

# EAST COAST HOME+DESIGN

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What's a chef to do when she wants to entertain at home? First, call Charles Hilton Architects! Indeed, one's kitchen can be as much about dramatic setting as it is about custom comfort—something the homeowners and Chuck Hilton proved in this strikingly designed kitchen set in a French Normandy home.

The breathtaking kitchen opens up beyond a 20-foot timbered arch, permitting guests a clear view of the masterful food preparation unfolding before them. Glowing pendant lanterns and recessed lighting in the reclaimed-barn timbered rafting provide warm illumination of a kitchen both rustic and modern—and with no sense of discord in that dichotomy. The cooler warmth of the French Camargue limestone flooring softens the pale oak details of custom-made oak cabinetry. The kitchen is fitted with commercial appliances to be of full service to its chef, and a custom-designed steel hood and pot rack keep all her tools beautifully visible and ready to hand. The countertops are thoughtfully fitted with concrete—which can be furnished in large single slabs—and zinc in a similarly gray finish around the sinks and stove. That zinc will develop a marvelous patina as it ages, telling the story of the home, and since zinc is antimicrobial, it will be the story of a healthy home.

A secondary kitchen space in an adjoining room provides a prep kitchen, a space generally used to prepare fresh produce grown on an organic farm on the property. It is also used as a staging ground for caterers for larger events. And what chef doesn't like cooking over an open fire? Not these homeowners. Their desire for the ability to cook on an open fire year-round led to one massive, magnificent feature in a kitchen packed full of detailed delights: a stone indoor fireplace. This integrated fireplace features a shelf for stacked timber and built-in cooking racks. What culinary stories this kitchen will host!





