

Menu FROM 53

allows people to try their hands at cooking on some of the more sophisticated appliances, with features not found in average products. For example, a Wolf range with a French top has the usual assortment of burners, plus a single flat expanse that is hotter in the center and cooler at the edges. Cooks can swiftly slide pots and pans into or out of heat zones as needed, instead of stopping to adjust the flame on individual burners. French tops have long been standard issue in professional kitchens, but are now finding their way into a growing number of private homes.

Before deciding whether to have a French-topped stove installed in a new home kitchen, clients can test it, along with many other high-end appliances found in the showroom's working kitchens.

Being enthusiastic home cooks themselves, Colucci and Salmon know the importance of good appliances and cabinetry. They won't promote or carry a brand unless they are familiar with the company and comfortable with its integrity and the quality of its products.

As designers, the two understand the subliminal imperative of good lighting, balance, texture and color. They delight in

exploring the possibilities of all kinds of materials and new synthetic counter surfaces – from conventional granite to concrete, wood, metal and enameled lava – and in searching out ways to guide each client toward the smartest choice for a particular project.

"There are many challenges to redesigning kitchens. I try never to repeat myself – every client I work with is getting something unique based on the client's personality, home, and the architecture of the space," Colucci said. "The most challenging thing is to marry clients to the quality of products they want and expect for the dollars they choose to invest. They're putting a huge amount of trust in us – after all, we're taking eight to 12 weeks to basically trash their kitchens and spend large sums of money replacing them with something they're meant to enjoy for a long, long time."

As Colucci and Salmon put it, every kitchen remodel is a journey whose destination is a kind of paradise – not just for the client, but also for the designers.

"When you love cooking, you love sharing food and good times with friends," Salmon said. "So, when clients say to me, 'I absolutely love my kitchen,' it's about the greatest compliment I can imagine, because it means that we've connected on an emotional level and I've succeeded in making their lives better."

Le Gourmet Kitchen Ltd., a design-and-build licensed contractor, is at 541 West Chapman Ave. in Orange. For more information, call 714-939-6227 or visit www.legourmetkitchen.com.



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