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Professional Remodeler

Real Simple, Real Clean

MEGHAN HAYNES -- 4/1/2006



Benvenuti and Stein designed both versions of this kitchen. The new one features a picture window, 6 1/2-foot square glass skylight and under-cabinet windows (at right) for views and sunlight. Seating six, the granite-topped island includes a cooktop and a warming drawer.

Photos by Paul Schlismann



Storage drawers beneath the dual-fuel (wood and gas) fireplace in the breakfast area/work nook, as well as the desk drawers and built-in shelves, repeat the form and style of the kitchen cabinetry. The door leads to a new pantry.

Sidebars: Products List

Twenty years ago, **Benvenuti and Stein**

had designed the kitchen of this home on Chicago's North Shore. The new owners liked its basic form and function, especially the center island. But the homeowner, an art collector, wanted the space recast in the modern, minimalist Scandinavian design she loves. She also sought more storage space and natural light, and the ability to keep an eye on the kids while cooking and managing family finances.

In moving the kitchen to the back corner of the home, Benvenuti and Stein architect Jeff Herberholz preserved the dining room and also created a sensible flow throughout the first floor, avoiding adding hallways. A 200-square-foot addition allowed the homeowners to nearly double the size of their kitchen and to have a new family room. With no second floor above the new kitchen location, Benvenuti and Stein raised the 8-foot kitchen ceiling another 10 inches without affecting the existing second-floor windows.

That added space made room for full 44-inch upper cabinets topped with lighting detail. Too many uppers would have made a large picture window unworkable, so Herberholz designed a floor-to-ceiling column of cabinetry around the refrigerator. Cantilevered shelving on the ends of the upper cabinets and open glass shelves in the cabinets serve as display areas. In- and under-cabinet lighting and above-counter, under-cabinet windows help keep the kitchen open and light.

Benvenuti and Stein duplicated the cantilevered shelving in the work nook, located off of the kitchen and breakfast area. A column of square glass-block windows over the desk repeats the window pattern of the kitchen but provides privacy for getting work done.



Before



Before



After

"We didn't put the side supports in because it would make the sink and desk areas look too closed," Herberholz says. "The actual cabinet construction was streamlined because we have an in-house cabinet shop, and whatever we think of they can do, so we're not limited to ideas that come out of catalogues."

The resulting 483 square-foot kitchen (increased from 230 square feet) has defined areas but still embraces open space. It can be accessed from both the dining room and new family room.

"You can literally connect people in any of the three rooms, which is much more desirable for entertaining formally or simply having the swim team over," Herberholz says. The kitchen represented approximately \$120,000 and four month's work of this whole-house project.

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Remodeler and architect: Benvenuti and Stein, Evanston, Ill.

Project location: Winnetka, Ill.

Age of home: 80 years

Scope of work: Relocated the kitchen and doubled its size, adding a pantry, work nook, breakfast area and wet bar.



Products List

Appliances: Miele, Sub Zero, Viking. **Faucets:** Grohe, Kohler. **Lighting:** Valli and Valli. **Paint:** Sherwin-Williams. **Sinks:** Franks. **Windows:** Andersen, Pella.