

LEAN CUISINE

Kitchen renovation achieved without burning the bank account

BY JULIE GEDEON

PHOTOGRAPHY: LARRY ARNAL

STYLING: NATHALIE TREMBLAY



KITCHENS CAN BE RENOVATED ON A BUDGET without compromising on appeal or quality. Nathalie Tremblay, the award-winning designer/co-owner of Atelier Cachet, says it's about knowing where to keep costs reasonable and where to splurge.

She recently designed a kitchen as part of a house flip in Don Mills that required gutting a 1950s bungalow. Tremblay and her husband/business partner, Dave Nicholas, opted to keep

the home's original footprint. "We doubled the kitchen space to 300 square feet by knocking down the wall that had separated the dining room from the living area," Tremblay says. "Any bigger and we'd be encroaching on other living spaces – something I see a lot these days with the desire for huge kitchens."

Switching the kitchen and dining locations enabled her to open up the kitchen to the living room to create a seemingly larger space. 🐾

The mosaic marble tiles on the fireplace wall are identical to the ones used on the kitchen backsplash but they're installed vertically instead of horizontally. They connect the spaces, but are distinctive. Customized oak frames in the dining area's wall cut-outs match the white oak flooring and create a practical but unique feature in which to store wine.

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Tremblay dispensed with the traditional over-the-sink window, opting instead for a deep trough sink and high-arc faucet in the island, so anyone at the sink looks into the living room and through its expansive windows. “I chose low-backed stools for the breakfast bar to avoid blocking the view,” she explains. “I usually design custom stools, but picked up these at Home Outfitters in time for the open house.”

Natural light streams into the kitchen and dining area through Panoramic Doors overlooking the backyard. “The doors were a bit more expensive but I love the way they slide completely to one side when you want them open,” Tremblay says.

She also splurged on sawn white oak flooring. “The wide planks add a rustic quality throughout the home and can take a beating,” she says. “When you’re decorating for a global appeal, it’s important for a contemporary look to have the warmth that nice wood adds.”



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By knocking down a dividing wall, the Atelier Cachet team was able to open the kitchen space and make it part of the home's entertainment hub. It boasts great views of the outdoors from the sink.





The rift-cut oak of the dark cabinetry and breakfast bar have the same effect and they contrast nicely with the white MDF panels. The custom-built cabinets make use of every bit of space to provide extensive storage, but Tremblay went for flat-panelled doors that would appeal to more buyers and cost less.

She designed the canopy of vertical rift-cut oak panels around the stove hood to draw the gaze upward to where the ceiling has been pitched to follow the roofline.

Identical mosaic marble tiles grace the backsplash and living room's fireplace wall, except that one set is installed vertically and the other horizontally. "I wanted to connect the spaces while still differentiating them," Tremblay explains.

While most of the lighting is recessed to keep the home as open and airy as possible, Tremblay did indulge in a necessary "bit of glam" with elaborate kitchen and dining room light fixtures. Her renewed house was sold within a week. ☛

Panoramic Doors invite ample natural light into the home from the backyard. The high-pitched ceiling is seen above the wall clock.

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