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before & after

Four different design solutions create top-notch kitchens with better function and lots of style

BY JEANNIE MATTEUCCI



AFTER

BEFORE: Laminate counters and a worn electric stove gave the old kitchen an outdated look. "It was small but felt more so because it was closed off," says Sandi Friel.



BEFORE

in the details

➤ **CABINETS** The kitchen's Shaker-style cabinets are finished in natural cherry with clean lines. Additional storage was created by adding a narrow pantry behind the refrigerator.

➤ **COUNTERTOPS** Black granite countertops with gold flecks reinforce the sleek look Dave and Sue wanted for their new kitchen. They help reflect light—instead of absorbing it—so the space seems brighter. The granite complements the slate used in the front entry and on the face of the bar.

➤ **WALL COLOR** A rich golden-yellow gives the kitchen's walls an appealing, fresh look. "Dave and Sue definitely wanted a warm feel," says Friel. "They used the same color in the whole great room to unify the space."

DAVE AND SUE LUKASIK'S cramped kitchen was crying out for a change. "We have a 1950s ranch house and the kitchen was updated in the 1970s," says Dave. "It was functional but it was pretty much a one-person kitchen." The Maitland, Florida, homeowners both like to cook, and wanted a more open plan that would take advantage of their lake views and give them the storage and workspace they needed. To help design and build this space, the couple hired Sandi Friel, CKD, pre-construction project manager for PSG Construction Inc. of Winter Park, Florida. "The kitchen had to be beautiful because it was going to be visible from the front door," says Friel.

Removing a wall between the kitchen, living room and dining area made room for a key component of the new space: a 42-inch-high bar that accommodates three stools, with pendant lights overhead. "It conceals the cooktop behind it but still keeps the open feel they wanted for the kitchen," says Friel. "They also chose a downdraft vent instead of a stainless steel hood to help keep the space open." Extending a wall to the left of the bar gave the couple a place to conceal the ductwork for the vent. Eliminating the outdated dropped ceiling and fluorescent lighting and adding recessed lighting make the kitchen seem more spacious. "It was really custom built for the two of us," says David. "We can now enjoy cooking together." ➤

AFTER: The new 150-square-foot open kitchen has enough cabinets and drawers for all the Lukasiks' cooking supplies and dishes, creating an uncluttered look.

PHOTOGRAPHS: EVERETT & SOULE

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AFTER

BEFORE: With its dropped ceiling and nondescript look, the old kitchen failed to offer the style and warm atmosphere the owner wanted.



BEFORE

in the details

➤ **FLOORING** Keeping the existing ceramic tile floor was an important cost-saving decision the owner made. "She was satisfied with the tile floor and it is a neutral sand/beige color, so we didn't need to change it," says designer Friel.

➤ **COOKTOP NICHE** An attractive niche with a checkerboard ceramic tile backsplash and faux border creates a focal point over the cooktop. This same design was repeated over the refrigerator and wall oven to reinforce the look. Built-in slots above the kitchen sink provide display storage for dinner plates.

➤ **WINE COOLER** Extending a wall and eliminating a pantry gave Friel room to add a new wine cooler to this Provençal kitchen. A microwave and convection oven share space with a pro-style wall oven, giving the owner the tools she needs to create gourmet French meals.

ARMED WITH PHOTOS of kitchens from her native France, an Altamonte Springs, Florida, homeowner came to designer Sandi Friel with detailed ideas about how she wanted her new kitchen to look. "Her main goal was a cosmetic change," says Friel. "She was homesick for the South of France and wanted this space to feel like home." The owner, a busy professional who runs her own business, loves to cook and wanted to increase the efficiency of the space. "We had to expand the kitchen to fit the new appliances she wanted," says Friel.

While the kitchen was gutted and the ceiling was raised, the owner decided to keep her existing tile floor and the large sliding glass doors that flood the sunny kitchen with natural light. One change that totally transformed the personality of the kitchen was the addition of custom cabinets. "We ordered unfinished wood cabinets and had a local artist faux finish them to the owner's specifications," says Friel. "The artist painted them a lavender-blue with yellow trim and accents. They almost identically matched the photos of her dream kitchen." Adding panel fronts to an existing refrigerator and dishwasher to match the cabinets and using charcoal-colored laminate countertops with a wood edge are other ways she kept project costs under control and created a consistent style. Other details—like the plaster walls with a heavy textured finish, and a custom-made country farmhouse table with benches and chairs—give this kitchen the French feel the owner craved. "The ambience was the big transformation," says Friel. "This isn't a cookie-cutter kitchen design." ➤

AFTER: The use of yellow and purple-blue in this carefully planned kitchen evokes the shining sun and fields of lavender associated with Provence.



AFTER

BEFORE: Besides the outdated style and cracked countertops, the old kitchen was too small. "They're a family of six; they needed more space," says Paul Gidus.



BEFORE

in the details

➤ **APPLIANCES** Two years before their remodel, Kim and Mark Tamoney purchased a dishwasher, microwave and range, all in stainless steel. "I decided when we did the renovation to also get a stainless refrigerator," says Kim.

➤ **ISLAND** The 8-foot-long island with a granite top and seating for six was configured to make the most of the space and shape of the kitchen. "It's where you go when you walk into the room," says Kim. It's where people sit and talk." It also offers storage drawers for linens and cabinets for the kids' school supplies.

➤ **LIGHTING** While their previous kitchen had some recessed lighting, Kim and Mark decided to add more recessed cans and three pendants over the island "so you can see what you're eating. The area is nice and bright for the kids when they're doing their homework," says Kim.

WITH FOUR CHILDREN and a habit of hosting large get-togethers, Mark and Kim Tamoney, of Altamonte Springs, Florida, needed a kitchen that could keep up with their busy lifestyle. "My old kitchen was narrow, dark and very crowded," says Kim. With dreams of creating a big, open kitchen for their family and friends, they turned to Paul Gidus, project manager and partner of PSG Construction. "We wanted to enlarge it so they could bring in lots of people," says Gidus. "We also wanted to add to the work area and make it brighter."

Removing a wall and door that separated the kitchen from the family room gave the team a chance to double the 325-square-foot space, creating a roomy eat-in kitchen with a multipurpose desk area. Expanding the kitchen allowed the couple to include a large island and plenty of storage. Fluted detailing and ball feet give the kitchen's new island the appearance of handcrafted furniture. Replacing their worn Mexican tile flooring was another important change. "It chipped every time you dropped anything on it and it was hard on your feet," says Kim. "We decided on a prefinished oak floor that is much more comfortable and makes the kitchen look homey." Earth-tone granite countertops also contribute to the warmth of the kitchen. "Granite is low-maintenance and very attractive," says Gidus. Fixed French doors that flood the kitchen with natural light is one of the final details of the transformation. "I don't know why we didn't do the renovation sooner," says Kim. "It's just easier now. There's a place for everything." ➤

AFTER: Kim Tamoney had a specific wish list for her new kitchen: "Lots of drawers and cabinets, a place for cookbooks, and a place to display my cow coffee creamers."

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AFTER

BEFORE: With a low ceiling and dark finishes, the old kitchen was not a very popular spot in the house. "Now it's a place you want to be," says the husband.



BEFORE

in the details

➤ **APPLIANCES** A convection oven and microwave combination, an electric cooktop, and a dishwasher and refrigerator with panel fronts have improved the look and function of the kitchen. "We don't do a lot of gourmet baking, but we needed the basics," says the husband.

➤ **LIGHTING** Undercabinet lighting, well-placed recessed cans, a stylish chandelier over the breakfast table, and hanging pendants over the island help illuminate the new space. "You really want lots of light," says Paul Gidus. "It's an important component for all the kitchens we do."

➤ **WALL COLOR** In contrast with the basic cream color in the old kitchen, its new burgundy-red walls add richness to the room. "They continue the color scheme from the granite and trim colors and provide a nice contrast for the cabinets," says the husband.

WHILE THE OWNERS of an Orlando, Florida, home near the water loved to grill and entertain outdoors, they still needed a kitchen that would allow them to prepare daily meals inside with ease. Busy doctors with two children, they had already given the exterior of their home a much-needed remodel and wanted a kitchen that would complement the improved esthetic. "We wanted an elegant look," says the husband. "Something that would flow well and improve our ability to entertain." The couple asked Paul Gidus to help them. "The house was built in the 1970s and was very dated," says Gidus. "The kitchen had dark cabinets and a peninsula with upper cabinets that hung very low."

After a cumbersome peninsula was removed, the ceiling was raised and the 300-square-foot kitchen was reconfigured into a more user-friendly U-shape. It was then combined with an adjoining family room and breakfast area, creating a great room perfect for the whole family. Now, the kitchen's new two-tier island gives the kids a place to do homework while Mom prepares dinner at the electric cooktop. The island has corbel detailing, a wine-storage unit and a second sink for prepping vegetables. Cherry cabinets paired with white-painted maple cabinets with a lacquer finish provide much needed storage. Rich brown granite countertops with cheery red accents complement the cabinets and new oak floor. All of the components combine for a much more polished look that fits the traditional style of the home. "The house is all brick and this kitchen remodel really completes it," says Gidus. ■

AFTER: New French doors and 8-foot-high ceilings make the kitchen seem brighter. Eliminating the peninsula allowed better access to the porch and pool area.