

# Pretty, Please

Outfit your kitchen with elegant elements. Gay Dawson can't get enough of this room's frill factor. By **Katie Snowden**, photography **Laurey W. Glenn**, styling **Todd Childs**

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O TWO PEOPLE ARE ALIKE IN THEIR ideas of kitchen perfection. One person's pot-and-pan paradise may be another's culinary chaos. For some homeowners, practicality makes perfect. Others will argue the plainer, the better. Gay Dawson of Chattanooga, Tennessee, agrees with all those folks—but she had ideas of her own when remodeling. Only pretty, pretty, pretty would do for her new kitchen.

**Hello, Gorgeous** Detailed like a stunning wedding cake from its cabinets to its island, this graceful space is just right for Gay. When she's in her kitchen, she's on cloud nine. "The kitchen is the sunniest, brightest area of the house," she says. "It has a beautiful setting, and I like being surrounded by it."

The sun didn't always shine in this place though. Before its renovation, the area was made up of three smaller, "dark and dreary rooms," says Gay. She and designer Hank Matheny chose to remove walls to create one long, lean space. Gay's tearoom sits at one end—at the other, a banquette.

**LEFT:** This elegant kitchen suits Gay Dawson's love for pretty things. Walnut-capped shelves on each end of the island assist in entertaining.

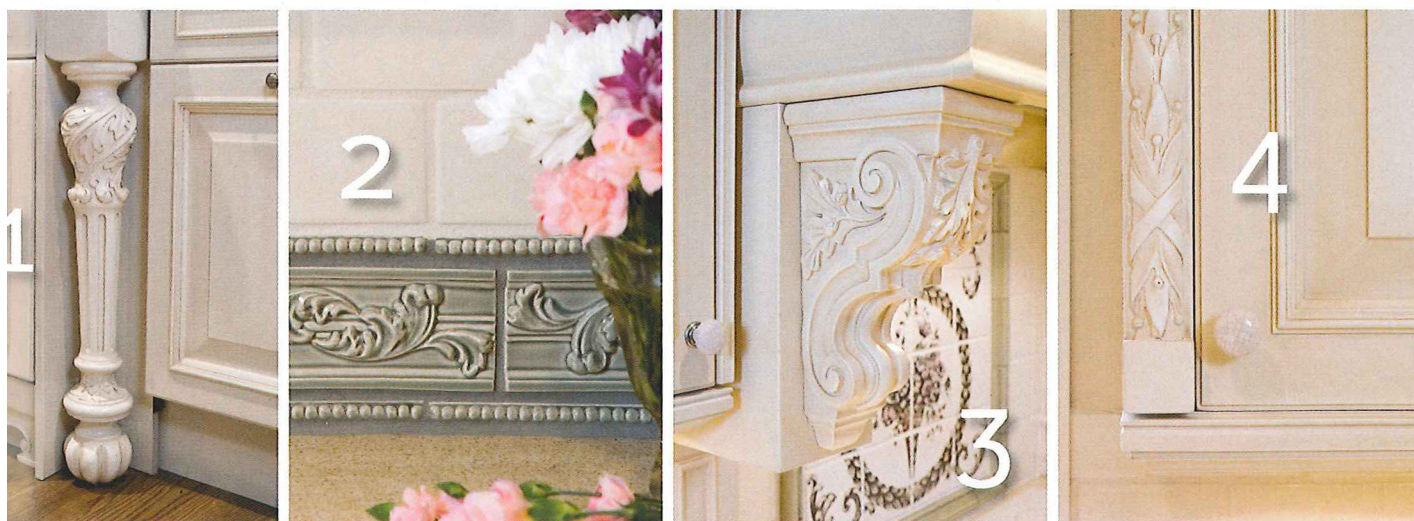
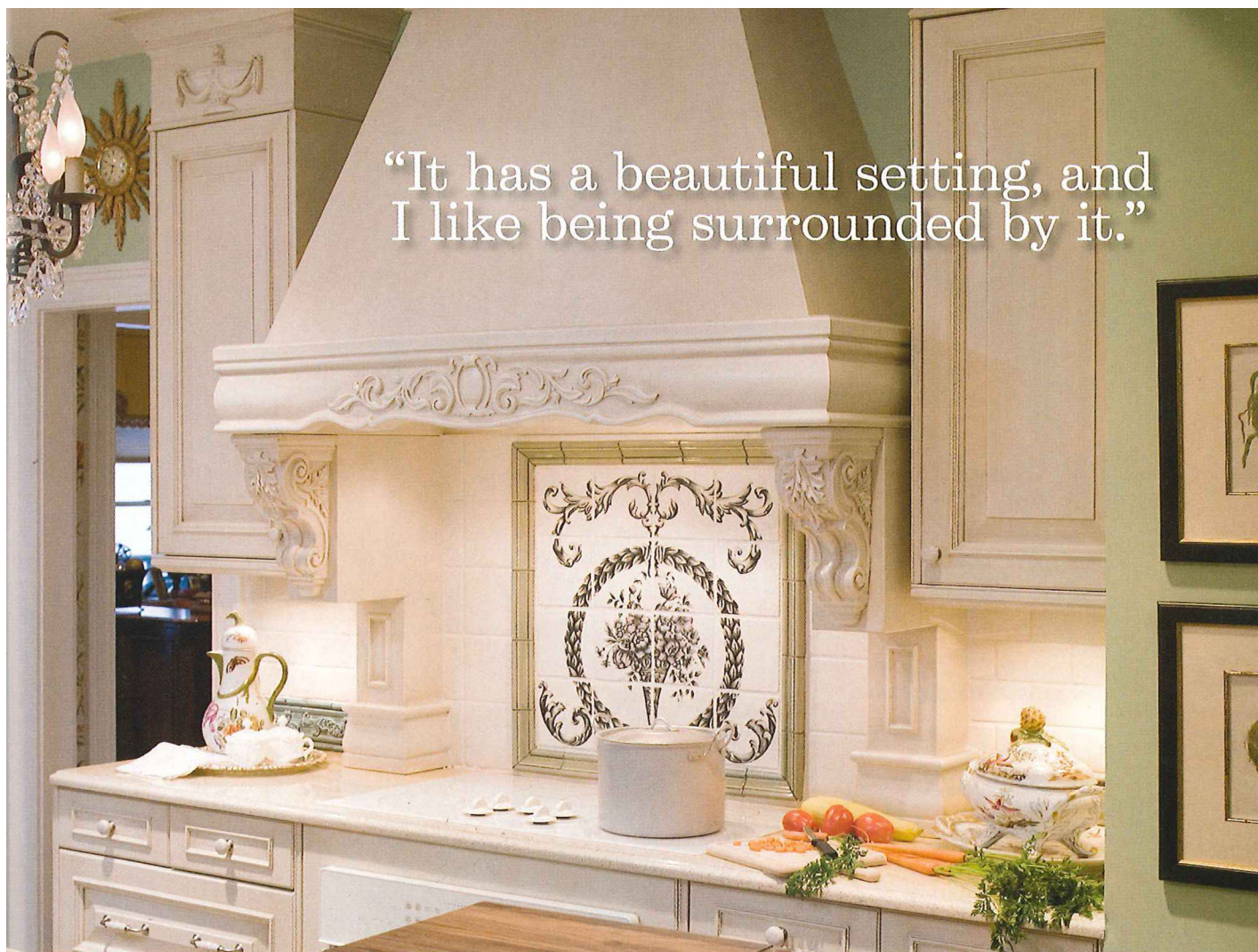




**No Shame in Chic** Every standout kitchen started somewhere. Gay's began with a piece of china. Formal and accented with pastel colors, the china inspired the design of the entire space.

Gay wanted to get a new look from using old things. She and Hank used half of what she already had and filled in the mood with soft lighting, chandeliers, and eye-catching carvings on the vent hood and window valance. A pastel-colored island has display shelves and raised walnut-capped ends for entertainment purposes. Best of all, while working at the island Gay can look out over the banks of the Tennessee River. ●





### Input Pays Off

- Be clear with your designer concerning your kitchen. Gay wanted warmth and elegance. Hank aimed for symmetry and functionality. A pantry and a refrigerator designed to resemble armoires, which stand on each side of her sink, accomplish the needs of both.
- Contribute as many ideas as your designer does to the renovation. Hank and Gay discovered over time they had similar styles in mind. "He and I were really on the same page," says Gay. "By the end of it, we were like brother and sister."

**1.** Designer Hank Matheny inverted a decorative newel post and outfitted it as a fully articulated leg for Gay's cabinets. **2.** Beading on the soft sage tile repeats beading used throughout the space. **3.** Corbels on either side of the vent hood feature acanthus leaves. **4.** Hank installed crackle-finish porcelain knobs that blend in with the cabinet color.