

The spirit of Mexico adds flavor to the flowing kitchen/bar area. A collection of retablos hangs above a low curving wall that leads to the breakfast nook, while an antique piece from Mexico stores glassware. Stools with hair-on-hide seats lend Western flair.

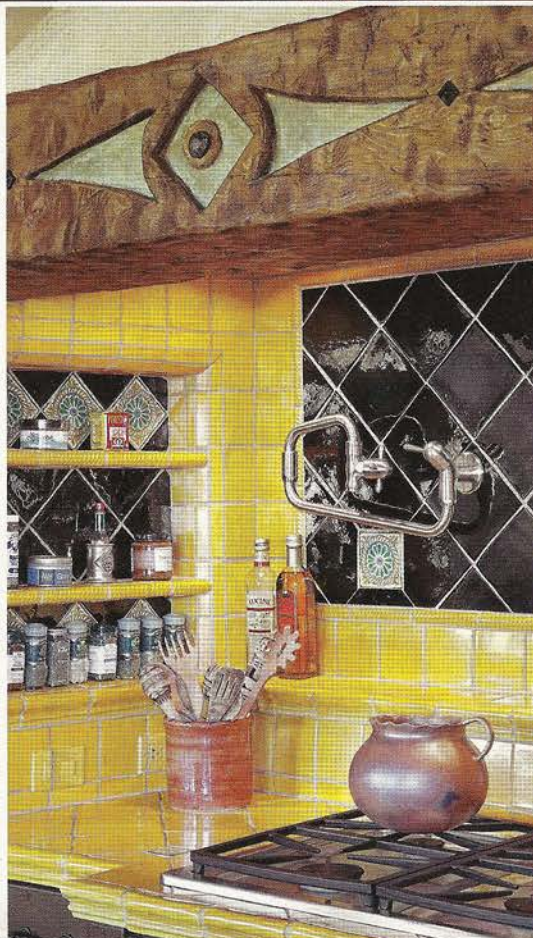


A TRIP TO MEXICO as a teenager—and several subsequent visits—so affected one Scottsdale homeowner that years later she infused that country’s vivid palette and rich culture into the design of her Arizona house.

A team composed of Masters of the Southwest interior designer Paula Den Boer and architect Lee Hutchison, AIA, and builder Randy Arnett-Romero was assembled to create the residence, and south-of-the-border elements were incorporated

Such elements as a fireplace in the breakfast nook/hearth room, reclaimed wood flooring, a hand-carved mantel over the range hood, and punched-copper pendants create the “warm and comfortable” feel the homeowner desired. The cooktop (near right) features a tiled niche used as a spice rack. Tiled countertops and backsplashes were common in old Mexican cocinas, or kitchens. The mesquite-topped island is reminiscent of the wood tables often found in south-of-the-border kitchens.

See Sources.



throughout. These include the use of such materials as terra cotta and punched copper, as well as niches for displaying collections of Mexican folk art. The kitchen/bar area is no exception.

Den Boer chose a vibrant color scheme to recreate the flavor of old Mexico. Yellow tiles clad the kitchen countertop and are paired with a dark-green tile to form the cooktop backsplash, while the free-form island features a scrubbed blue-wash finish.

The island mimics the shape of the space, which

transitions into a breakfast nook/hearth room before continuing into a bar area. A signature Hutchison-designed spoked ceiling connects all three; in the kitchen, pavers laid between the wood beams reinforce the mood.

"I fell in love with Mexico when I was 19 and returned often, but since we were from the Midwest, I never really had a chance to indulge that passion in my decorating," recalls the lady of the house. "Here, I had that perfect chance." ■

