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# REMODELING



A family room and kitchen undergo a modern make-over that proves neutrals needn't be boring

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Give your home a new look without the major overhaul

PHOTOS BY TONY VALAINIS





AFTER

# MODERN UPDATE

A Fishers family room and kitchen receive a fresh look with chic neutral colors and sleek features

BY LORI D. ROBERTS

The house was almost perfect for the recent East Coast transplants. The Hamilton Proper neighborhood in Fishers offered a pool and a golf course. But the kitchen didn't suit their tastes. The space had been designed with traditional stained cabinetry and ornate columns, and the adjacent family room followed suit with heavy white shelving and woodwork.

The owners decided the rest of the home was worth the investment in a new kitchen. The wife liked light colors and uncluttered surfaces, but she didn't have any specific plans when she sought the help of Kitchens By Design. Kristin Okeley, the company's owner and lead designer, and Lisa Stites, vice president, senior designer, and general contractor, proved that their talents could go beyond the kitchen and into renovations and design insight throughout the home. The company also did general contracting on the entire project from start to finish.

"We went to her house," Stites recalls, "and it was definitely not her taste in the least bit. She wanted it to look formal but transitional and clean."

## THE OVERHAUL

The team worked its magic, removing arches and columns and replacing them with clean lines and unfettered designs. Bulky cabinetry was torn out. The range hood, with its faux painted exterior, didn't make the cut, and neither did the family room's traditional fireplace,



The original built-in shelving and cabinets overwhelmed one of the family-room walls. Now, a limestone fireplace surround and elegant, modern accessories fill the space.

topped with a mantle and flanked by a built-in TV space on the left and shelves on the right.

Dated pieces made way for timeless features, as smooth, sleek, and sophisticated elements redefined the kitchen and family room. Walls were refreshed with stylish gray, white, and taupe hues.

As a mom of two growing boys, the homeowner needed a functional, efficient

kitchen with ample room for storing food and seating extra youngsters who might show up on any given day. Okeley and Stites responded with a layout that works around a dominant middle island, which sets the character for the kitchen with its dramatic pattern and glossy surface.

The charcoal-painted island is topped with Bianco Romano Panna granite from Santarossa Mosaic & Tile. Two slabs





The large center island anchors the kitchen, which now features crisp white cabinetry and a rich, dark chocolate-stained hardwood floor.

were needed to cover the island, and a custom design by Okeley, in which she used a center square surrounded by four triangular pieces, camouflaged the seams. Lantern-like fixtures by Arteriors provide ample overhead lighting.

“We did the island in a darker finish and kept the perimeter light, adding some stainless accents,” Stites says.

Fabric poufs, custom made by Kitchens By Design, sit ready for a quick morning meal or a spot to enjoy a cup of coffee and read the newspaper. Additional seating is provided in the form of a one-of-a-kind banquette, also a Kitchens By Design creation, placed against a curved wall. Originally, a three-sided niche featured built-in cabinetry that sat like a traditional dining-room hutch. Once the cabinetry was taken out, the team decided that a curved wall would be a perfect way to accommodate the unique piece of furniture.

“We didn’t want to put cabinetry back there,” Stites says. “We basically had the bench custom made and built the wall around it.”

A 48-inch Thermador range, which features a handy pot filler, is accentuated with a modern, metal-trimmed white range hood custom designed and built by Kitchens By Design. Indianapolis-based Specialty Stainless added the metal accents. The team installed traditional white subway tiles from ProSource to give the backsplash a classic, clean look that never goes out of style.

White is certainly a dominant color in the kitchen. White cabinets—some solid, some glass-paneled—by Custom Cupboards line the perimeter and cover the refrigerator. The taupe-gray walls are highlighted with bright-white trim. Yet the kitchen itself never looks sterile, thanks to contrasts like the island and the rich engineered-oak floor finished in a dark-chocolate stain.

#### UNIFIED DESIGN

That color scheme repeats itself in the family room, a spacious retreat with a wall of windows overlooking the pool area and golf course. The new fireplace stands as a lustrous centerpiece.







Instead of traditional wood or brick work, Okeley and Stites brought in Gibraltar limestone cut into tiles by Santarossa. The floor-to-ceiling fireplace features a bump-out step at the bottom and a niche up top for a flat-screen television. The walls are the kitchen's taupe-gray, a soft hue with just enough warmth, and white trim work adds dramatic contrast. The sconces from Hudson Valley Lighting are the same style as those used over the banquette and allow the two areas to flow seamlessly.

Mirrored chests and shiny accessories on either side of the fireplace reflect their surroundings and add a chic and sophisticated touch.

The kitchen's dark hardwood floors extend into the family room and are



Cabinetry was removed to make way for this curved wall and banquette.

covered by a gray area rug, setting the tone for the furnishings. Here, the homeowner chose a large, comfortable cream-colored sectional that sets off a circular black ottoman. Beyond the sitting area, a dark, round dining table is accented with light-colored chairs.

The success of the project can best be summed up by its daily use. The boys have their bedrooms, Mom and Dad have a formal living room, and the basement has a full theater room—but those spaces don't quite compare to the family favorite.

"We're always in the kitchen," says the satisfied homeowner. ●

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