

Scenic mural spices up bland kitchen

BY MICHELLE GLANCE
STAFF WRITER

When Art and Dorothy Antonelli first moved into their Drake's Crossing condo in Farmington Hills the kitchen was totally white.

The cabinets were white, the counter tops were white, the appliances were white, the tile was white and the walls were white.

Many people would have looked at the kitchen as the ultimate in contemporary decor. After all, all-white kitchens are constantly featured in decorating magazines.

The Antonellis saw the white kitchen wall as a canvas waiting to be painted.

The Antonellis love visiting Italy. They came up with the idea of having a mural of an Italian scene including a vegetable stand painted in their kitchen to brighten it.

"I go to Italy every couple of years and the mural reminds me very much of the northern part of Italy," Art Antonelli said. "It gives me an uplift every morning when I look at it. And we got some color in the kitchen at the same time."

The Antonellis first found an idea for the painting from an Italian travel book. The photo the mural is based on contains a vegetable stand in the foreground with an Italian village and green hills in the background.

"We wanted something that would be colorful and cheerful," Dorothy Antonelli said.

To paint the mural, the Antonellis hired mural artist Julie Giordano of Northville. She has painted murals in homes throughout the metropolitan Detroit area. One of the murals she painted for a home in West Bloomfield was featured in "Better Homes and Gardens" maga-



From white to wow: Mural artist Julie Giordano painted an Italian village scene in the kitchen of Art and Dorothy Antonelli of Farmington Hills. The couple says it brightens their day every time they look at it.

zine.

Painting the kitchen mural was particularly tricky because the Antonelli kitchen has a cathedral ceiling. A bridge in the upstairs hallway overlooks the kitchen. The wall on the south side of the kitchen — on which the mural was painted — is two stories tall.

In order to paint it, Giordano and her artist apprentice, Tina White, had to take turns lying on

a board hanging over the edge of the bridge to reach some of the more difficult spots.

Giordano said she's pleased that the mural includes the vegetable stand scene in the foreground, the village buildings in the middle ground and the hills in the background because it gives the work a sense of depth and perspective.

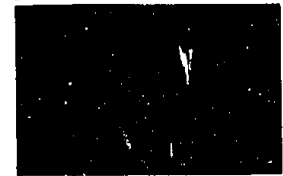
To paint a mural Giordano charges a flat rate of \$600 per day

plus 20 percent for a materials fee. She uses latex paint, which is very practical and washes up well.

"People sometimes think murals are out of reach but they aren't," Giordano said. "For \$500 it can change the whole room."

Giordano says she can't rest until a mural has been created to her satisfaction. For instance during

See MURAL, 12A



KENNETH KEMP

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