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INTERIOR DESIGN

Remaking the Hub

EFFICIENT USE OF SPACE TRANSFORMS KITCHEN

BY TROY BLEWETT

Creative space planning and beautiful interior design are hallmarks of a stunning kitchen remodel done in a three-story townhome in Merrifield's Mosaic District. Christina Gee, Ryan Watkins and their two young sons moved into the home with a kitchen remodel in mind and hired Michael Nash Design, Build & Homes to do the renovation.

"From a functionality standpoint, the original kitchen really wasn't meeting our needs," Christina says. "It lacked both counter space and adequate storage. Additionally, there was really only enough room for a small table, which was fine when our boys were young, but we needed more room now that they are bigger," she comments.

"Owing to strict building codes, the possibilities for an open plan in a townhouse are still being discovered, yet the change can significantly improve quality of life without changing the basic footprint."

—Sonny Nazemian



CREATIVE SPACE PLANNING

The challenge for the Michael Nash team was to create an open concept within an 800-square-foot footprint while maintaining the integrity of the structure, mechanical and electrical of the home. The wall that needed to be eliminated was load-bearing and full of ducts and plumbing for the level above it.

“Increasing usable living space in a small home is always a challenge, especially when there are structural issues,” says Sonny Nazemian, president of Michael Nash. “In this case, we inserted a structural beam to carry the load and then moved the existing wall two feet into the dining room to be able to create larger kitchen floor space. This allowed the old island to be replaced by a much larger square island for more storage, while the sink and its plumbing were relocated to a new half-

wall of kitchen/dining room space. The south wall is home to a larger cooktop, double oven and refrigerator, and a lot more needed counter space. All of the appliances are stainless steel.

Opening the space up allowed for a three-seat bar/dining counter that faces into the kitchen, providing convenient seating and more counter space; the change also brought more natural light into the space.

BEAUTIFUL INTERIOR DESIGN

Christina and Ryan got a lot of their ideas from surfing the Houzz website (www.houzz.com), an online forum about architecture, interior design, decorating and home improvement. The site offers photos and articles on all aspects of remodeling.

Christina’s favorite feature is the exotic river rock granite used for the island counter top, table top

Page 43: Opening the space up allowed for a three-seat bar/dining counter that faces into the kitchen, providing convenient seating and more counter space; the change also brought more natural light into the space.

Above: The homeowner’s favorite feature is the exotic river rock granite stone used for the island counter top, table top and fireplace surround.

Opposite, clockwise from top left: View from the kitchen sink into the adjoining dining area with fireplace; the gas range vent hood and glass tile backsplash; cabinets tucked into the center island; and even more storage space.





and fireplace surround. “It’s got a weathered finish instead of a glossy one,” she says. “It always looks great without a lot of care, which is great given our busy lifestyle,” she says. “Plus, because we get a lot of sunlight through the windows, we wanted something that would cut down on the glare.”

Beautiful upper and lower custom wood cabinets help complete the design and offer plenty of storage for pots, pans and dinnerware. The upper cabinets go up to the ceiling, offering even more storage areas. Roll-out shelving makes the space especially cook-friendly.

Other materials include porcelain tile flooring and a glass tile backsplash. Sage paint colors and white and cocoa-stained cabinets beautifully complement the granite counters. The smart use of pendent lights in conjunction with a pretty backsplash helps set off the design.

THE HUB OF THE HOME

The new openness of the space has made it much more usable for the entire family. The boys can be do-

ing their homework in the living area while the adults are working in the kitchen and still have a sense of being together.

“The new space is much better for entertaining,” she says. “Before, guests were crowded together in the kitchen. Now, they can spread out throughout the kitchen and dining room and still feel connected. We’re very happy with the results,” Christina concludes.

SELECTING THEIR CONTRACTOR

When it came time to find a contractor for their project, Christina and Ryan didn’t have to look far. The Michael Nash showroom is only a few miles away from their home.

“Michael Nash has a great display of materials and finishing ideas,” Christina points out. “Their designers were very insightful and they willingly answered all of our questions.”

In fact, Michael Nash was the area’s first licensed contractor to introduce a comprehensive showroom—a useful consumer research facility that now features

Above and opposite: The new design includes porcelain tile flooring, a glass tile backsplash and sage paint colors and white and cocoa-stained cabinets which beautifully complement the granite counters. The smart use of pendent lights in conjunction with a pretty backsplash helps set off the design.



BEFORE

more than 20 fully assembled displays.

“We also liked their fixed price policy,” she says. “They were willing to give us a set price for the work, even with the structural changes. Other contractors weren’t willing to be that transparent.”

“A hallmark of our company is that the design and construction teams are our own employees,” stresses Nazemian. “This allows us to carefully manage the project budget and assure superior craftsmanship on each and every project.”

AN AWARD-WINNING KITCHEN

Impressively, this kitchen project garnered Michael Nash a Contractor of the Year award from the Metro DC Chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry. It was named a Grand Award winner for kitchen remodeling in the \$30,000 to \$60,000 category.

To learn more about the capabilities of Michael Nash Design, Build & Homes, visit www.michael-nash.com or call (703) 935-2538.