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Working for the Weekend

This vacation home kitchen revisits classic farmhouse style—but with a modern look and crowd-pleasing features.

Barnyard-red paint, simply paneled Shaker-style doors with Victorian bin latches, and a sturdy pine worktable: The basics of vintage farmhouse kitchens set the mood of a country getaway in this new weekend home in Hillsdale, New York. But how can a kitchen with such cozy inspiration host 18-20 people comfortably, and with ultramodern efficiency?

That was the challenge for architect Kate Johns, whose clients wanted to host large numbers of friends and family without

the formality of a separate dining room. Instead, she needed to seat guests where they naturally gravitate: the kitchen.

Johns set three goals. She had to create a space plan that was perfect for large parties, but that wouldn't leave the owners at opposite ends of a long table when weekend-ing alone. The room's styling also had to be flexible—something informal, yet right for festive occasions. Finally, this kitchen had to integrate appliances that work extra hard for a crowd.

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Light It Right

Lofty spaces are great by day but can be difficult to light. Architect Kate Johns employed a variety of fixtures to illuminate this kitchen for greater efficiency and style.

- **Cable lights** traverse open spaces and can be strung with different types of pendants, all movable. Move the furniture below, and pendants can follow.
- **Uplights** such as cove lighting and spotlights serve to accent the two-story architecture and to highlight objects displayed high on shelves.
- **Task lights** include undercabinet lights and recessed fixtures that target work areas.
- **Firelight** adds a warm glow for ambience and is the perfect complement to an airy space flooded with natural light by day.

Make It Cozy

The goal here was informal charm—something special that would still put guests at ease. Johns opted for a two-story construction, above, which raises the room's drama but also recalls a casual, country barn vernacular. High ceilings allow for diamond-shape clerestory windows that infuse the cooking and dining areas with soft, natural light. The solution for seating both large and intimate parties revolves around a standard-size table and a movable island that becomes part of the dining table when needed. "The island can be taken off its base," Johns says. "And because it matches the dining table, they can be put end to end to make one long table."

Add a Self-Serve Space

On the far wall, right, a fireplace sets the kitchen's tone as the new hearth of the home. Family often gathers for fireside snacks after skiing or skating, so some kitchen functions are sited here for easy access by all, away from the fray of cooking. Built-ins to the right of the hearth hold the microwave (handy for warming coffee) and a beverage station with an undercounter refrigerator and bar sink.



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