

# SuCasa

Southwestern homes

inspiration ideas resources

walls at work:  
kitchen  
backsplashes

nothing  
beats a  
great kitchen

**beaming with pride**  
Santa Fe historic remodel

living it up  
in an **ABQ** contemporary

by Amy Gross

# now you're cookin'

There's nothing  
like a great kitchen

A soaring, copper-lined sky vault helped this impressive kitchen win HGTV's Design Challenge for Appolloni Remodeling by Design.

Marble Street Studio

## once more, with feeling

Everyone was all smiles when HGTV's cameras were rolling in the Northeast Heights community of Bear Canyon, but inwardly, the designers—Steve Appolloni of Appolloni Remodeling by Design/Euro Fe Kitchens, and Lora Vassar of Arch Design—were sweating. “It was so stressful,” Appolloni recalls with a laugh. “It was fun, but we got so little sleep.”

After writing to HGTV in 2005, homeowners Nadine and Kerry Clark were chosen to participate in HGTV's Design Challenge, which at the time was the popular home design channel's most-watched show. The parameters for their challenge: a kitchen remodel with a maximum budget of \$60,000. Interior designer Deborah Smith encouraged Appolloni to enter the design-and-build challenge, which he did—and won. But Appolloni immediately got creative with respect to that rather limited budget. Reaching out to local and national suppliers and manufacturers, he was able to secure almost \$100,000 worth of donated materials, including floor and backsplash tile, windows by Pella Windows & Doors, under-counter refrigeration units from Perlick, roofing by EX-EL, and much more. “We kinda struck gold there,” Appolloni says, noting that most of the labor for the project was also donated in consideration for exposure on HGTV.

A key element of the design of the new kitchen was making it functional for the family. The Clarks, parents of young triplets, spent



Homeowner Nadine Clark and designer Steve Appolloni discuss Clark's kitchen remodel while cameras roll.



a lot of time in their backyard, grilling and using the pool, so Appolloni and his team relocated the kitchen from the front of the house to the back, nearer to the family action—leaving the old kitchen intact so that the family could use it throughout the remodel.

“Moving the kitchen created a central location,” says Nadine. “Now it’s the heart of the home.” The kids, she notes, do their homework at the island while she cooks dinner, and guests tend to circle the area during parties. The centerpiece of the renovated space: a gorgeous, copper-lined sky vault rising some 14 feet in the center of the kitchen—a design element Appolloni had used before, with great success. The eye naturally follows this soaring feature, which lets in sunlight through windows that run around the sides of the frame, reflecting warmly off the copper.

Thoughtfully designed and creatively financed, the Clarks’ kitchen certainly earned its place among HGTV’s best home remodeling projects. But what Nadine likes best about her kitchen, outside of the obvious aesthetic improvements, is the fact that it allows her to keep everybody together. “We’re a family, and I always have access to the kids,” she says. “It’s been wonderful.”

**Appolloni Remodeling by Design / Euro Fe Kitchens**  
remod.com

## fitting right in

It would have been so easy to allow this old Santa Fe adobe’s classic style to inform the design of its new kitchen, but its design team looked outside the Southwestern vernacular to reimagine the space with a thoroughly contemporary eye. “When you’re doing something to an old adobe, it’s fun to do something unexpected,” says Jeanné Sei, owner of Kitchens by Jeanné, who has been designing kitchens for 32 years for clients in the Santa Fe area. When Marfa, Texas–based architect (and part-time Santa Fean) Kristin Bonkemeyer approached Sei about inserting a sleek, modern kitchen into her client’s traditional adobe, all parties were excited about the challenge.

Bonkemeyer and the homeowner had known each other for more than three decades, and although the two had been talking about a renovation of the Santa Fe galley kitchen for years, the owner confesses, “The idea of actually doing it was overwhelming.” Finally, with a list of starting points that included two sinks, lots of counter space, efficient cabinets, and two hidden garbage areas—all to facilitate easy entertaining—the construction project spearheaded by Toby Anderson of Anderson & Associates, Inc., began. The 26-foot-long kitchen was gutted, and a second entry to the dining room closed off, providing needed wall space for cabinets and the new Sub-Zero refrigerator.

For the flooring, Bonkemeyer opted for striking ivory-and-black concrete tiles from Statements in Tile/Lighting/Kitchens/Flooring. Made in Nicaragua, the tiles are reminiscent of flooring found in Mexico and Central America in the 1800s—perfect for an old Eastside Santa Fe home. “The floor really integrates with the beams [in the kitchen] and the rustic palette of the rest of the house,” Bonkemeyer says. When it was time to choose the cabinetry that would make her kitchen hyper-functional, the owner turned to Sei, who recommended horizontal grain pine doors from Italian cabinetmaker Berloni. The deep red color infuses happiness to the space, says Bonkemeyer, and also “speaks to an ethnic color array that really makes sense in the Santa Fe environ-



In this galley kitchen, vibrant red Italian cabinetry, gleaming stainless steel appliances, and a highly patterned tile floor are right at home in a traditional Santa Fe–style residence.

Dianne Stromberg

ment” The metal-framed upper cabinets are translucent but not entirely see-through; the owner loves how they fold in or flip up and out of the way of even her taller husband’s head.

Matte-finish soapstone countertops from Sherpa Stone, coupled with gleaming Wolf, Thermador, and Gaggenau appliances from Sierra West Sales, complete the kitchen’s clean and contemporary look. Overhead, rounded vigas protrude from the plaster walls, and the homeowner’s Native American baskets sit atop the shiny upper cabinets, looking perfectly at home. Clearly, some elements of Santa Fe style will never change.

**Kristin Bonkemeyer, Architect, [kristinbonkemeyer.com](http://kristinbonkemeyer.com)**  
**Kitchens by Jeanné, [kitchensbyjeanne.com](http://kitchensbyjeanne.com)**