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INTERIOR DESIGN

Innovative Reconfiguration

KITCHEN REMODEL JUDGED BEST IN 11 STATES

BY JOHN BYRD

A skillful floor plan reconfiguration that increased the size of a 20-year-old kitchen by more than 30 percent, while staying inside the envelope of the existing home, has won a regional Chrysalis Award for Michael Nash Design Build and Homes.

The makeover to this Fairfax Station residence was named “Best Kitchen for over \$150,000” in an 11-state region stretching from Maryland to Florida. Among other strategies, the remodeler eliminated an obstructive interior bearing wall, converted a garage bay into additional living space, gained wall surface by deleting a stair rail and relocated several small first-level rooms.

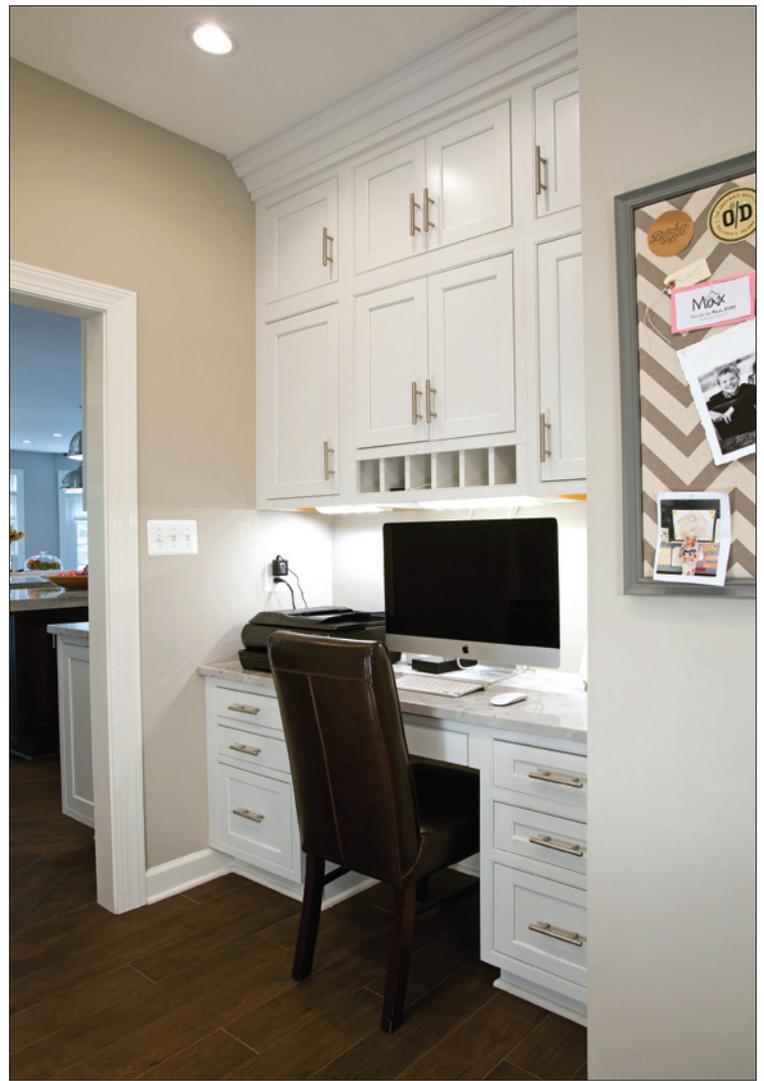
The 700-square-foot kitchen now accommodates a professional-caliber cooktop range, two food prep islands, ceiling-flush glass-facing cabinetry and other amenities within an eclectic interior scheme that combines traditional finish work detailing with elements of industrial design.

Founded in 1993, the Chrysalis is generally considered the most prestigious of the remodeling industry’s peer awards. *Qualified Remodeler Magazine* and *Kitchen and Bath News* are among the competition’s national media sponsors.

Taken as a whole, the comprehensive remodeling plan transformed a builder-grade kitchen into a gener-

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ous suite of rooms that includes a larger laundry room, a mudroom with customized storage spaces and a private computer workstation.

The prize is one of four Chrysalis honors the Merrifield-based remodeler has received this year. In August, the firm became the first-ever recipient of the “Decade of Excellence” award, a special honor acknowledging its consistently high standards over a ten-year period.

In accepting the “Best Kitchen” kudos, Michael Nash founder and president Sonny Nazemian praised his company’s design team and their practiced, cost-sensitive approach to helping homeowners make effective home improvement decisions.

“Since most of our projects are executed by Michael Nash employees, we’re able to offer fixed-price contracts,” Nazemian discloses. “Customers can select finish work materials from our showroom at-cost. These are among the components of our business model which allow us to routinely outperform our client’s budget.”

In the case of the recent “Best Kitchen” winner, grappling with a floor plan that was ill-suited to the homeowner’s emerging needs was the principal challenge.

“The owners were looking ahead,” the remodeler recalls. “With three kids under age 10, an *au pair* and a number of pets, the kitchen was often too cramped to



Page 43: A plan that converts one bay of a three-car garage into square footage needed for an expanded family kitchen has won a regional Chrysalis award for Michael Nash Nash Design Build and Homes. The remodeling to a Fairfax Station home was named “Best Kitchen over \$150,000” in an 11-state area stretching from Florida to Maryland.

This page, clockwise from top left: By removing a staircase railing, remodelers gained the wall space needed for glass-facing cabinets and a serving station complete with a wine refrigerator; the skillful reconfiguration of existing space gained the square footage needed for a private workstation. The 1” x 4” marble tile backsplash behind the professional-quality cook top range reiterates the chevron motif in the flooring.

Opposite: Recessed LED lighting, crown molding and industrial pendant lights are employed to develop the kitchen’s unique interior design style which features wood-grain porcelain flooring in a chevron pattern that combines with large farm sinks to evoke a rustic ambiance.





comfortably satisfy everyday food preparation and dining requirements.”

The owners had considered borrowing square footage from a garage on the western side of the house, but a bearing wall that held essential plumbing, electric and HVAC systems was situated between the kitchen and a mudroom abutting the three-car garage.

Also, given the growing list of improvements being sought, the new plan would necessitate relocating several adjacent rooms – and dramatically upgrading the entire interior.

What to do?

“Since the home’s second floor rested on a mid-house bearing wall,” Nazemian explains, “we proposed an alternative structural support system that would allow us to access more square footage inside the envelope of the existing home.”

In a nutshell, the Michael Nash engineers re-routed the HVAC, plumbing and electrical conduits, installed vertical supports attached to 24-inch horizontal I-beams all the way to the basement, then shifted second-floor loads to the new infrastructure and removed the offending wall.

The plan gained 250 square feet of kitchen floor space, generating the elbow room needed for substan-



This page, clockwise from top left: Framed mirror with sconce lights and marble tile on back wall highlight a floating vanity and drawer storage. The custom wallpaper in a circular pattern brightens up an otherwise small space. Re-locating a former powder room created the footprint needed for a butler’s pantry adjacent to the formal dining room. The new laundry provides ample work space and added storage.

Opposite, top: The east-facing interior elevation now accommodates a 72” refrigerator freezer, two farm sinks, a spacious breakfast zone and two food prep islands; and every member of the family has a private accommodation in the new mudroom.



tially larger appliances (a 72-inch refrigerator/freezer, a 60-inch commercial grade cooktop, a coffee station, a wine chiller), as well as an additional 5' x 12' food prep island that doubles as a dining counter.

What resulted was an “open” plan with clearly defined activity zones within a visual continuum. The spacious new interior (which includes a large breakfast nook) allows everyone to enjoy private pursuits while maintaining eye-contact with other parts of the suite.

The new butler’s pantry, meanwhile, helped preserve the integrity of the formal dining room. The powder room finished in stacked marble and patterned wallpaper is also notably elegant. More importantly for busy parents: the plan boasts a mudroom with direct outside access, plus closets and cubbies custom-designed for every member of the household.

A computer workstation nearby provides internet access and a WIFI charging station, but also a convenient “way station” between the kitchen, garage and outdoor play areas where mom can chat with kids while keeping an eye on a multitude of day-to-day tasks.

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