

GOOD LUCK

Careful planning and thoughtful design go into a family kitchen



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PHOTOGRAPHY: BRANDON BARRÉ

(Above) The homeowners were very involved in the renovation; for example, Stephen personally went through the marble tiles for the backsplash and discarded the ones with too much brown in them. Island countertop, Super White granite; pendant lights, Elte; stove, Wolfe; dishwasher, Miele. (Opposite) Next to the Sub-Zero fridge is a handy pass-through to the family room.

“It looks organic to the house, maintains its character.”

“WE HAD REALLY GOOD LUCK.” That’s what you want to hear about a kitchen reno. It’s no secret that doing a kitchen is, on average, the most stressful upgrade you can make short of razing the entire house and starting over.

Jane Lockhart, principal designer and founder of Jane Lockhart Interior Design, knew that this project would go relatively smoothly, but that’s because of more than simple luck. “I had worked with these clients on their previous home,” she says. “They’re decisive. They know what they want and don’t want.”

“Things moved really fast. My clients had thought about it a lot. We spent time planning. We then did a few sketches on the back of an envelope, I put them into CAD, and it all worked together enough that we were quickly able to say, ‘Oh, that’s good. Let’s do it.’”

So what did those clients want? “A contemporary vintage look,” says homeowner Stephen. “This kitchen does look new but refers back to the time the house was built. It’s a turn-of-the-century home, and there’s a lot of great architecture in here. It was respected as the house passed from one homeowner to another. As you move from one room to the next, you feel as though you’re still in the same house.”

To achieve the look, Lockhart commissioned custom-made solid maple cabinetry from Brice’s Furniture that she characterizes as simple and understated. She specified little touches that contribute to the vintage look, such as recessed kick plates that make the under-counter cabinets appear freestanding.

The reno involved some new construction to enlarge the kitchen. The room is L-shaped, and one wall was pushed back eight feet to make the total space approximately 490 square feet. Lockhart took the opportunity to add a window over the sink, designing it so that “it looks organic to the house, maintains its character.”





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(Above) The end of the room opposite the food preparation area accommodates a dinette, its banquette flanked by the pantry and the beverage centre. In an ell to the right is a cozy lounge area. (Opposite) Honouring the home's circa-1910 origin also meant accommodating old-fashioned radiators. The lower part of the china cabinet has a grille in one side for heat to escape.



At the end of the room, opposite the stove, are two built-in ceiling-height cabinets flanking a banquette, with a table and chairs drawn up for casual dining. The cabinets hide, on one side, a pantry with an ingenious stack of shelves that can be pulled out and spun for easy access, and on the other, a beverage centre with a Jura coffeemaker and a Danby mini-fridge.

Strategically located next to the beverage centre is a charming lounge area with a fireplace. It's a cozy corner but is almost upstaged by the island.

"Our favourite part of the room is the island; the whole kitchen is designed around it," says Stephen. "It's where we spend our time, our kids do their homework, the family talks. It was meant to be the centre of our family life, and it is." ❧

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