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Big or Small:
Baths with All the Amenities



Call it the kitchen of the centuries: A couple open their 100-year-old home, shaking its classic bones with some modern pop.

THE WALLS HAVE ERAS



Storage stands out in Alison and John Shoemaker's new kitchen, including wine racks that top pantry cabinets. "I just wanted to use every single bit of space," Alison says.



A 100-YEAR-OLD HOME NEAR PHILADELPHIA needed lots of work—the previous owners had lived there for five decades, making few changes, before Alison and John Shoemaker moved in.

The cramped kitchen—a series of dark spaces—fit a turn-of-the-20th-century household with servants and a cook, not a modern family. The couple wanted a clean-lined look, plenty of natural light, and tons of storage for themselves and their two girls, Anna, 12, and Avery, 10.

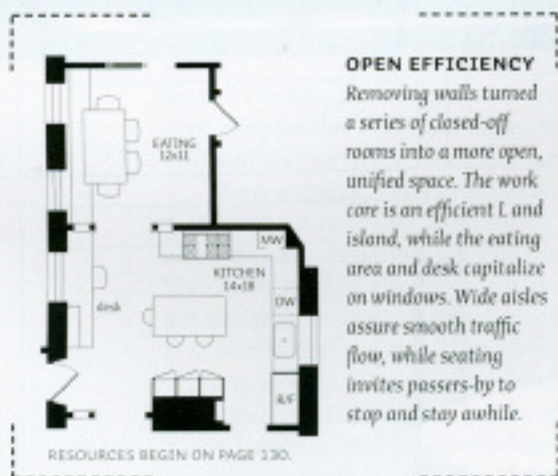
Alison and John turned to friend and neighbor William Smilow, a builder specializing in restoration work, for help. Smilow worked with architects Jeff Krieger and Cheryl Bestenheider to modernize the kitchen. “There are tons of square feet in all these houses in the neighborhood, but they’re not very open spaces,” Smilow says. “We were trying to marry the wonderful architecture with modern requirements and amenities to create a big, open space.”

Fortunately, the existing kitchen wing was large enough that adding square footage was unnecessary. Instead, the design team gutted the space, tearing out walls that separated the kitchen from the family room and other adjacent areas. Though the new layout is more contemporary—the kitchen shares sunshine and sight lines with adjoining spaces—each area maintains its own function and identity. Passageways are wide for easy traffic flow, but transitions are defined by half-walls and old-look columns. This mix of traditional and contemporary extends to the kitchen’s style, too.

ABOVE: Stainless-steel appliances and accents put a modern face on classic white cabinetry and granite countertops. Open shelves and ribbed-glass doors vary the look. **OPPOSITE:** The sink window lets Alison enjoy a view as she works, while the stainless-steel rack lets her wash pots and hang them up to dry in the same spot.



The kitchen's look is **OPEN** and clean, a mix of trad and rad that is fun and family-friendly.



ABOVE LEFT: A built-in bench boosts seating in the eating area, now open to the work core. The bench lifts up to reveal bonus storage. ABOVE RIGHT: Alison had the new desktop match the floor—both are oak. “The desk is where I run operations, my command central,” she says.

Classic white cabinetry, granite countertops, and hardwood flooring share the spotlight with stainless-steel appliances and modern accents, satisfying Alison’s desire for space that’s simple, minimal, easy to use, and easy to clean. “I like to cook a lot, and every night our girls want to help with dinner,” she says. “They love the new kitchen because it’s so easy to cook in.”

It’s fun, too, as certain elements skew quite modern, some inspiring mirth. In the butler’s pantry, for instance, black-and-white posters depict superhero figures—“self-portraits,” Alison says. A stainless-steel table, which hails from a restaurant-supply store and is surrounded by mod plastic chairs, is dubbed “the operating table.”

The light cabinetry and walls provide an understated backdrop that allows such accessories to stand out. “The new colors, artwork, and furnishings are a big part of why it looks so good,” Krieger says.

A kitchen is never too old to change. **KMI**



Columns create a sense of separation between the working kitchen and eating area without blocking light or views. The butler's pantry is beyond the eating area.

