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TODAY'S BUTLER'S PANTRY

PACKED WITH PURPOSE & STYLE

PHOTO BY MED DEMENT

BY HASKELL MATHENY,
ASID, CAPS,
LEED GREEN ASSOCIATE

In a modern home, the kitchen is usually a focal point in the overall plan, but one of the most requested features today is not all that modern. In fact, it may be one of the oldest original kitchen features: the butler's pantry.

The original butler's pantries became popular in the mid 19th century in homes of the wealthy. They were a room or passage area near the dining room where the domestic staff or servants could stage the food for formal dinners and for the storage of household silver, crystal, serving pieces and dishes. They also provided easy access for the staff to clear the dishes and to keep food nearby without having to go back to the kitchen.

Today's 21st century butler's pantry still retains the original attributes of its ancestor – mainly, providing additional



The formal-style pantry includes wide drawers for linen storage and marble countertops for serving and prepping food.



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Pantries can be more than functional storage. The pantry on the left houses a sink, wine cooler and dishwasher. On the right, this pantry allows for the display of china and crystal.

PHOTO BY MED DEVIANT




This retro-style pantry features lots of drawer space, display space, a sink and granite countertops for prepping food.

storage and a convenient place to serve food near the dining area. But as we have become less formal, so have today's butler's pantries. Today, they often can act as secondary work spaces and provide convenient and, in the case of a small kitchen, necessary functions for entertaining. Wine coolers, secondary sinks, dishwashers and refrigerators are all popular amenities in today's butler's pantry. Everyone still wants the extra, functional storage space, but today's butler's pantries are more often than not, a beautiful transition area between the dining room and kitchen.

Whether you have just a few feet of counter space or the luxury of a large area devoted to storage, there are a few things to keep in mind when planning your butler's pantry. First, are you storing oversized serving pieces there? If so, think about deep base cabinets with rollouts for

easy access. Second, do you have items you want to display? Open shelves and decorative glass doors are great for showcasing your favorite pieces. And don't forget to add accent lighting to really show off your glass and crystal. Finally, are you going to be preparing food or drinks? If so, a small sink and even a refrigerator or wine cooler are great features to incorporate.

With careful planning, a butler's pantry can be a true godsend – and much cheaper than a man named Alfred. 

Would you like to have your design dilemma considered for an upcoming issue? Just send an e-mail to designerguy@haskellinteriors.com.

Haskell Matheny, ASID, CAPS, LEED Green Associate is the owner and principal designer of Haskell Interiors, located in historic downtown Cleveland, Tenn. Visit www.haskellinteriors.com.