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Retaining Vintage Charm

Swapping the kitchen and dining room enabled a small addition to provide big culinary rewards



A CUTE 1950S GINGERBREAD HOUSE in Westchester County, N.Y., offered plenty of charm but little elbowroom in the kitchen. Even worse, the galley-like space was a dead end whose only interior entrance was via the dining room. The homeowners called upon designer Jason Landau, owner of Amazing Spaces in Greenwich, Conn., to transform the existing space into a kitchen that was better functioning and accessible.

The clients' wish list included larger state-of-the-art appliances, more counter space and storage, increased natural light, added ceiling height, seating in the kitchen and white cabinetry. With the small area offered by the existing kitchen, Landau and the homeowners easily agreed that an addition would be necessary. By extending the room and adjusting the layout of the kitchen and dining area, the homeowners now enjoy an airy light-filled, connected space with vaulted cathedral ceilings and a functional flow.

ABOVE The homeowners wanted large, chef-friendly appliances, so including them became key to laying out the space once the size of the addition had been determined.

BY CARRIE WHITNEY

CHALLENGE 1: SCALING AN ADDITION TO COMPLEMENT THE EXTERIOR

When determining the size of the addition, Landau had to balance the interior expansion with the exterior style.

"The scale from the outside was important in relationship to how much we could gain on the inside," he said, adding that he was hamstrung by the driveway, which meant that the addition would only work on the front of the house. "This location allowed us to take advantage of the new roofline, which added interior volume and an opportunity for tall windows – meeting the needs of the client for an abundance of natural light."

The addition needed to be modest because of the site layout and existing architecture, so the design team limited it to 100 square feet. Landau gained more space by replacing a garden window with a box bay window, which provided extra width and enough room to include a bench in the dining area.

CHALLENGE 2: ACCOMMODATING LARGER APPLIANCES

Although the homeowners had not yet selected appliances, the wife, who is an avid cook, knew she wanted a large refrigerator, double wall ovens and a six-burner cooktop. Landau worked with the new space provided by the addition to see what would fit and how the appliances could be arranged in the new kitchen, which is now situated mostly within the addition. He

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explained they could only go forward with the addition, which determined the width of the room.

They needed enough space for the appliances and an open area in the middle to keep the kitchen navigable. Realizing there would not be enough space in the kitchen to accommodate an island, Landau opted for a peninsula that could serve as a countertop or an eating area.

CHALLENGE 3: CREATING ROOMS THAT FLOW

Circulation had been a serious issue in the original layout. Previously, the kitchen could only be entered through the dining room, so Landau flipped the locations of the two rooms.

“We didn’t want to walk through one space to transition to another,” he said. “Moving the kitchen to the front of the house allowed us to enter the newly combined kitchen and dining space directly between the two.”

TOP RIGHT Whereas the original kitchen could only be entered through the dining room, the connected rooms now feature two entrances, including one that opens up between the two rooms.

RIGHT The kitchen now faces the front of the house and welcomes the light with clerestory windows made possible by the higher ceiling of the addition.

BELOW Adding a box bay window created space to include a bench for extra seating. The hutchches feature mouth-blown, soft-seeded glass and cherry countertops.



house, possible thanks to the raised ceiling of the addition, accentuate the height of the house and let in plenty of light. By using glass on the sides as well as the front of some cabinets, the light continues to move throughout the entire space.

CHALLENGE 4: MAINTAINING SEPARATE IDENTITIES

In addition to creating space that flowed and functioned well, the design team was also asked to give each space its own identity. Landau responded to this challenge by defining the kitchen and dining areas in two ways.

“First, we used the change in ceiling heights, and second, we changed the door style, counter surfaces and millwork details to give each area a slightly different identity while maintaining uniformity,” he said.

Countertops in the kitchen area are lighter quartzite, while the dining area features dark wood surfaces and a higher counter height. With the variation in cabinet door style, the hutchches in the dining area have the look of furniture. The peninsula provides seating as it also outlines the shift from kitchen to dining room without halting the flow from one room to the next.

SOURCES

DESIGNER: Jason Landau, Amazing Spaces;
PHOTOGRAPHER: Ilir Rizaj, <http://ilirrizaj.com/>

CHANDELIER: Cristallo Ring; **COOKTOP:** Wolf; **DISHWASHER:** Bosch; **FAUCETS, SOAP DISPENSER & WATER FILTER:** Waterstone; **FRIDGE/FREEZER:** Sub-Zero; **HARDWARE:** Anthropologie & RKI Intl.; **HOOD:** XO; **MICROWAVE:** GE Profile; **SINK:** ROHL; **WALL OVEN:** Wolf