

Photo: Courtesy of ALNO (www.ALNO.com)

Bon Appétit!

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Bring on Summer Vacation!

You can practically smell the steaks sizzling on the grill and hear the laughter of the kids splashing in the pool. It's good times like these that create some of the fondest memories for your family and friends.

Do these happy thoughts also bring back some unfortunate reminders of you running back and forth all afternoon carrying items between your kitchen and the grill? Then, at the end of the day, everything had to go back inside for clean up. Wouldn't you rather have spent the day outside relaxing

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Photo: (www.lynxgrills.com)

The Cocktail Pro is a fully-functional outdoor cocktail station.



Accessorizing Your Kitchen

Have you ever stopped to consider how your kitchen is like a little black dress? Both of these items—while wonderful on their own—are made even more fabulous once you add the right accessories!

The key to accessorizing your kitchen is to keep clutter under control, while carrying the theme of your décor throughout. Here are a few ideas for accessories in two popular kitchen styles.

Country Kitchen: Part of the charm of a country kitchen is that so much of the décor is usable and functional in the kitchen. Those wicker baskets you have above the cabinets are also a perfect place to stash away things like napkin rings or those forbidden snacks you want to hide from the kids! Use an old crock to store utensils or as a vase for fresh flowers. Hang copper pots from a pot rack. Be sure to include some fabric in your accessories—whether you choose lace curtains on the windows, or quilts hanging on the wall.

Modern or Contemporary Kitchen: Sleek and simple is the name of the game in this style kitchen. You'll want to look for accessories that match each other, while either complementing or contrasting with the appliances or countertops in your kitchen. Brushed nickel utensil accessories look sophisticated on black countertops, while black accessories would really compliment a marble countertop. Simple canisters can line a counter, hiding flour and sugar or loose change and car keys, depending on your need. Find unique art for the walls, and if it works with the wall color, use frames that match the rest of the accessories you choose.

However you choose to accessorize, remember that your choices are an extension of your own style and personality. Choose pieces that express who you are while serving the purposes you need.

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In last summer's hit movie *"Julie & Julia,"* viewers see glimpses of Meryl Streep (starring as Julia Child) at work in a replica of the famous kitchen where Julia filmed her last three television shows. Julia's actual kitchen has been reassembled at the Smithsonian where it has become a destination for crowds of admirers. With its blue-green cabinets, maple countertops, and gleaming copper pots, her kitchen was fashioned after the practical French country kitchens she loved so much. The kitchen is highly functional, while radiating the warmth and unpretentious welcome that was the trademark of Julia's personality and her joyful style of cooking.



ALNO's Country Collection features traditional design, stylishly combined with modern kitchen technology.



One reason the country-style kitchen continues to be so popular today is that it—like Julia—encourages us to appreciate the simple, ordinary pleasures of food and family. It helps us escape to a less complicated time, while providing the efficiency needed to keep up with the demands of the modern lifestyle.

Both of the charming, updated country kitchens, shown here and on the front page, convey a relaxed attitude, yet neither sacrifices modern conveniences. To create this style in your kitchen, choose unadorned cabinetry painted white or muted colors. Select hardware in simple shapes, such as round knobs or old-fashioned freezer handles. Place favorite crockery on open shelves and behind the glass doors of upper cabinets, while keeping shiny copper pots on display near the stove. Install wood, soapstone or marble countertops and enjoy the incredible beauty inherent in these natural materials. Add a deep, undercounter stainless steel sink or a farmhouse sink reminiscent of those found in the cottages of the French countryside. Bring your table back into the kitchen for casual country dining. Forego window treatments to create a light and airy feel. Use wide plank wood floors that are painted and/or surface-treated to produce an authentic footworn look. Crown molding or recycled wooden ceiling beams complete the inviting look.

Picking Up Steam

In recent years, steam technology has been added to a wide variety of home appliances, including ovens, clothes washers and dryers—and now dishwashers. Why is a steam cycle useful in a dishwasher?

- For one thing, it can more effectively loosen dried, baked-on food from your dishes than soap and water can. When steam is used in a pre-wash cycle, it eliminates the need to manually rinse dishes prior to loading.
- Steam's cleaning ability comes from high heat and pressure rather than a vigorous spray action, so it is gentle to fine china.

- Steam, of course, is much hotter than even the hottest water and can be used to kill bacteria and sanitize objects, such as sippy cups and baby bottles, in the dishwasher.
- A small amount of water creates a much larger volume of steam, so you end up using less water to clean your dishes—saving on your water bill.
- Steam cleaning helps you avoid using expensive—and possibly harmful—chemicals and detergents to get the job done.

The GE Profile SmartDispense II dishwasher offers a pure steam pre-wash, in addition to steam options during the normal wash cycle.

Once Upon a Time

A vintage master bath, with design elements evoking the early 1900s, offers a timeless appeal. Today the nostalgic look is more popular than ever, as people have come to value the warmth and simplicity they associate with that period.

The great emphasis on cleanliness at the turn of the century gave rise to the “sanitary” bathroom. The exposed plumbing that appears so quaint to us now, was purposely brought out into the open where it could be kept scrupulously clean. Popular choices for materials were based on how easily they could be cleaned: shiny white porcelain washbasin and tub, gleaming tile on the walls, white painted woodwork, and polished nickel-plated pipes. Tubs were raised from the floor on ball and claw feet so that no dirt could become wedged underneath.

Tile or marble on the floor and walls was considered ideal, but less expensive treatments were also used, such as a tile wainscoting with wallpaper above, or floor-to-ceiling paint in delicate colors. Another popular floor covering was linoleum designed to imitate the look of tile or marble, while waxed or painted hardwood floors were also common.

Windows were a priority, since they let in healthy sunlight and fresh air. Leaded stained glass was preferred, as it required no window treatment, but when plain window glass was used, privacy was maintained with washable curtains simply gathered on rods. Two sconces flanking a mirrored medicine cabinet, duly installed above the washbasin, provided the classic look. Nickel-plated or glass towel racks, tumbler-holders, toothbrush racks and soap dishes were plentiful. Dainty hand-embroidered towels were on display throughout the room.

If you long to step back in time with this romantic look in your master bath, you can still enjoy the luxury of a modern whirlpool tub or the flushing performance of today’s toilet. Several plumbing manufacturers currently offer state-of-the-art bathroom fixtures that were inspired by period pieces, like those pictured here from the Reminiscence collection by American Standard, and the Vintage Washbasin from Stone Forest.



Photo: Courtesy of GE Appliances (www.ge.com)



Photo: Courtesy of Stone Forest (www.stoneforest.com)

Photo: Courtesy of American Standard (www.americanstandard-us.com)

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with your family and guests? An outdoor kitchen would make that possible: all the ingredients necessary for outdoor cooking, dining and clean up can be conveniently located alongside the grill outside. Rather than missing out on all the fun, you'll be right in the center of the action.

The first thing you need to determine is how large and elaborate your outdoor kitchen should be. That depends on how often you plan to use it, and for what kinds of meals. If you enjoy spending every waking moment outside, you'll want a fully-equipped kitchen with a sink, refrigerator, storage space (including trash center), counter-high workspace and a dining surface—in addition to your grill. Optional items to consider would be a side burner for preparing sauces, a warming drawer, an ice machine, and a cocktail center. If you only use your grill every couple



Sturdy masonry cabinets with grill components by Lynx.

Photo: Courtesy of Lynx Professional Grills (www.lynxgrills.com)

of weeks, a counter-high cabinet that provides storage and workspace on both sides of the grill would probably suffice.

It is extremely important that all the appliances used in an outdoor kitchen be specifically constructed to withstand the rigors of outdoor use. Select sturdy, weatherproof countertops and cabinet materials as well—such as stainless steel, stone, and moisture-resistant wood like teak or cypress.

Once you've experienced the joys of an outdoor kitchen, you may decide to continue cooking outside even as the weather becomes cooler. To help keep things comfortably warm, you may want to include an outdoor patio heater or a fireplace. A fireplace has the additional benefit of creating an attractive focal point in your outdoor room. Building a shelter for the kitchen keeps you dry during inclement weather, even if your guests decide to head inside. Just keep in mind that if your grill is located in a semi-enclosed area, you should install a vent hood.



Photo: Courtesy of Atlantis Cabinetry (www.atlantiscabinetry.com)

Atlantis Cabinetry offers natural teak, cypress and bamboo wood doors over their weatherproof cabinets.