

Showpiece Blends Contemporary with Traditional

By Kim Berndtson

GLEN ELLYN, IL — Most remodeling jobs have at least one especially challenging hurdle to jump over. For Gail Drury, CMKBD, and president of Drury Design in Glen Ellyn, IL, the biggest challenge of a recent kitchen remodel was the oak flooring and matching casings.

“The original kitchen was all oak – everywhere,” she says. “Cabinets, flooring – everything was the same color. The room was extremely dated, and there was a large hood in the middle of the room that blocked the view.”

While the design firm was allowed to remove the hood and replace the cabinetry that blended monochromatically with the floor, the hardwood under foot and in the



Photo: Eric Hausman

Rather than match the flooring, the Drury Design team contrasted the oak with espresso-colored cabinetry.



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Photo: Eric Hausman

casings needed to stay. So did the window over the sink. None of the entrances could be changed, either.

“The basic footprint of the room needed to stay the same,” she reports. “And, we needed to create table-like seating for five at an island that would be conducive for conversation and TV viewing.”

CREATING A MODERN SHOWPIECE

Armed with her design challenges, Drury and her team, along with interior designer Ginny Blasco, principal of Ginny Blasco Design Studio, in Chicago, IL, set out to turn the dated space into a modern showpiece. It needed to reflect the client’s desire for a contemporary kitchen with a traditional flair that blended with various styles used throughout the rest of the home.

The end result was an award-winning kitchen that won first place in Grabill Cabinets’ 2010 Home Collections Design Competition for the transitional category.

Rather than try to match the flooring, Drury choose to meet the

The media area acts as a visual break between the kitchen and the wet bar. Tall cabinetry, painted in a high-gloss green hue, flanks each side of the TV.

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Project Highlights

- Drury Design, Glen Ellyn, IL, worked with Ginny Blasco Design Studio in Chicago to turn a monochromatic kitchen with oak cabinets, casing and flooring into a modern showpiece that reflected the client's desire for a contemporary kitchen with a traditional flair that blended various styles used throughout the rest of the home.
- Design challenges in the space included the oak flooring and casings, as well as the large window above the kitchen sink, which could not be changed.
- Design solutions included Grabill cabinetry crafted from quarter sawn oak and stained in an Abby brown finish. To add contrast and move attention away from the casing and flooring finishes, designers added accent cabinetry painted in a custom high-gloss, soft green hue.
- Focal points of the room include the custom-designed mantle hood set off by backsplash tile that was custom cut from a single slab of marble. Pewter inlays in the island and bar as well as pewter brackets that support the bar top tie into other metals used in the home.
- High-end appliances include a Wolf microwave, range top and double oven; Sub-Zero wine cooler and under-the-counter refrigerator; Miele refrigerator/freezer and dishwasher; Thermador warming drawer; Blanco sinks and Kohler faucets.
- The end result is an award-winning kitchen that won first place in Grabill Cabinets' 2010 Home Collections Design Competition for the transitional category.

challenge head on by contrasting the relatively light-colored flooring and casings with dark-colored Grabill cabinetry crafted from quarter-sawn oak stained in an Abby brown finish.

The espresso-colored stain is used throughout the kitchen, including on floor-to-ceiling cabinets that house a Wolf double oven and 3"-thick hollow core shelves that support the TV and serve as a way to

contain wiring for the lighting.

Flanking the television on each side is tall cabinetry painted in a contrasting high-gloss soft green hue. One side contains a Miele refrigerator/freezer, while the other houses the pantry.

This area acts as a visual break between the kitchen and the adjoining wet bar, which features the same rich-colored cabinetry as well as a

Sub-Zero wine cooler and Blanco stainless sink highlighted with a Kohler faucet in a polished nickel finish.

While the dark-stained wood provides a hint of traditionalism, it is set off with the accent cabinetry sheathed in the high-gloss paint that speaks to the modern touches of the space. "The color was painstakingly selected to

The artful use of pewter ties the kitchen to other rooms in the home. Inlays in the island feature a hammered texture and satin border.



Photo: Eric Hausman

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blend with the existing materials in the house as well as soften the existing oak floor," she explains. "These splashes of color were strategically placed as accents in certain areas."

KEY ELEMENTS

A focal point of the room is the cooking center, which features a custom-designed mantle hood above a stainless Wolf range. It is offset with backsplash tile custom cut from a single slab of marble to create a one-of-a-kind look.

"The hood is a masterpiece, and is filled with accessible storage," says Drury, adding that its two legs hide pull-out spice racks. The upper section features touch latch doors that house infrequently used items.

Another key element of the space is the artful use of pewter, which is



Photo: Eric Hausman

Espresso-colored Grabill cabinetry provides a hint of traditionalism in the bar. Pewter inlays and support brackets for the bar top add interest.

included in inlays in the corners of the island and bar as well as in the brackets used to support the bar top.

Each piece was custom crafted to tie into other metals used in the home. For the island, Grabill routed

out a 3/8"-deep area to accept the inlays – which feature a hammered texture and satin border – and frame them like pieces of art. In the bar area, the hammered texture is repeated and an 'x' detail is added for interest. "The curved metal in the bar brackets softens the otherwise hard lines," Drury adds.

Overall, material and color selections were chosen to create a one-of-a-kind look. "The client was not looking for a cookie-cutter kitchen," says Drury. "The goal was to create an eclectic mix of different materials. The end result is a beautiful kitchen with a diverse mix of materials with a touch of the Beaux-Arts design accented by details that, while not obvious at first glance, unfold as you walk through the space."

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