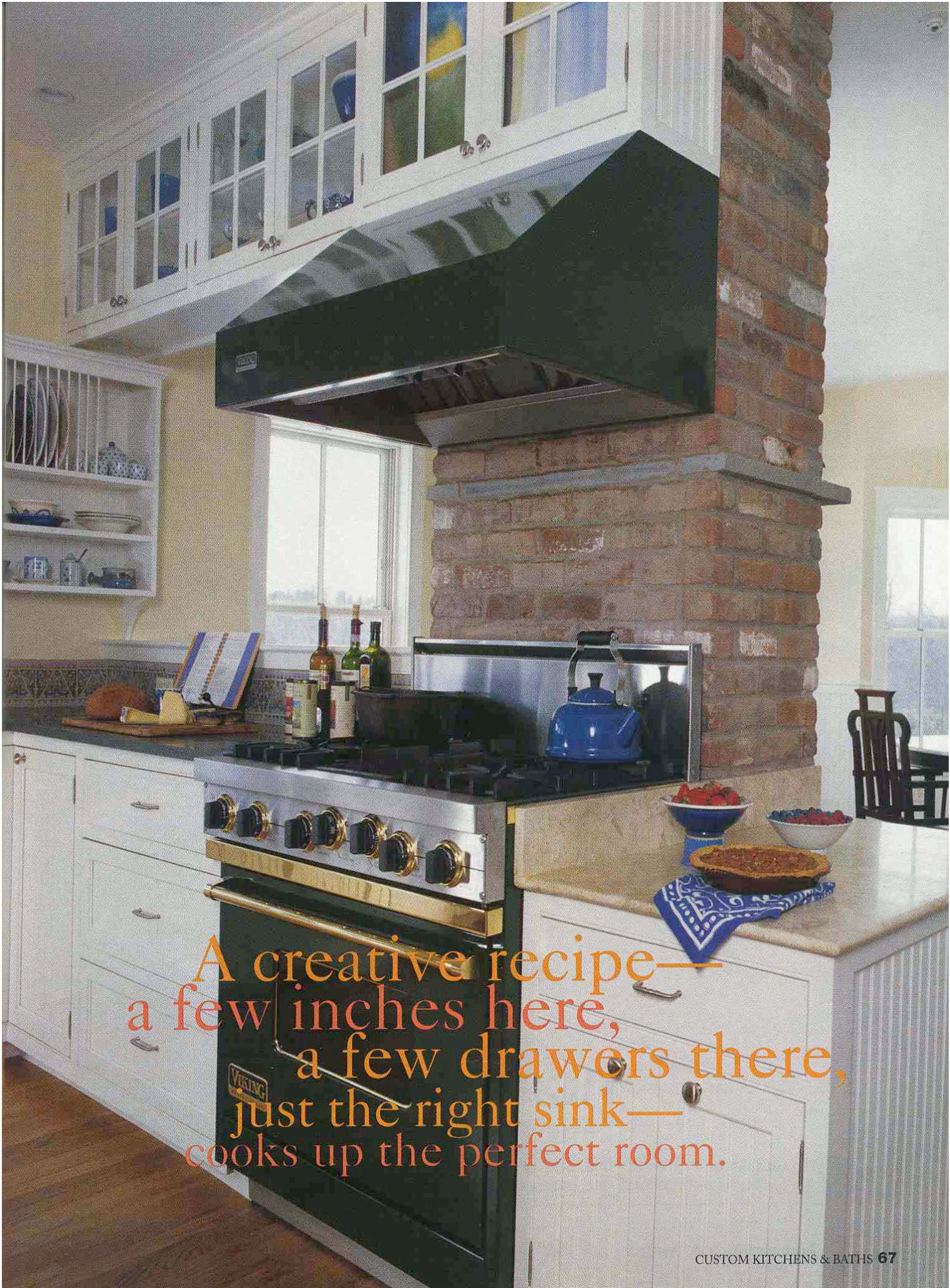
A bright, airy kitchen with white cabinetry and a large window. A woman is crouching on the left, petting a dog. A young boy stands next to the dog, and a young girl is leaning on a wooden island table, reaching for a bowl of fruit. The kitchen features a double sink, a wooden island with a lattice base, and blue pendant lights. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

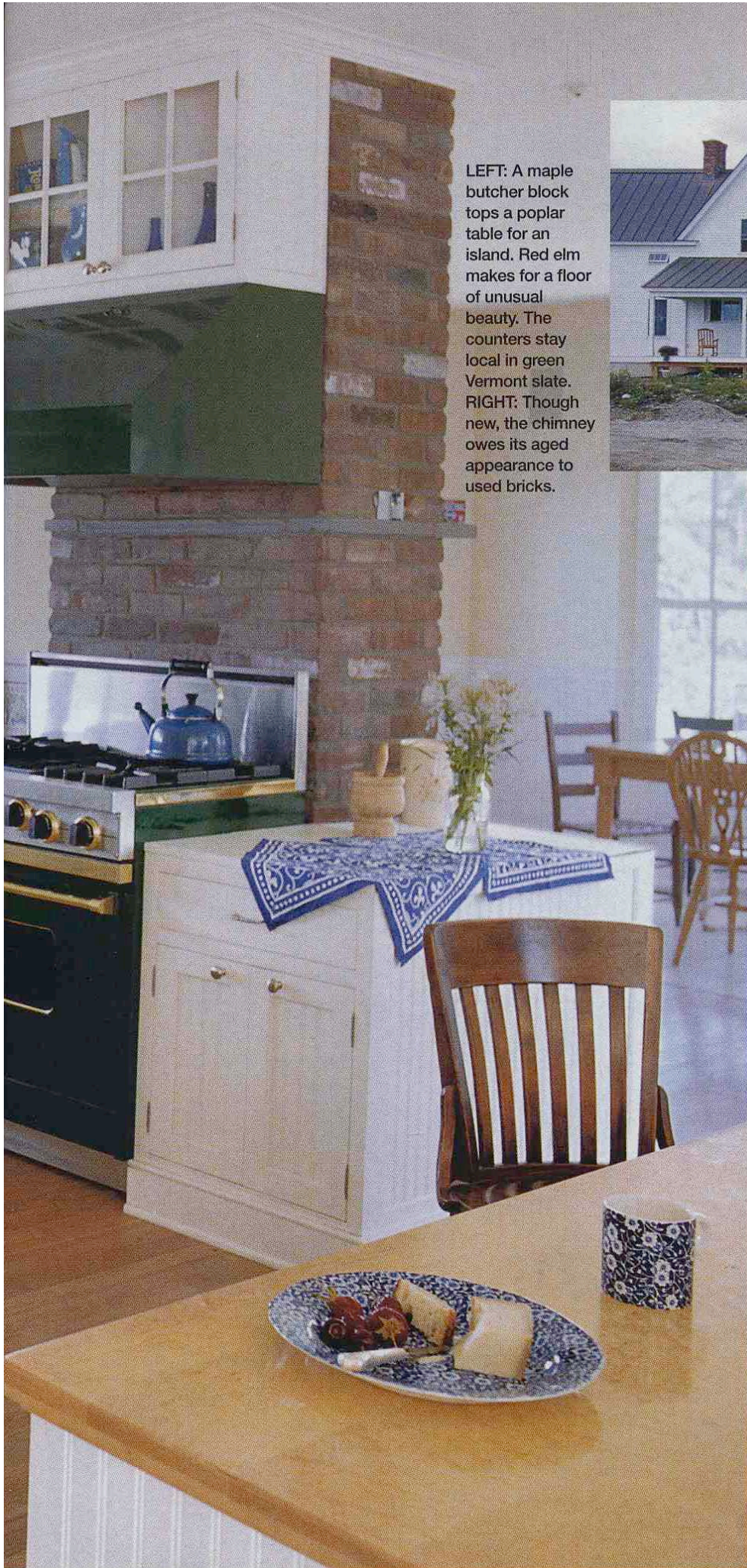
the heart of the home

The family-friendly kitchen

BY KRISTINA SIGLER PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROLYN BATES



A creative recipe—
a few inches here,
a few drawers there,
just the right sink—
cooks up the perfect room.



LEFT: A maple butcher block tops a poplar table for an island. Red elm makes for a floor of unusual beauty. The counters stay local in green Vermont slate. RIGHT: Though new, the chimney owes its aged appearance to used bricks.

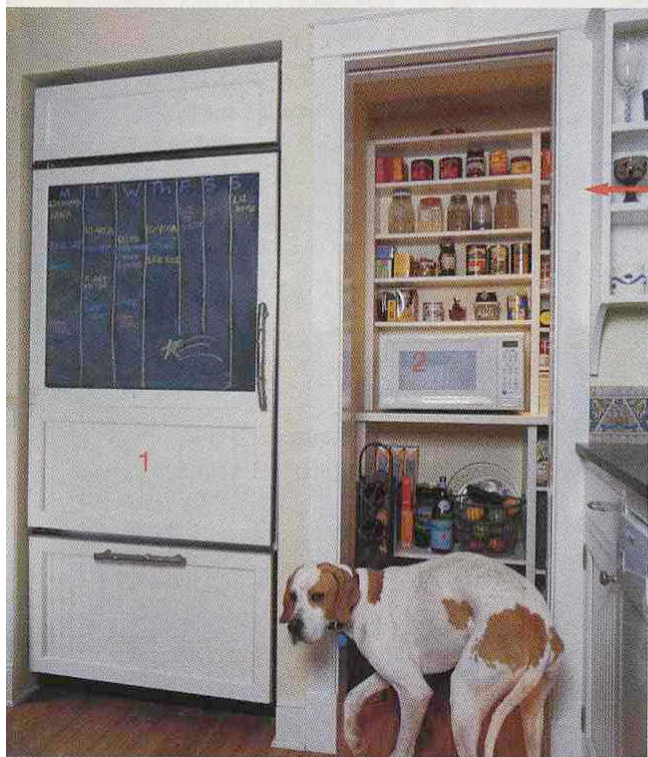


To pack a kitchen with custom features that work for your family, starting with a wish list can be the answer. It worked for Liz Poulsen and John Barlow, who took their list to Jim Huntington, the principal of New England Housewrights, the design/build firm that constructed their new home in Charlotte, Vermont. The couple asked for a kitchen layout central to their home's first floor that would incorporate the open planning popular today. They also requested cooking and design items that would simplify life for the family.

"No matter what, everyone ends up in the kitchen," says Huntington. "Liz and John wanted be able to see the dining and family rooms from it, but their goal was that they still wanted the kitchen to feel like its own room. I did that by creating half-walls—like you see behind the 'command central' desk—creating posts and the brick chimney behind the range." The chimney vents a wood stove in the dining room.

Such divisions let you see into other rooms but keeps a sense of separation.

“Two sinks were my most important request,” states Poulsen. “I’m not an enthusiastic dishwasher. This way I can let them pile up in the sink by the window, and we use the sink at the island for washing food and drinking.” A baking center topped Barlow’s list: The accomplished cook can often be found with two befloured helpers at the special limestone slab, which is set

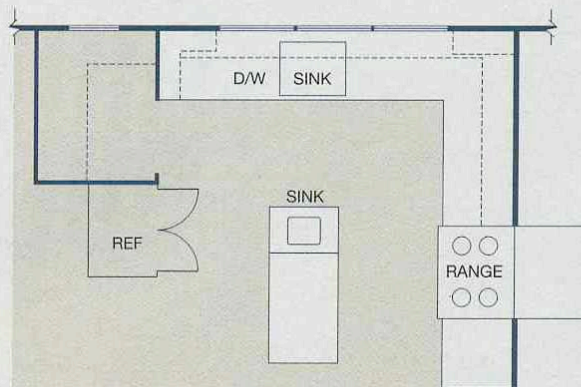


6 inches lower than the other counters in a custom cabinetry block (cabinet design is a specialty at Housewrights).

“We definitely wanted to keep an openness and light in the kitchen,” Huntington says. “The space is not huge—about twelve feet by eleven feet—so we put the emphasis on windows. The only upper cabinets are light, glass-fronted units very high above the view through to the dining room. The storage is made up for by a pantry, which has its own window. We wanted no gloominess, even in there.” ■

what makes it family friendly

- **1. CHALK IT UP TO EXPERIENCE:** On the refrigerator, Liz Poulsen wanted a slate board. It was nixed because it was too heavy, but an assistant made a light plywood panel with chalkboard paint.
- **2. PERFECT PANTRY:** The pantry is conveniently located next to the refrigerator—all groceries can be put away at once. The unusual 8-inch shallowness of the shelf allows food to be seen easily. The microwave is also housed in here.
- **3. A WATERY ISLAND:** “This is our main cooking and drinking sink,” says Poulsen. The three-sided porcelain beauty sits in the center of the room and handles traffic from all angles.



FLOOR PLAN

The centrally located kitchen boasts two sinks. An open layout provides views of the dining and family rooms.

SEE BUYING GUIDE FOR DETAILS