

Menu FROM 52

showroom, which features fully operational kitchens where customers can test-drive appliances, to an ongoing quest for new ways to save time and space and promote visual harmony.

"I think of every kitchen as a canvas," said Colucci, who founded the company in 1992. "I believe in color, texture and balance. It's a composition."

Yet, Colucci and Salmon never forget that the "canvas" serves as an important workspace and more.

"It's not only a place where you entertain and where your family gathers; it's also a place where you have to prepare food. So, it must be easy to use and, at the same time, inspire creativity," said Salmon, who enjoys cooking so much that he was one of the first to enroll in classes at Laguna Culinary Arts when it opened in Laguna Beach nearly six years ago. Today, the respected cooking school operates a satellite classroom at Le Gourmet Kitchen's showroom in the historic district of Old Towne Orange for students residing in North Orange County.

The classroom kitchen, created especially for the school, is one of four functioning kitchens at the showroom. The other three defy the industry convention of presenting design options to customers through the use of static and semistatic displays or photographs. Instead, customers can view, touch and experience for themselves the advanced components and design elements that Colucci, Salmon and their small team of designers make available to clients.

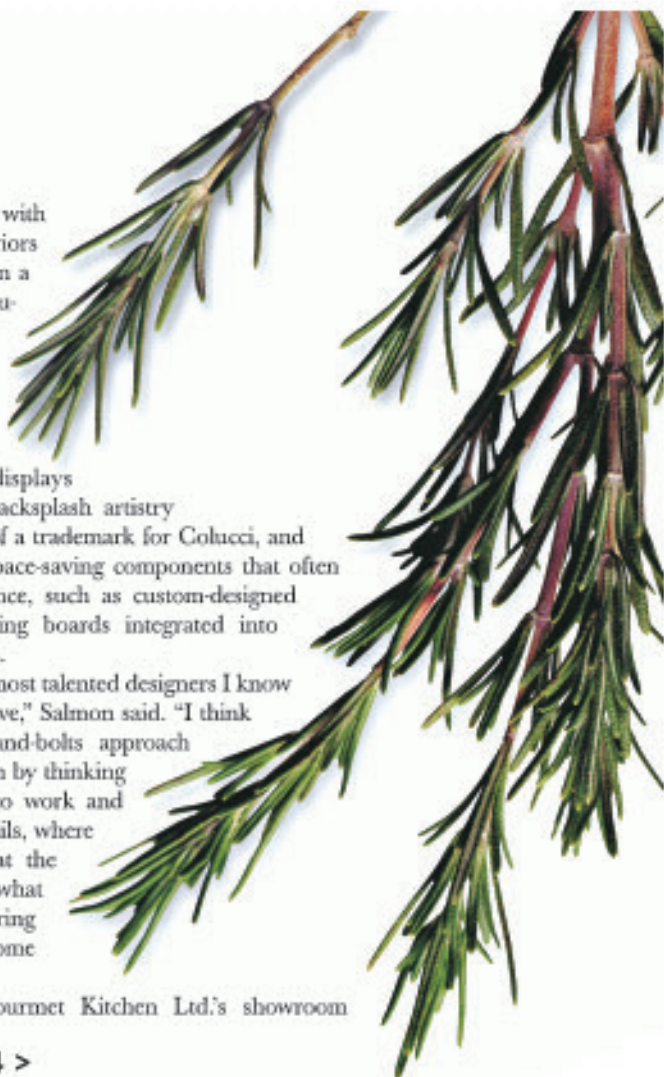
People who haven't kept up on the latest changes in home kitchen technology may be delighted with developments in cabinetry that make small areas more spacious and easy to use, and the ways in which dishwashers, refrigerators and other appliances can be disguised as part of the cabinets' woodwork.

"We created a space with many elements of interiors and details, but did it in a way to give clients a visual understanding of the potential in their own homes, without overwhelming them," Colucci said.

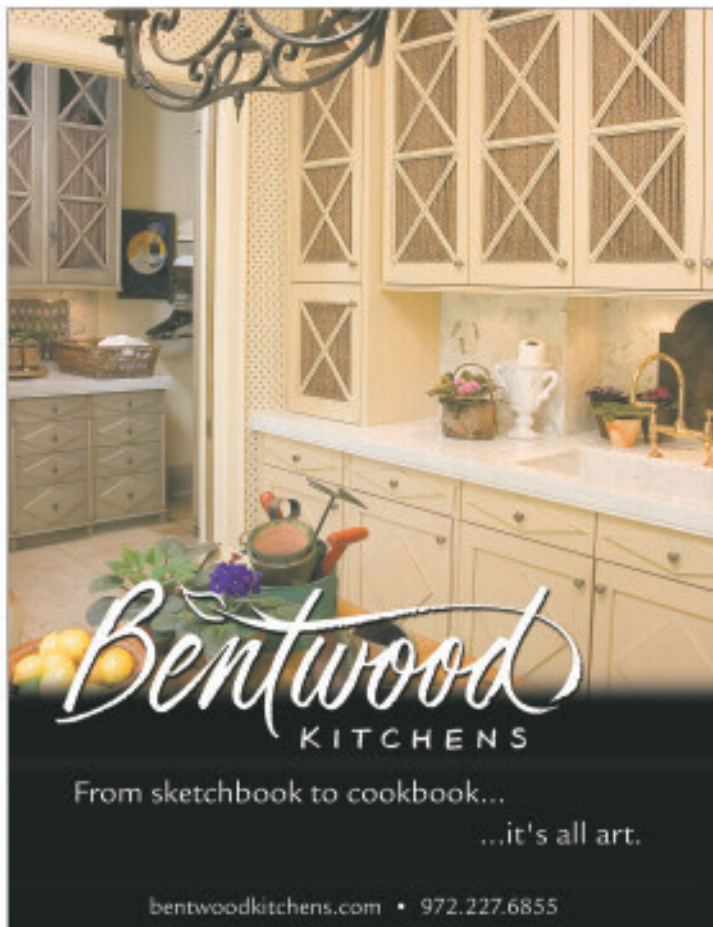
The showroom displays such features as the backsplash artistry that has become a bit of a trademark for Colucci, and innovative time- and space-saving components that often reflect Salmon's influence, such as custom-designed knife blocks and cutting boards integrated into counters and sink areas.

"Bruce is one of the most talented designers I know - he is extremely creative," Salmon said. "I think I have a more nuts-and-bolts approach - when I design, I begin by thinking about how it's going to work and the minutiae of the details, where Bruce tends to start at the other end, visualizing what he wants and then figuring out how to make it come together."

Additionally, Le Gourmet Kitchen Ltd.'s showroom



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