the kitchen calls on both technical and artistic abilities to make everything come together. When approaching a project that has historical origins, Kennedy looks toward a home's exterior architecture for guidance. As the following three kitchens show, it is possible to embrace historical design within a 21st-century lifestyle.

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Kitchen Designs: Lois Kennedy, CKD, Portfolio Kitchens, Vienna, Virginia

Simplicity defines the exterior of this mid-1800s farmhouse (above), but the Victorian-era design influences of the original furnishings come to life in the warm kitchen. A hand-painted mosaic of the "Tree of Life" creates an artistic focal point in the kitchen (right).

A Victorian Farmhouse

The exterior of this simple Virginia farmhouse belies the grandeur inside. The Victorian-era antique furnishings that fill the home influenced Lois Kennedy's innovative approach to the kitchen.

A traditional farmhouse would have had a functional but stark servants' kitchen; Kennedy, however, responded to the client's desire for a more furnished look. Period-appropriate design elements in the kitchen came from the elegant antique furnishings found in other rooms, many of them original to the house, which was built in the mid-1800s.

Applying these Victorian design elements, Kennedy gave the kitchen more personality with warm colors and interesting architectural accents, including detailed mouldings, while maintaining a high level of functionality. The island is a prep area with refrigerated drawers, and a hutch serves as a breakfast bar. Premier Custom Cabinets, which built the cabinetry throughout the kitchen, reproduced the hutch, designed by Kennedy from an antique piece.

As an artistic focal point for the room, a mosaic Kennedy designed for the homeowner based on the "Tree of Life" is displayed over the range. "The woman who owns this house loves and treasures life," she says. A volunteer with the Animal Rescue League, she has converted the basement of the farmhouse into a facility for the care and rehabilitation of abused and neglected animals. She is also an avid organic gardener, and it was the family's desire to preserve the land that led them to buy the property, which is kept as a working farm. Painted and fired by a local artist, the mosaic seemed "the right idea for a woman who contributes to the wholeness of the earth and life," muses Kennedy.

RESOURCES

Cabinetry: Premier Custom Built, Inc., New Holland, PA.
Countertops: Marble Source Unlimited, Inc., Annapolis Junction, MD.
Tile Painting: Pat Bergeron, Monrovia, MD.
Appliances: Viking, Miele, Sub-Zero.

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The lines of the kitchen cabinets, along with details in the mouldings and hardware, reflect the Victorian furniture found throughout the home.