



Kitchen Conversion

A HOME SHOW VISIT HELPED THE KUBS CHOOSE THE RIGHT REMODELOR FOR THEM

BY JENNIFER GANGLOFF

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VLADIMIR VALIOUKEVITCH

When the Kub family decided it was time to remodel their kitchen 15 years after moving in, they knew it would take someone special to do the job right. Previous owners of the house had done some of their own electrical and plumbing work, and those do-it-yourself projects had created problems when the Kubs tried to tackle some smaller remodeling jobs.

“We wanted to make sure the company we went with had dealt with these kinds of problems before,” Andre Kub said. Andre and his wife, Alice, had a company in mind – Master Builders. So last February, as their ideas started taking shape, they paid a visit to the annual Home Show, where they were able to chat in-depth with representatives of Master Builders. “The company also had lots of pictures at the Home Show of other projects they’d done,” Andre Kub said, “and it helped seal the deal.”

Initially, the Kubs were unsure exactly what they wanted to do with their home, which sits on a quiet, wooded cul-de-sac in Oronoco. The original layout was awkward and cramped. And with three young kids, it just wasn’t working. Andre Kub first thought they may need to create an addition on the front of the house, but Alice disagreed. Little did they realize that it was only by making the kitchen a tad smaller that the family would gain the space and functionality they’d been seeking.

Combining Form & Function

A major part of the remodel was tearing down the wall that separated the kitchen and the formal dining room. A 15-foot laminated wood beam – easier to work with than steel – was installed overhead to provide secure support for the second

story, said Master Builders owner Tom Gommels. That move opened up the kitchen without robbing space from the dining room, creating a sweeping view from the front of the house overlooking the cul-de-sac and on to the back deck and wooded lot.

Removing the wall also allowed the family to shuffle appliances and change the location of the kitchen peninsula. Originally, the peninsula with eating bar was cramped and impractical, set against the back wall of the kitchen. The new peninsula, installed where the dining room wall once stood, creates a functional eating area for kids on the run. But it also serves another purpose. “The bar allows us to have an eat-in kitchen but keep the kids out of the way while I’m trying to prepare a meal,” Alice Kub said.

Because of the new layout, the kitchen

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pantry was sacrificed, which Alice Kub naturally had some qualms about. However, Master Builders ensured that a pull-out base pantry on the peninsula would make up for some of the lost storage, as would the taller cherry kitchen cabinets.

Throughout, the remodel is a mix of the practical and the subtly elegant. The tired linoleum floor was replaced with commercial-grade cork, which offers better support while cooking but also can withstand the wear-and-tear of an active family. The cork offered another bonus – because of its great insulating ability, the Kubs didn't have to install electric in-floor heat as they'd initially planned, Gommels said.

The granite countertops and peninsula boast just one seam, and nearly invisible at that. The ceramic tile backsplash offers the texture and look of stone, at a more affordable price. Appliance garages, lazy Susans in the corner cabinets and even a hidden outlet for the phone are additional features that provide both form and function.

The process wasn't always easy, the Kubs concede. "We went through 13 designs," Andre Kub said. "We had the basic first plan but then had to make a lot of refinements."

But the Kubs couldn't be more pleased with the final outcome. "It used to be a very narrow space," Alice Kub said. "If you opened the refrigerator, no one could walk by."

"It looks like the house it's supposed to look like," added Andre Kub. "It goes better with the rest of the house, it's more open, flows better and feels really natural." ♦

Jennifer Gangloff works for MayoClinic.com and is a freelance writer and editor.

Tom Gommels of Master Builders with Andre and Alice Kub.



Your Home...A Work of Art

The 28th Annual Rochester Area Builders Home Show is February 2 (3 – 8 p.m.), 3 (9 a.m. – 7 p.m.) and 4 (10 a.m. – 3 p.m.) at the Mayo Civic Center. It features more than 200 exhibitors, a garden area with a pondless waterfall and the famous Wrong Way House. Seminars include:

Friday, February 2

- 4 p.m. Making a Splash: Add water to your garden
- 5 p.m. What's the lineup for the replacement market?
- 6 p.m. Remodeling and its impact on the home's value

Saturday, February 3

- 9:30 a.m. Color as an architectural tool
- 10:30 a.m. Working with a CKD. What?
- 11:30 a.m. Construction financing
- 12:30 p.m. Making your bathroom into a haven
- 1:30 p.m. Design of your home, from the inside out
- 2:30 p.m. Under one roof
- 3:30 p.m. Remodeling ... the right way
- 4:30 p.m. Kitchens 101

Sunday, February 4

- 11 a.m. Lighting today's busier kitchens
- 12 p.m. Landscaping 101
- 1 p.m. Green Design

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