



At the breakfast nook, a single chair with a distinctive silhouette immediately catches the eye as it keeps company with a classic banquette. "We chose this chair because its asymmetric profile adds visual interest to the more traditional style of the kitchen," says designer Leigh Misso, owner of River Brook Design & Construction.

Sunny Outlook

A 1960s kitchen is brought well into this century with a fresh and fun transitional makeover that blends contemporary conveniences with timeless touches.

When Amanda and Luke Lanier purchased their charming midcentury cottage a few years ago, they knew the kitchen, original to the home, was a project they would have to tackle. Anticipating the needs of their growing family, the couple teamed up with River Brook Design & Construction to transform the dated space into an open, airy, and inviting kitchen built for family life and hosting in style.

"The kitchen was dark, closed off, and not very functional," Amanda says. "With the original layout, only one person could be in the kitchen at a time.

When designing our new kitchen, we wanted it to be bright, functional, and more family friendly."

They began with the floor plan, opening it up a bit more to the living room and adjacent back porch to make the kitchen feel larger and achieve a better flow for entertaining while also replacing the original laminate floors with hardwood. From there, River Brook worked with the existing window placement and reconfigured the space to include the Laniers' top wish-list items.

"Our goal in this renovation was to give the family an island with counter seating, a built-in pantry area,



BEFORE

Amanda calls the new kitchen design a “game changer” after enduring the dark, tight quarters and unreliable appliances of the old space. “It’s so much more functional and makes our day-to-day so much easier, especially with a new baby,” she says of the addition to the family that factored into their plans. “We love the open feel, the brightness, the storage, and the fun pops of blue in the fabrics.”

it becoming too busy with the help of a peaceful color scheme that utilizes texture and subtle patterns for interest. A white paint color with a blue-gray tint and sky-hued Roman shades bearing a tropical plant print echoed in pillows coalesce with bamboo-motif barstools and an unexpected asymmetrical woven chair.

“The client wanted a more neutral color palette on the cabinetry and was open to adding color and texture in the upholstery and window treatments,” Leigh says. “Paneled appliances are integrated into the cabinetry for an uncluttered perimeter. A colorful patterned Roman shade adds dimension.”

And while these updates produce a fresh, contemporary feel, enduring elements at the heart of the design instill lasting appeal. “We always recommend our clients use honest, natural materials that will stand the test of time—materials that will [develop] patina with the home and look even better 10 years from now,” Leigh says, referencing inclusions like the Shadow Storm marble countertops that continue into a full slab backsplash, polished nickel plumbing fixtures, and unlacquered brass hardware. “We live our lives more casually these days, and mixing up traditional elements with modern comforts helps make a space feel more cohesive and inviting.”

TEXT BY ELIZABETH CZAPSKI
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAC JAMIESON
STYLING BY MARY BETH JONES



With walls and cabinetry painted Cloud Cover by Benjamin Moore and surfaces made from sleek Shadow Storm marble all contributing to a crisp, clean backdrop, color is carefully injected in thoughtful textiles and artwork bearing similar shades of soft, soothing blue that further the coastal inclination of the kitchen. Schumacher pillow covers depict florals and stripes that harmonize with the patterns on fabrics above. “Over the banquette, we had a custom pleated shade made that coordinates with the other banquette upholstery,” Leigh says of the finishing touches they included.

panel-ready appliances, and an attractive range elevation,” says designer Leigh Misso, owner of River Brook. “They also really liked the idea of a breakfast nook for casual eating or for them to sit and work from. This gave them a functional kitchen space with ample storage. When it comes to designing our clients’ kitchens, the most important thing to keep in mind is function, and that’s what we did here.”

The resulting ambience is warm and welcoming with a classic foundation and organic accents that lean into a coastal aesthetic. “The overall look of this kitchen is traditional and timeless with a slight coastal feel,” Leigh says. “I would say the number one element of transitional coastal style is simple, clean lines.”

With the idea of this crisp simplicity in mind, the team was able to make the most of the small space without



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