

COOKING with CHARACTER

A blend of traditional, contemporary and vintage touches, create a personality-packed kitchen



Nothing beats a good kitchen renovation. Especially one that transforms the way you use your home. This personality-packed kitchen makes a statement and yet provides much needed functionality for a young family.

When we were approached to renovate and design the main floor of this Riverdale family home in Toronto's East end, the couple was pregnant with their second child. This resulted in a tight timeline to make a major transformation. The family had lived in the home for three years before they decided to make some big changes, and knew exactly what they wanted as a result. A growing young family, with no plans to move in the near future, they needed an updated space and an open-concept kitchen for cooking and entertaining.



EXPANDING ON THE PAST

The home is a semi-detached Victorian with great historic features and good bones. Its '90s-style kitchen had crumbling maple cabinets, terracotta floors and oodles of wasted space. It even featured a terracotta-tiled countertop! The busy couple wanted a more functional, open-concept kitchen, suitable for raising their children and entertaining friends. Space planning was key to creating a functional layout. By tearing down the wall between the kitchen and dining area, we were able to create the large open space that the family desired. After assessing all our layout options, we decided on a peninsula versus an island. This created a U-shaped kitchen where the cook of the family (in this case, the husband) could slave away without interference by dinner guests... or little feet!

UNCOVERING SPACE AND STORAGE

The current pantry was previously a lonely, empty wall with nothing but a small table leaning up against it and a pile of shoes. During construction we discovered there was space between the exterior wall and interior framing, so we moved some ductwork and gained almost a foot of extra space. This allowed us to make the kitchen bigger and provided space for the custom pantry with lots of storage. The full-height cabinets house a broom closet, pull-out shelves, cupboards for small appliances, and a nook for coats and shoes. Since the family has laneway parking and generally enters the house through the back door, the mini-mudroom was a must.



CHARACTER BUILDING

In addition to being extremely functional, we wanted the space to make a statement, while still being consistent with the character of the home. We chose a mix of traditional and contemporary elements, vintage touches and pops of colour to create an inviting and unique space. The rich blue cabinetry adds colour and depth, while the mosaic marble backsplash adds luxurious texture and interest. It also hides any water splatters or mess. The marble ties in seamlessly with the sleek white quartz countertops and Silgranit white sink. Hits of yellow and brass establish the fun and polished esthetic.

Vintage details help this new kitchen blend effortlessly into its surroundings. The schoolhouse-style pendants and handmade wood shelves add an old-world feel. While the detailing on the walnut stools also has a trendy yet timeless appeal. The shelves and bench were handmade by the homeowner's mother, and are a perfect personal touch.

COLOUR STATEMENT

Pops of yellow make a bold statement against the blue cabinets. The Roman shade adds colour and texture, and complements the custom yellow leather stools. A lot of time was spent searching for the perfect counter stools. The original design had wooden stools that we ordered and ended up returning because they didn't make the right statement. Sometimes you have to be fluid with design and recognize when something just isn't quite right. When we couldn't find the perfect stool, I decided to design a custom one. They ended up being the showstoppers and the proverbial icing on the cake. The stools tie all the design elements together.

The end result is a personality-packed kitchen full of all the modern amenities and conveniences of modern family life. ♦

PAINT PICKS



Cloud White
OC-130,
Benjamin Moore



Marilyn's Dress
2125-60,
Benjamin Moore



Newburyport
Blue HC-155,
Benjamin Moore



SOURCES

DESIGN, Rebecca Hay Designs, rebeccahaydesigns.com **CONTRACTING**, TriMatrix Construction **WALL PAINT** Benjamin Moore 2125-60 Marilyn's Dress **CABINETRY PAINT**, HC-155 Newburyport Blue & CC-40 Cloud White **COUNTERTOPS**, Caesarstone Canada **BACKSPASH TILES**, Marble Granite Depot **REFRIGERATOR**, Oven, Range, Jenn-Air **DISHWASHER**, Whirlpool **FAUCET**, Delta **STOOL FABRIC**, Designer Fabrics **CUSTOM STOOLS**, Rebecca Hay Designs **ROMAN SHADE**, Tonic Living **PENDANT LIGHTS**, The Door Store **CABINETRY HARDWARE**, Upper Canada

Designer Rebecca Hay, Principal Designer of Rebecca Hay Designs Inc., is a Toronto-based boutique design firm offering complete design & renovation services for residential, commercial and vacation properties for over a decade. Known and celebrated for her design work and appearances on various acclaimed HGTV shows, Rebecca and her team design classic, livable spaces that reflect the homeowner's personality. Servicing clientele throughout Toronto, the GTA and Canada. rebeccahaydesigns.com

