

## Tale of a tea table top

BY ANISSA KAPSALES

**A**llan Breed's tea table reproduction (seen on the back cover) has it all: perfect proportions, sinuous curves, and impeccably carved details. Surprisingly, the construction is straightforward—except for the top. What appears to be a top with a mitered, scalloped frame is a solid piece of carved mahogany. By the way, the 1-in.-thick top is rabbeted on its lower edge and drops into the base, allowing the top to have an appropriately thin molding.



### 1 RECESS THE TOP



**Establish the flat field.** To create the look of an applied molding, the material in the center of the top has to be subtracted. Breed uses a 2-in. Forstner bit to waste away most of the recess. To remove the rest, he switches to a router attached to a frame. The frame rides on the outside edges of the table while he guides the router freehand close to the line. Chisels and gouges take the shape to the line.

### 2 SCRATCH THE BEAD



**Define and relieve.** A shopmade scratch stock marks the inside edge of the bead and establishes the fillet (top). Breed uses a router plane to relieve and flatten the area from the scratch line toward the center of the table (bottom; note the spacer blocks on the bench and in the center of the table that stabilize the plane), further defining the bead and fillet.

### 3 CARVE THE OGEE PROFILE



**Shape in two steps.** After establishing the sharp corners in the miters with a V-tool, Breed uses a 7/20 gouge to create the hollow in the molding (top). A backbent gouge is used to round the bottom of the ogee profile (bottom). To smooth the carving, Breed uses two customized scrapers ground to match the hollow and round of the ogee profile.