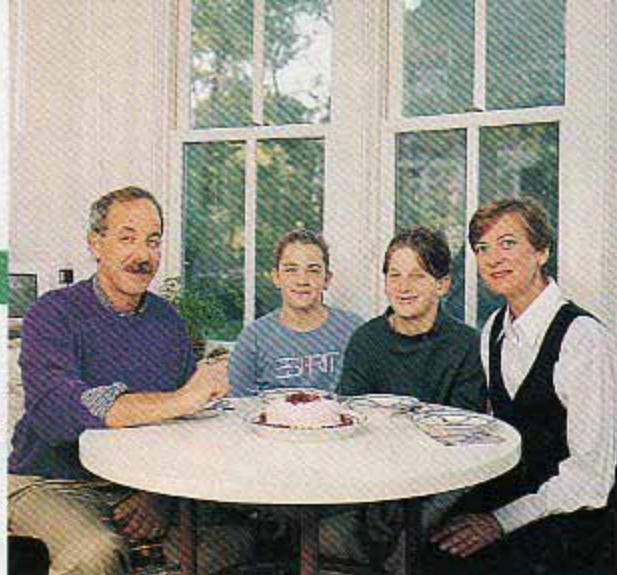


Made for Entertaining

Physicians Marc Pritzker and Linda Hedemark invited six friends to their Victorian home in St. Paul's Crocus Hill neighborhood for New Year's Eve dinner. Linda had prepared ratatouille and wild rice casserole. Marc was in charge of the beef tenderloin. "And it was good," assures Linda, a big smile spreading as she nods her head. "We had a great time."

Linda's grin is sly because cooking for guests involves a kitchen—something they didn't have at the time. Their kitchen renovation not yet half complete, they "literally had the back of the house ripped off for the winter," qualifies Marc. Having painted, papered, carpeted, and furnished other rooms during their eight years in the house, Marc and Linda had now turned toward the kitchen. "We wanted to do it from the start, but not when the kids were little," Linda says. Josh and Laura, now 13 and 11, were growing up. It was time.

The Pritzker-Hedemark residence was built in 1907. The kitchen, a two-part affair shaped like an "E," wound around corners and skimmed walls. True to the Victorian era, it was a galley and butler's pantry, really; an area intended for hired help. "It was a servants' kitchen, done with the thought that no family life went on there," says architect Martha Yunker, who with Marc Asmus from the Minneapolis firm Yunker/Asmus Architecture orchestrated the renovation. "It was cramped, not particularly well-lit, and there wasn't any place to sit down," sums up Yunker.



Homeowners' needs have changed since 1907. "We do a lot in the kitchen," says Marc. "There are always one or two extras around—friends, relatives—and we use the kitchen as a gathering place."

Marc is Jewish, so the family observes two sets of holidays, often in the company of 20-some relatives. Traditions abound. For instance, every Thanksgiving, Linda and the kids whip together her smooth, spicy cranberry mousse. "We like to entertain," says Marc. "We wanted a kitchen that would lend itself to big family and holiday gatherings with people there while we're cooking. And we wanted it in keeping with the rest of the house."

Yunker and Asmus designed a kitchen that suited both modern entertaining and period styling. With the help of Yerigan Construction of Isanti and Schmidt Cabinetry of Buffalo, they tacked on 800 square feet, adding a mud room plus a cozy eating area that spills into the backyard. Running the length of the new kitchen is an island where Linda sets up holiday buffets. Before guests line up, the island—with its oven and vegetable sink—functions as a prep station. With the main sink on one side of the island, a microwave and second oven on the other, refrigerator on one end and cooktop on the other, there are multiple work stations. Two dishwashers await cleanup.

A closer look recalls earlier times. The kitchen is large, yet still separate. Victorian homes are full of hallways and doors: Those who built them valued private, enclosed rooms. Inset-paneled cabinetry is painted white, as Victorian kitchen woodwork was, and drawers and doors are inset flush with the surface.

Telling of the era are the glass-faced crystal cabinet and the hardware's brushed texture. Raised ceilings align with those throughout the house, and ceramic floor tile patterns blend with wood parquet in connecting rooms. There are no harsh fluorescent or modern halogen lights, only traditional incandescents casting their timeless glow.

"The space works," says Yunker. "It can handle a huge crowd; at the same time, four people sitting in the new eating area fit well. The kitchen blends with the house, yet you could pull it away and it has its own balance."

Concludes Linda, "It looks like it's been here forever."

Crocus Hill Cranberry Mousse

Every Thanksgiving, the Pritzker-Hedemark family enjoys this cranberry mousse. They prepare enough for core packages for relatives and neighbors. Josh and Laura love to fix the custard, and make a little extra to eat plain as well. Serves six.

- Peanut or almond oil
- 2 1/2 cups (10 ounces) whole cranberries
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 1/3 cup fresh orange juice
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon orange zest, finely grated
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1 1/2 cups warm milk
- 1 tablespoon unflavored gelatin, softened in small amount of cold water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup heavy cream

Lightly grease a six-cup ring mold with peanut or almond oil, and set aside. Combine cranberries, one-half cup plus two tablespoons of the sugar, orange juice, cinnamon, and orange zest, and cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally until thick. Puree mixture in a food processor or blender, and set aside.

In the top pan of a double boiler, combine egg yolks, cornstarch, and remaining sugar; whisk until blended. Gradually add warm milk, whisking constantly. Put top pan over double boiler's bottom pan and cook over simmering water, whisking until mixture thickens enough to heavily coat the back of a spoon, about 10 minutes. Add the gelatin and vanilla. Continue whisking until gelatin dissolves, about two minutes. Transfer custard to a bowl and refrigerate until it just begins to set, 25 to 30 minutes.

Whip cream until stiff. Fold whipped cream and cranberry puree into almost-set custard. Spoon mousse into prepared mold, cover, and return to refrigerator until completely set, about four hours. To serve, unmold the mousse onto a decorative platter.

