

[Online Advertising](#)

[FAQ's](#)

[Find the IJ](#)

[IJ Employment](#)

[Newsroom](#)

SPECIAL SEC.

COMMUNITY

[Chambers](#)

[Outreach](#)

[Elected Officials](#)



Sleepy Hollow's secret: Annual kitchen and garden tour

PJ Bremier

Article Launched: 08/24/2007 06:44:54 PM PDT

KAREN MARTIN smiles as the unmistakable scent of sun-warmed lavender gently wafts in across the pool patio, wrapping around guests gathered in her foyer. She reaches out to touch their arms and asks "Do you want some lavender? I have to cut it back anyhow."

With that, the vivacious founder of the Sleepy Hollow Kitchen Tour heads past the pool terrace, her heels clicking on the poured concrete, her colorful sundress popping against the green shrubbery and her two golden retrievers right behind her. She quickly returns with an armful and divides it among her friends.

Martin epitomizes the friendliness that has come to define this cloistered and close-knit model of suburban living. "It's Sleepy Hollow's secret," reveals Kim Lear, president of the Legend Club, sponsor of the fourth annual Sleepy Hollow Kitchen and Garden.

This September, five recently remodeled homes will be showcased - a remodeled California Ranch, an updated Eichler and examples of Craftsman, Spanish and eclectic styles.

"I'm excited," Lear says. "Visitors will really get to experience the feel of Sleepy Hollow."

Four chefs will be demonstrating recipes in various kitchens. "People can engage in lively conversations with the chef making it more than just



Designers Rosemarie and Krikor Halajian created this kitchen at a Sleepy Hollow residence using design features that offer beauty and functionality. (IJ photo/Jeff Vendsei)

Advertisement

a walk-through house tour. It fits well; it's what we're all about," Lear says.

A quartet from nearby San Domenico School will entertain during the afternoon at the Market Square gift boutique, where complimentary beverages and homemade treats will be offered.

This year, the homes will be staged by popular designers Wanderely, Robert Federighi and Christi Sanford, giving visitors an opportunity to see their work firsthand and learn how stagers can show them a home using existing furnishings

and beautiful accessories," Lear says. "It'll be fun to see what they do."

In many ways, Sleepy Hollow has retained the family feel of the 1950s era in which it was developed. It remains, by large, a secluded collection of spacious lots with mostly traditionally styled homes in a semi-rural setting.

The tour starts at the Sleepy Hollow Clubhouse, the community hub where members swim, socialize and welcome newcomers, serve up Friday night barbecues, hold their own Fourth of July parade and engage in club activities, including an equestrian club and tennis and swim teams. One noteworthy observation about this year's tour selection is that they're relatively small and yet stylish, which is a refreshing take on the proliferation of large kitchens.

"What owners have told me is that while their space is small, it doesn't feel that way because their kitchens open up to their gardens making it feel like it was one big area," Lear says. "At the same time, the homeowners like having

beautiful materials around them. They just don't want to have to travel far to get things in order to cook."

Martin's ell-shaped Eichler home is a good example. It was built for builder Joseph Eichler's controller and designed by Anshen and Allen. An old rock wall and a specimen oak tree are reminders of the original garden laid out by the noted Marin gardener, Herman Hein.

Enclosed by large walls of windows - along the gallery overlooking the pool and garden, in the living room and on both sides of the kitchen - the house enjoys a sun-splashed gallery with cool, shaded living areas. The open kitchen is small and clean-lined with views to the dining room and, on either side, views of the landscape.

Here, playful touches of unexpected color emerge as a mustard-colored fireplace pops against the subtle gray walls and dark floors; a trio of blue pendant lights dangles over the dining table and a wall of windows flank filled with blue skies flow in from either side. Another ell-shaped house, a remodeled California Ranch, is also on the tour. It was given a fresh, clean, modern feel with lots of sexy curves from designers Krikor and Rosemarie Halajian of Kitchens & More.



The kitchen of Karen and Matt Martin's Eichler-style home looks out onto the backyard patio and pool area. (IJ photo/Jeff Vendsei)



Verde Fire Granite is used for the island countertop, and wave-cut scalloped glass (below) for the shelf above the sink. (IJ photo/Jeff Vendsei)



"We took the client from a very large home to a small one," Krikor Halajian says. "Their last home was all spread out and that didn't work for them. They didn't want to expand the footprint of the house; they wanted a home that was conducive to family life."

So the design was kept simple and casual with the only formal elements being stylish designer furnishings. The kitchen was opened up to embrace the dining room and the colors of the table inspired the color scheme of the kitchen.

Maple cabinets are framed in cherry wood and a serendipitous find of color-coordinated Verde Fuoco granite, with eco-friendly Brazilian cherry, form an elegant island countertop.

A wonderful creamy-colored tile from Marin Design Works creates a quiet drama in the backsplash, which Halajian carried into the living room with his custom curvy fireplace made of concrete and plaster. "There's a lot happening here architecturally speaking," Halajian says. "But it's simple and elegant, visually quiet and easy to be with."

The same can be said of the new front garden; the entire lawn was ripped out to make room for a gravel driveway surrounded by a Mediterranean planting. There's still a swath of lawn in the back garden, between the sport court and pool, where tropical plants bloom.

Just a few streets away is another home on the tour, this one a compact tile-roofed Spanish-style house with a number of provocative architectural angles. Inside, it's cozy with carefully selected furnishings, decorative objects and personal collections of silver and porcelain all arranged by the homeowner, a former interior designer.

She's also a "superb cook," says her husband. " She modestly brushes off his compliment, but admits that she does likes to cook, especially spicy foods, and chuckles as she reaches over her Viking range to a shelf for a glass jar of crushed red pepper, the kind you find in pizza parlors. "I go through pounds of this."

Interestingly, the saffron-red and mustard-yellow pepper flakes are the very same colors found sprinkled throughout the home's rooms. In the kitchen, the ceilings are "stepped" for interest, curtain rods are wrapped in fabric and the walls are painted in two tones.

Rustic elements such as the wrought-iron chandelier and tile floors rest easily against the more modern stainless steel look of the appliances. As small as the floor space is, it packs in plenty of functional work spaces, including a narrow island, breakfast table and office area.

"I cook a lot and I really like compact kitchens," she says. "Everything is condensed and easy to find. It's practical."

The pool and garden is just outside overlooked by a charming guesthouse with a steeply peaked roof and striped yellow walls. From here, the view is of the home's romantic ivy-entwined balcony, an unexpected surprise.

As far as Lear is concerned, that's how people feel about the whole tour. "They're pleasantly surprised at how good a tour this is. It's an enlightening afternoon where they can get ideas for their own project and just have a good, down-to-earth fun time."

IF YOU GO

What: Fourth annual Sleepy Hollow Kitchen and Garden Tour

When: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 30

Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door; pre-ordered box lunches \$10

Information: 456-5951 or sleepyhollowtours.org

PJ Bremier can be reached at pj@mindspring.com.

[Print](#) [Email](#) [Return to Top](#)

[Comment about this article](#) | [Trackback](#)



Own Marin!
Buy prints of
Marin [sports](#),
[scenic](#), [animal](#) and
[historic](#) photos.



[Subscribe to the
IJ](#), and get a
3x5 American
flag and pole

Most Viewed **Most Emailed**

(From the last 12 hours)

1. \$2.1 million home top prize in Marin \$150 raffle
2. Edwards gets praise, cash at Mill Valley stop
3. Far-away fire mars Marin's skies
4. Sausalito chided over art festival deal
5. Lawsuit: Peeper wants his porn back
6. Novato gunshot death an apparent suicide
7. Novato teen charged in Bel Marin Keys crash
8. Novato-based Buck center gets \$25 million boost
9. Morgue may come to Civic Center
10. New Branson leader arrives at post - 1 year after Katrina delayed him

Sponsored Links

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| Softball Bats | Alaska Jobs with Princess | Moving Quotes | Au-pair-nanny agencies |
| Barcode Scanners | Speaker Mount | Au pair & nanny jobs | Debt Consolidation |
| Barcode scanners, printers | | | |