

## Special Section: HOME Guide

### Personalize the Kitchen with Hand-Picked Accessories

*By Karen Amster-Young*

Perhaps the most famous quote about kitchens is from Harry S. Truman: "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen." However, when I started thinking about kitchens recently, my research revealed a few more great quotes which quickly became favorites that capture the essence of what this article is really all about: inspiration, specifically accessorizing to bring some personality to what many say is the most important room of the house – the kitchen.

"My kitchen is a mystical place, a kind of temple for me. It is a place where the surfaces seem to have significance, where the sounds and odors carry meaning that transfers from the past and bridges to the future." – Pearl Bailey

"When I'm old and gray, I want to have a house by the sea. And paint. With a lot of wonderful chums, good music and booze around. And a damn good kitchen to cook in." – Ava Gardner

"The only thing that I have ever successfully made in the kitchen is a mess. And several little fires." – Carrie Bradshaw, "Sex and the City"

Wait! Carrie Bradshaw in a kitchen article? We all know she didn't pay much attention to her kitchen – but that's the point, maybe she should have. If you have a passion for accessorizing anything, including adding countless Manalo Blahnika, jewelry and hats to complete your wardrobe, you have the potential to become passionate about decorating your kitchen. I would bet that Carrie would have been in her kitchen a lot more with Mr. Big and others if it looked even



Photo by S. Goldfeld

half as put together as she did. I'm not saying to cancel your dinner reservations indefinitely. I'm just suggesting that you stop and look around and bring some new life and personality to the place.

Sylvester and Company – at Home in Amagansett was the spark that ignited my kitchen décor fires. The original, founded 16 years ago in Sag Harbor by Linda Sylvester and Nancy Dow, started as a small housewares and coffee shop. It's now in a new, and much bigger, location in Sag Harbor. The At Home location in Amagansett features a beautifully edited collection of home furnishings from Tucker Robbins, the Robin Rice Gallery, Fritz Hansen and others. Lighting, furniture and accessories abound, but it was the Judy Jackson stoneware that put me in a whole different mood. These porcelain pieces look vintage and come in a huge assortment of colors. The Metro line captures the essence of 1940s tableware and accessories – high fired and made for today's use. The pieces are glazed in two colors (different on inside and outside) and are available in six pastel colors and black and white.

"The Jackson pitchers and berry bowls are big right now," said Katy Frank, store manager in Sag Harbor. "We carry the Basic line and the tea kettle and cups are great if you want some color and personality. Environmentally friendly items are becoming the new contemporary. Bamboo is also flying out of the store." Jackson's Basics is a stoneware line of less expensive ceramics. The simplicity of these pieces inspired me to think about contrast, about mixing them with copper pots, bamboo accessories and kitchen antiques. So I found myself on a mission to bring it all together to create the perfect balance of old and new, function and personality.

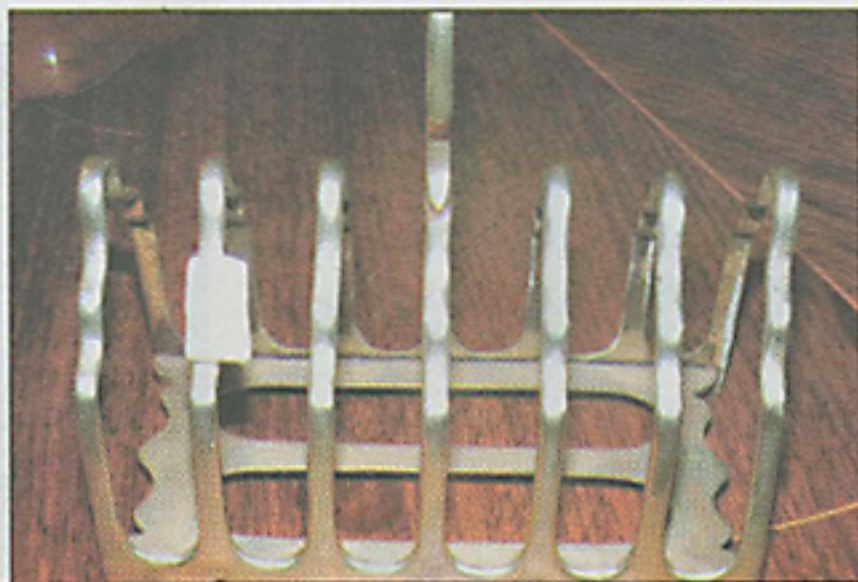
Re:place, an interior design firm based in New York City, is a great example of a company that is

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Toast holders and classic canisters from Sag Harbor Antiques

practicing the art of bringing together the old and the new. "We use recycled, found, natural and environmentally friendly materials in our projects to keep our clients in harmony with the world that surrounds them," said Amanda Moore, founder of Re:place. "Color theories and Eastern design principles like Vastu and Feng Shui are incorporated into every design plan. I incorporate antiques and vintage furnishings into most design plans because it is one of the easiest ways to live



green, by not using any of the earth's new resources. For example, salvaged lighting fixtures and antique tables infuse old soul and warmth into even the most modern kitchen renovations."

I personally think it's all about the art of collecting and just feeling drawn to the old, unique and vintage because of the personality these items bring to the kitchen. So when I rolled up my sleeves and went further, I couldn't tear myself away from French antique kitchen items that kept coming up again and

again, including coffee mills, earthenware and copper pots. Two great experts on antique French kitchen tools are Thomas and Claire Schlessler. Their names are synonymous with French kitchen antiques and they have an amazing web site, [objetsofobjects.com](http://objetsofobjects.com), where you can find rare and wonderful items for the kitchen from their travels all around the world – so, essentially they do the hunting for you. If the thrill of the search is important to you, search flea markets and antique shows, especially if you find yourself in

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