

Kitchens, Reimagined

Area designers share insights on refining the heart of the home.

Text and styling by Charlotte Safavi



PHOTO BY FRANK SPURGEON



ECLECTIC VIBES

“For this renovation, an all-white kitchen felt too commonplace and stark, and all-wood-stained cabinetry too dark with a lack of contrast,” says DMV interior designer Sarah Goldfarb of Sarah Goldfarb Designs. The newly renovated kitchen in Bethesda now features a mix of finishes and materials.

The once-dated kitchen had cherry cabinets, speckled granite countertops, and a white tile backsplash. Goldfarb opted for custom cabinetry with different door styles, including flat panel, beaded flat panel, and reeded. She also chose contrasting finishes: white oak, painted gray-white cabinets, and a few olive green drawers with playful marble ball pulls. The rest of the hardware is polished nickel.

“My aim was to create balance, depth, and a curated look,” she says. “The eclectic cabinetry, both in finish and style, created a contemporary yet inviting space that fluidly mixed, not matched, different styles and decorative elements.”

The accent color of the olive green drawers draws from streaks of the same color in the full-height gray quartzite backsplashes.

The kitchen formerly had two smaller islands and a wall separating the dining room. These were eliminated in favor of an open-concept space with an airy dining table and chairs adjacent to one larger island that has an integrated sink and breakfast bar. Other notable kitchen features include a decorative floor-to-ceiling white oak panel feature designed to cover the immovable HVAC system.

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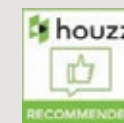


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BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL

This 400-square-foot Vienna kitchen doubled in size and was opened to the main floor plan during an extensive renovation by Justin Olewack of Bolt Builders.

“The homeowner works in luxury hospitality design, so she naturally gravitates toward spaces that feel experiential. We leaned into that perspective by creating a kitchen that feels like a boutique hotel at home,” Olewack says.

In addition to a striking, custom brass-strapped black hood, the kitchen features a spacious island with a blue-painted base. A pair of pendants hang above it, pulling palette and style from the hood.

“The kitchen is visible when you enter the home,” says Olewack. “It sets the tone for the décor. We introduced a few elements to do the heavy lifting, rather than dozens of competing details.”

The range hood creates an impactful focal point, while the kitchen’s periphery reads quieter. The all-white cabinets feature simple paneled doors and brass pulls. The glazed ceramic backsplash and quartzite countertops are also white.

“It’s about balance. You can go big, but you need to edit everything around it. When you choose two or three impactful elements and allow the rest of the room to breathe, the space feels calming instead of busy,” he adds.

The kitchen is also perfect for hosting, with a large range, plenty of prep space, double dishwashers, and a window pass-through to the exterior.

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RUSTIC CHIC

Leesburg-based Julie Hoffmann and Lori DuVal of J&L Interiors were involved in every aspect of this highly customized kitchen crafted with their in-house cabinetry in collaboration with Distinctive Building Group and architect John Heltzel.

“The homeowners not only wanted a space to accommodate multiple people while cooking and entertaining, but also wanted their son, who uses a wheelchair, to be able to navigate the space with ease,” says Hoffmann, who was the project lead.

With its large double islands (one for prep, one for dining), the kitchen boasts extra-wide circulation paths and wheelchair-level access to essential features, such as the microwave.

“The resulting kitchen is highly functional and inclusive by design, allowing every family member to participate comfortably in daily life,” Hoffmann says.

The style of the kitchen, with its striking veined quartzite countertops and full-height range wall, is a step above modern farmhouse, though it pays tribute to that style with its warmth and texture.

“The design is more elevated and refined,” says Hoffmann. “We incorporated elegant details such as the crystal chandelier, polished nickel hardware, and of course, the CornuFé range.”

Equally calculated is the layering of black cabinetry (some glass-fronted, some not) with a knotty alder island and matching tower cabinet. The white-painted hood also features a contrasting knotty alder wood band.

“The carefully curated mix of natural materials and rich finishes creates a warm, sophisticated aesthetic, which is both welcoming and approachable,” Hoffmann says.

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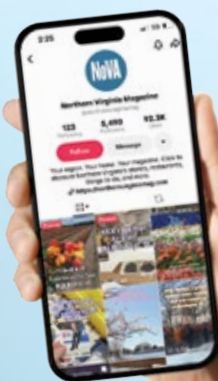
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ENGLISH COTTAGE

When Mike Brennan of CDT Re-modeling and Natasha Thibodeau of 1500Design undertook this Falls Church kitchen renovation, they tapped into an English cottage aesthetic.

"The homeowner loves to cook and bake (she makes bread from scratch) so function and storage were also massive priorities," says Brennan.

The new custom-designed kitchen is in a galley layout. Moving the range and hood down opened the space up to the adjacent family room by way of a wraparound peninsula with lower storage.

"We used butcher-block counters on the prep areas because the homeowner prefers to make her bread on that surface," says Thibodeau.

By contrast, the kitchen's "wet" side has quartz countertops, and an apron front sink. To the left of the sink are open display shelves.



PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTY MOSNIC

Throughout, Shaker-style cabinetry pairs walnut uppers with painted-green lowers, some with furniture-style toe kicks. The hardware is a mix of pulls and knobs that amplify the curated cottage look.

"We were inspired by old cooking hearths when designing the hood. It features a brass display rail and integrated pull-out storage cabinets for oils and spices," says Thibodeau.

The range also features a decorative ceramic tile backsplash with an integrated pot-filler. Elsewhere, including in the new pantry, backsplashes are a rustic porcelain subway tile including inspired by an English scullery.

"Customizing the cabinets and open shelves makes this pantry function specific for the homeowners' baking and cooking needs. This space really sets this kitchen apart," says Brennan.

Curtains in place of cabinet doors add to the kitchen's charm and collected style.

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TOTAL TRANSFORMATION

“What was originally going to be primarily a modest cosmetic job turned into a much more substantial renovation,” says Todd Howard Ezrin of TOBE DesignGroup. He recently worked on this kitchen project in Woodley Park for a single parent with two children. “When it came to the kitchen, she had just wanted to paint the cabinets to refresh the space,” he says.

Ezrin advised against this quick fix: The old gray cabinets were worn, the countertops were a dark granite, storage was limited, and the appliances were dated.

The adjacent room was also paneled and painted in the same gloomy tone. Ironically, the homeowner loves the use of color, so Ezrin took the opportunity to add color to the kitchen. The paneling came down, and a fresh coat of paint

brightened up the overall space.

“We retained the kitchen’s footprint,” Ezrin says, “but the rest was gutted.”

New cabinets were added in collaboration with Cabinet Concepts & Design in a pale blue. They were paired with white countertops with gray veining and a glossy white subway tile backsplash. Pulls are in a warm brass.

“The bar became a breakfast bar, and we designed a custom banquette in this breakfast nook. A pendant above defines this space. The banquette also gave us an opportunity to infuse pops of red on the seat and back cushions,” Ezrin says.

Ezrin says the family loves the renovated space. “She wanted a kitchen that reflected her taste and personality and [that could also help foster] a comfortable and happy home for her children.”



PHOTO BY ROBERT RADPHEA PHOTOGRAPHY