



PHOTOS BY TOM REEL/treel@express-news.net

The Norrises included Japanese design influences in their kitchen. Both were stationed in Japan in the Air Force.



Sinks made of granite-composite material look good, and the hard surface resists scratches.



Matte glass subway tiles cover the wall behind the induction cooktop, which can boil water in 90 seconds.

COOKS & COCINAS

Kitchen says goodbye to 1980s

What began as an aesthetic makeover of the ceiling crept down to cabinets, counters and even floors. And the owners of a solar-powered house thought about the environment as they remodeled their kitchen.

Who's cooking: Dr. Robert "Tito" Norris, an orthodontist; his wife, Dr. Simone Norris, a physician; their two daughters, 12 and 6, and their son, 10. "Cooking is something we can do as a family," Tito says. "It's nurturing our bodies and spirits at the same time."

What's cooking: During the week, family meals center around vegetables, fruits and, often, seafood. On the weekends, they kick it up a notch with more complex dishes that still combine good nutrition with good flavor.

In this kitchen: Two months. They remodeled the kitchen after living in their 1980s Hollywood Park house for eight years.

The space: 14 feet by 23½ feet, including breakfast room.



"I really enjoy being in the kitchen a lot more now," Tito Norris says.



TRACY HOBSON LEHMANN

On the surfaces: Granite counters, stained concrete floors, stainless and matte glass tile backsplashes, composite granite sinks. They repainted cabinets to mimic the espresso stain on an entertainment cabinet in the family room.

Starting point: What began with removing popcorn texture on the ceiling snow-

balled into redoing cabinets, counters and walls; upgrading some appliances, and replacing saltillo floors with stained concrete.

Why it works: When Tito discovered previously unused plumbing in the island, the family added a second sink. That has eliminated a bottleneck when there's more than one cook in the kitchen. And though a late change in the plans caused some issues with the floor, removing a peninsula and extending the island have improved traffic flow and workspace. "I really enjoy being in the kitchen a lot more now," Tito says. "It's a pretty space."

Green features: Touchless au-

tomatic faucets minimize water waste. A second skylight over the island not only balances the light in the kitchen, but it also saves electricity because the lights are seldom used during the day. More energy-efficient windows in the west-facing breakfast room feature shades between the glazed glass panes. An induction cooktop boils water in 90 seconds, especially convenient, Tito notes, for cooking in their layered bamboo steamer.

Know of a good cook with a great kitchen? E-mail suggestions for Cooks & Cocinas to Home & Garden Editor Tracy Hobson Lehmann, tlehmann@express-news.net.

Asian Seared Crusted Salmon

Ingredients

- ¼ cup mirin (sweetened Japanese rice wine)
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon white miso paste
- 4 (about 3-ounce) salmon fillets, skin removed
- ½ cup panko bread crumbs
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce

Directions

Combine mirin, rice vinegar and white miso paste, and whisk until smooth. Marinate salmon in mixture for at least 30 minutes (overnight is ideal).

Heat oven to 350 degrees.

Remove fillets from marinade and coat with panko bread crumbs. Set aside.

Heat skillet to medium heat and add olive oil and crushed garlic.

Quickly sear salmon in oil and garlic, no more than 30 seconds per side. Remove fillets and place on foil-covered cookie sheet. Bake 8-10 minutes, depending on thickness of fillets.

As fish is finishing in the oven, combine honey and soy sauce. Warm in microwave oven for 10-15 seconds. Whisk with a fork. Drizzle over fillets as soon as they are removed from the oven.

Serve hot.

Makes 4 servings, each 550 calories (25.4 percent calories from fat), 15 g fat, 165 mg cholesterol, 1,440 mg sodium, 30 g carbohydrates, 1g fiber, 67 g protein.

Source: Tito Norris

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COOKING ON A BUDGET

Saved that holiday ham bone?

If so, you've got a hearty soup at your fingertips.

BY EDMUND TIJERINA
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Please say you remembered to freeze the ham bone from the holidays. If not, make a note to do it next year — there's so much flavor there, and you already bought it.

That key ingredient brings the cost of this dish down to the price of a package of dried peas.

Whether or not you have a ham bone or ham hock, this is a good dish for the remaining cold days of a San Antonio winter. The starch of the peas and the pork flavor from the bone and/or ham chunks make this an old-fashioned dish that has satisfied for generations. It's a classic that's inexpensive and easy to make.

Served with some crusty bread, this is pretty much a meal in itself.

Split Pea Soup

Ingredients

- 1 pound split peas
- 8 cups water
- 1 ham bone or smoked pork hock (or 1 pound diced ham)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, scraped and diced
- 2 ribs celery, without leaves, chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups defatted chicken stock
- Sherry or Madeira, for serving (optional)

Directions

Place peas, water, ham bone, onion, carrots, celery, bay leaf and salt in large pot or soup kettle and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, 3 to 4 hours. Refrigerate overnight.

All of the fat will congeal on the top. Remove and discard fat. Remove ham bone and discard all of the fat. Pull remaining ham from bone and reserve. Pour soup into blender, a little at a time, and blend until smooth.

Pour pureed soup into a large pot and add chicken stock and ham. Mix well and bring to a boil. Serve hot with a dash of sherry, if desired.

Makes 11 cups, each 210 calories (14.0 percent calories from fat), 3.5 g fat, 25 mg cholesterol, 700 mg sodium, 28 g carbohydrates, 11 g fiber, 19 g protein.

Source: Express-News files

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