

A watercolor illustration of an autumn forest scene. The foreground is dominated by the trunks of several trees, rendered in dark, textured brushstrokes. The foliage is a vibrant mix of reds, oranges, yellows, and greens, with some leaves appearing to be falling or scattered on the ground. A path or stream winds through the trees, leading towards a hazy, mountainous background. The overall style is soft and painterly, with visible brushwork and a rich, warm color palette.

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CELEBRATING THE ARTS | OCTOBER 2020



INTERIOR DESIGN

Open Kitchen with Golf Views

“BEST KITCHEN IN THE \$60,000 TO \$100,000” RANGE | BY JOHN BYRD

A kitchen enlargement and floorplan reconfiguration in a home situated next to a golf course has won a “Contractor of the Year” (COTY) for Michael Nash Design Build and Homes.

The makeover to an Ashburn residence was named “Best Kitchen in the \$60,000 to \$100,000” range by the National Association of Remodeling Contractors (NARI) metro DC chapter. Among other strategies, the remodeler eliminated an obstructive interior bearing wall, merged the existing kitchen with an adjacent porch, established a dramatic sightline linkage to the golf course, and gained wall surface for cabinets by deleting a dysfunctional pantry.

The 800 sq. ft. kitchen now accommodates a professional-caliber cooktop range, a custom designed food prep island and a dining counter which seats four, a formal breakfast zone, ceiling-flush glass-facing cabinetry and other amenities within an eclectic interior scheme that presents traditional finish work detailing within a panoramic view of the sprawling surrounding countryside.

Taken as a whole, the comprehensive remodeling plan transforms a 15-year-old, builder-grade kitchen into a generous kitchen-centric great room that segues directly to a spacious barbecue deck and a family room with stone clad hearth.

“A family kitchen is always a fulfilling assignment; it really keeps us in touch with how families interact; it’s an arena where our skills are especially well-applied.”

—Sonny Nazemian



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 allows us to routinely outperform our client’s budget.”

In the case of the recent “best kitchen” winner, grappling with a floorplan ill-suited to the homeowner’s emerging needs was the principal challenge.

“The owners were looking for both functional and aesthetic improvements,” Nazemian recalls. “They had decided that the sunroom adjacent to the kitchen—which featured a stunning view of the golf course—didn’t need to be a separate room since they used it as a dining area for much of the year.”

There was even a “pass-thru” between the kitchen and the porch—the main problem being that it was within a bearing wall encased with plumbing and other ducting that routed to the second floor.

What to do?

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

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

The plan converts the former sunroom into an extension of the kitchen which now functions as a breakfast room.

With the bearing wall eliminated, new mahogany hardwood was installed to seamlessly connect the kitchen with the entire first level. Designers relocated the new dinette set into a spot still closer to the rolling view. Re-routing an air-return vent allowed the team to eliminate an obstructing knee wall and better unify the family room to the new kitchen great room.

The space plan called for: mid-kitchen food prep Island and dining counter; better locations for a new sink, two dishwashers, microwave, ice maker; develop-

Page 45: A microwave oven embedded in the island was part of the process of creating wall space needed for new cabinets. The built-in incorporates two dishwashers and an icemaker.

Above: The solution transforms a 15-year-old, builder-grade kitchen into a kitchen-centric great room that segues directly to a spacious barbecue deck and a family room with stone clad hearth.

Opposite top: The space plan called for mid-kitchen, pentagon-shaped food prep island and dining counter where family and friends could gather—easily interacting with the cook. The cook’s station with a 48” six-burner gas range topped with a tapered vent-a-hood has added immeasurably to the basic cooking pleasures. The backsplash is accent Arabesco tile. The glass-facing cabinets are backlit.



ing wall surfaces appropriate to adding capacious cabinetry; and designing activity zones where family and friends would gather, interacting easily with the cook.

To optimize the accessibility of a commercially-sized refrigerator/freezer, pantries and double oven, the design team re-deployed the room's south wall. Shifting the entrance to the dining room generated the wall surface needed for a 48" range top crowned with decorative tapered custom hood and surrounded by an exquisitely articulated layered tile backsplash.

Among the most impressive interior design features: enchanting triple decorative chandeliers; an island and dining counter surfaced in an exotic white veined quartz countertop; and glass-facing backlit cabinets.

In short: a crisp, clean look in all directions.

What results is an "open" plan with clearly defined activity zones within a visual continuum. The spacious new interior allows all to enjoy private pursuits while maintaining eye-contact with other parts of the suite.

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