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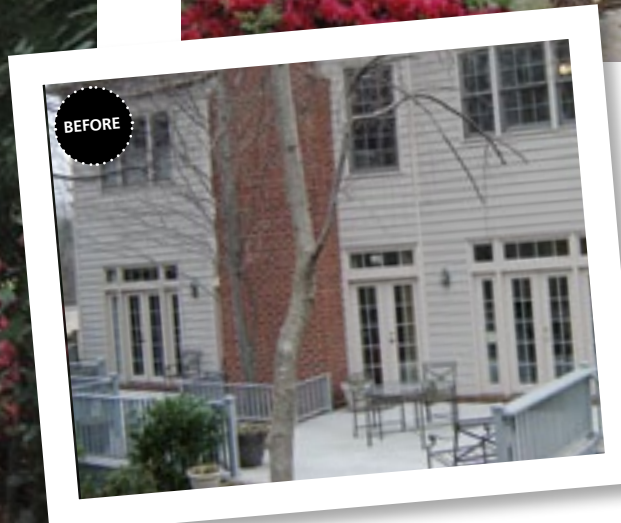
# HOME & DESIGN

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A vast improvement over the original patio (below, inset), the breakfast room addition (pictured here and right, top) is surrounded by landscaped terraces. A standing-seam copper roof lends a refined look to the structure.



# A FRUITFUL COLLABORATION

A design team creates a tasteful kitchen remodel and addition enhanced by architectural details and a connection to the outdoors

BY CATHY APPLEFELD OLSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
KENNETH M. WYNER

**T**oo many cooks in the kitchen? Not for a Maryland couple with two young daughters, who transformed their bland galley kitchen into a spacious, warm and light-filled space that fosters family time and casual entertaining. The project, which was implemented by Edgemoor Custom Builders, not only reconfigured the existing kitchen to accommodate state-of-the-art appliances and a generous island, but also saw the addition of an elegant new breakfast room.

Although this new octagonal space measures only 12 by 12 feet, the breakfast room lives large in the new design. "Sometimes it's a matter of inches to make an enormous difference," says interior designer Alexander Baer, who previously decorated the clients' home and collaborated on the kitchen re-do. "It works so well because it changed the whole circulation of the space and added access where you didn't have any before."

**RENOVATION ARCHITECTURE:** RUI PONTE, AIA, LEED AP, Ponte Mellor Architects, Bethesda, Maryland.

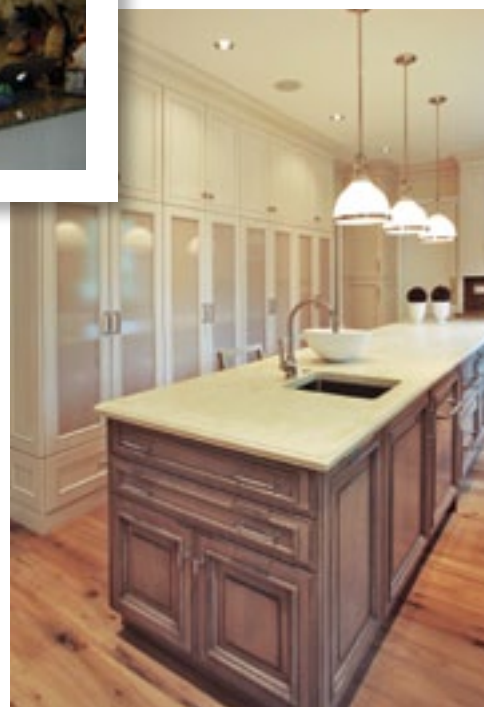
**RENOVATION CONTRACTOR:** JEAN ASSUNCAO, president; BILL RAMBO, project manager, Edgemoor Custom Builders, Bethesda, Maryland. **INTERIOR**

**DESIGN:** ALEXANDER BAER, Jenkins Baer Associates, Baltimore, Maryland. **LANDSCAPING:** CHAPEL VALLEY LANDSCAPE COMPANY, Woodbine, Maryland.



BEFORE

The original, outdated kitchen (inset, above) needed an upgrade to reflect the finishes throughout the rest of the home. The light-filled renovation raised the ceiling height to accommodate taller cabinets by Wood-Mode (top). The new kitchen also features a long island with a custom concrete countertop (right) and a Wolf range with a remote-controlled hood (far right). The new breakfast room (opposite) is offset by golden-hued walls.



Architect Rui Ponte designed the addition with French doors leading outside. “They didn’t have a proper breakfast room before,” he notes. “Now, [the space] affords better views and more convenient access to the deck and side yard. The kitchen is the gatekeeper to the yard; there was a real opportunity to make it special.”

The existing kitchen got its share of updates, including two new windows to funnel more natural light into the space and full-length cabinets that tower thanks to a newly raised ceiling. While granite tops the peripheral counters, Baer suggested that the owners install a concrete countertop on the island for contrast. “Concrete is an extremely practical surface,” he says, “and you can get it in any color, any edge.”

From the get-go, the project flowed like a blue-ribbon recipe thanks to seamless communication among all parties involved. “We came in during the design

phase,” says Edgemoor president Jean Assuncao. “We worked with all of the [vendors] to ensure they had a chance to offer suggestions, and we had regular meetings with the clients.”

The collaborative relationship stretched beyond the interiors as well. “The plans were really detailed,” recalls Edgemoor vice president Bill Rambo, who served as project manager. “We tied in the landscaping and hardscaping, and sketched out things like irrigation and lighting with the landscaper early on. Every detail was planned, down to the bushes.”

Of course, no matter how carefully conceived, every renovation holds an element of surprise. In this case, existing ductwork forced a rerouting of the kitchen exhaust through the house and out the roof—a change that ended up yielding a nice result. “We reworked a closet upstairs and ran the exhaust up through the house,” Rambo

says. This meant using a remote fan in the kitchen, which makes it much quieter. “Everyone wants these industrial-grade cooktops, but that means you also need an industrial-grade fan, and they’re noisy.”

Bobby Caras of Multi-Systems, Inc., also worked some magic behind the walls, with the installation of a Control 4 integrated audio/video and lighting system. “The kitchen is such a gathering area, this was the next step in bringing the family together,” says Assuncao.

While the working kitchen radiates natural tones and textures, the breakfast room is awash in vibrant gold. “Sometimes you have to think outside the box,” Baer says. “This color accentuates the beautiful kitchen. It almost hugs you.” ♦

*Cathy Applefeld Olson is a writer in Alexandria, Virginia. Photographer Kenneth M. Wyner is based in Takoma Park, Maryland.*