



A *Refined* POINT OF VIEW



LEFT When the wall between the kitchen and living area was removed, detailed planning was required to run all of the utilities from above. Building a soffit artfully hides the technical aspects of the utilities while also creating a graceful architectural element.

RIGHT To create this open floor plan, a wall was removed between the living room and kitchen, windows were added to the front of the home, and more windows and sliding glass doors capture 360-degree views.

A kitchen design caters to well-traveled clients and cosmopolitan tastes

By Erinn Loucks



“The live-edge table adds soul – and function. The space is mid-century, but the clean lines and black-framed, industrial windows keep it feeling crisp.”
–Jonathan Adler



S

ET AMONG GREEN HILLS IN ENCINITAS, CALIF., the home of a diplomat’s daughter and her French husband had lovely surroundings but a less-than-ideal interior. When Sol Quintana Wagoner, senior interior designer at San Diego, Calif.-based Jackson Design and Remodeling stepped in, it was obvious to her that the kitchen had some dramatic changes to undergo.

“Our clients are a couple with an appreciation for European aesthetics,” said Wagoner, explaining that in contrast to the open, minimalistic feel of European designs, the home was cramped, separated and outdated. “It was important to them that their kitchen expressed a refined, artistic point of view reflective of their cosmopolitan lifestyle. They wanted to explore a mix of modern, mid-century, rustic and eclectic themes.”



“Hanging pendants at varying heights breaks up a long, linear space.”

TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

According to the designer, the biggest challenge in converting the home to a modern haven was transforming the dark and cluttered layout into one expansive space with a connection to the surroundings.

“To accomplish this, we removed walls, doors, windows and a fireplace and strategically added tall, rectangular windows to the perimeter, windows above the cooktop and large glass doors to dramatically increase natural light,” said Wagoner, adding that this open floor plan was inspired by the openness of mid-century modern layouts.

When the wall between the kitchen and living room was taken out, the design team had to carefully run all of the utilities from above. An artfully built soffit hid the utility space while creating an interesting architectural element, but since an important wall was removed, an existing ceiling beam had to stay. The solution to the one exposed beam in the soffit space was to repeat a series of dark beams on the white ceiling for symmetry and rhythm.

Below, the outline of the flooring subtly coincides with the outline of the soffit. The floor directly underneath the soffit is now concrete-look porcelain, with the home’s original hardwood lining the outside. This helps retain visual unity with the rest of the home.



“Who doesn’t want an iconic lounge chair in their kitchen?”



CREATING VISUAL INTEREST

ABOVE Several types of dark brown textures, such as the top thermofused, or textured melamine doors, are contrasted with the glossy sheen of the bottom white cabinetry and countertops.

LEFT The pantry door was custom made from three sliding panels, with a centerpiece of rustic slate-looking material framed by two panels of pure white glass. Behind the sliding doors lies a full-sized pantry, complete with small appliances, wine storage, open shelving and a second sink.

To create the diverse and eclectic look the clients wanted, Wagoner used materials with different volumes, textures and geometric compositions, along with contrasting dark brown and white colors.

“The overall concept for the space was to create a mid-century modern-inspired design with rustic elements,” she said. “We wanted a space that looked truly artistic.”

Several rustic textures, like the wood-grain look of the top thermofused melamine cabinets, juxtapose with the glossy white bottom cabinetry and countertops. Throughout the kitchen, rectangles of open shelving and closed cabinetry make up the visual duality the designer wanted to achieve.

Additional mid-century modern references include custom tiles to the right of the cooktop, which are inscribed with square, overlay shapes, as well as glossy, thin ceramic tiles on the side of the island.

AN ISLAND OF CONTRASTING ELEMENTS

Even though the perimeter cabinets are a dramatic play on texture, the center island is the focal point of the space. This 16-ft.-long piece has a multipurpose design, with one end containing a dishwasher, sink and extra storage space. Topped with a white quartz countertop, this part of the island is ideal for food prep.

The other end of the island started with two pieces of wood the clients found at a local shop. Working in AutoCad, the design team laid out a template that combined both pieces, and they worked with the shop carpenter to stabilize the pieces with metal. An intentional hole was left for the clients' dog, Leo, to join in.

"The handmade live-edge rosewood table was crafted with meticulous detail from the inspirational piece the clients discovered," said Wagoner. "We matched wood grains, built iron legs and added a bronze support piece to make this one-of-a-kind element."

The wall on this side of the island was built to perfectly match the width of the designer tiles on the side facing the table, continuing the symmetry and harmony in the space and highlighting the wooden seating area.



THE HIDDEN PANTRY

As evidenced by the expansive island, the clients love to entertain. In the previous space, a closet in the dining room served as a makeshift pantry, which was frustrating for the home cooks.

"The wife enjoys cooking fresh, organic meals for family and friends, which required significant storage and organization," said Wagoner. "The couple wanted to accommodate this lifestyle while keeping the main kitchen tidy, especially when entertaining."

The solution was a large walk-in pantry, complete with wine storage, open shelving, a second sink and small appliances. To create a sense of artistry, the pantry door was custom made with three sliding panels. These include a centerpiece of a rustic slate-looking material framed by two panels of white glass. This keeps the rest of the kitchen streamlined and clutter-free while allowing the clients to prepare meals, store ingredients and entertain with ease in a setting open to the outdoors.

"My favorite part of this project is the way it feels," said Wagoner. "The home is now very much connected to the clients' beautiful natural surroundings, and the new space feels as if it has always been a part of the home. The design is unified and organic, while also being visually stimulating with an elegant sense of calm and order."

SOURCES

DESIGNER: Sol Quintana Wagoner, Jackson Design and Remodeling
PHOTOGRAPHER: Jackson Design and Remodeling

BACKSPLASH TILE: Modcraft; **CABINETRY:** DeWils Custom Cabinetry; **COOKTOP:** Wolf; **COUNTERTOP (ISLAND):** Caesarstone 5000 London Grey Quartz; **COUNTERTOP (PERIMETER):** Silestone White Zeus Extreme Quartz; **DISHWASHER:** Bosch; **FLOOR TILE:** Contemporanea Piombo; **HOOD:** Best; **ISLAND TILE:** Ann Sacks; **MAIN FAUCET:** Kohler; **MAIN SINK:** Kohler; **OVEN:** Wolf; **PANTRY DOOR INSERT:** Neolith; **PREP FAUCET:** Kohler; **PREP SINK:** Blanco; **REFRIGERATOR:** Sub-Zero; **STEAM OVEN:** Wolf; **TABLE TOP:** Custom Rosewood Live Edge; **WINE COOLER:** U-Line



LEFT From left to right: Leo (dog), Marisela Contreras (assistant designer), Sally Pla (homeowner), Sol Quintana Wagoner (senior designer) and Karina Kmiotek-Ally (assistant designer)