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BEFORE & AFTER

# Perfecting the Puzzle

With space at a premium, a Little Rock kitchen is transformed to **get the most out of every inch while infusing style**



WRITER TIFFANY ADAMS PHOTOGRAPHER RETT PEEK

Having lived in her home since the late '90s, Anne Mourning felt it was time to update its cozy, galley-style kitchen. She looked to Little Rock firm Yearly Lindsey Architects to help her reimagine its design and was introduced to the late Carolyn Lindsey Polk, a beloved local architect and co-owner of the firm, and interior designer Brittany Nixon Brun of Brittany Nixon Creative. "I just fell in love with both of them," Anne says. "I considered myself so lucky to have happened upon these two intelligent women."

However, she wasn't immediately convinced their design would work. "When Carolyn came back with the plans, I was a non-believer," Anne says. "I just thought, *This is never going to happen in my kitchen. There's just no room and no way.*" But thanks to thoughtful space planning and careful consideration of details, it was possible. "Carolyn was absolutely wonderful and kept it moving forward. If I texted her, she would be here in five minutes to talk through what should happen with the contractor," Anne says.

Several decisions were integral to bringing the space to life, including trading what Anne calls a "giant" refrigerator for a counter-depth model, opting for a bistro-size table and chairs, and taking the cabinets all the way to the ceiling to maximize storage. Situating the key components around the perimeter also allowed space in the center for a built-in island to replace a furniture piece. Additionally, the team enclosed an underused covered porch to create circulation through the kitchen and back into the adjoining dining room. "That changed everything because I now have more than one way in and out of the kitchen; it's no longer a dead end," Anne says.

Focusing on the style, Brittany streamlined the space with neutral hues and added interest through materials, including the marble backsplash, window treatment fabric, and a mix of silver and gold, while also incorporating the hardworking pieces of a kitchen. "You look in magazines for inspiration, but this was all so far over my head. I hadn't looked at ovens or stovetops in years, so I really relied on Brittany," Anne says.



BEFORE



**ON DISPLAY**

The wall where the range was previously became home to a built-in cabinet, which allows Anne to store her collection of china and entertaining wares. The seeded glass door fronts give texture and are more forgiving when it comes to keeping the contents of the piece perfectly organized.



BEFORE

“I just couldn’t believe all of this could happen in this **same amount of space.**”

—Anne Mourning, homeowner

1

**HELLO BIRDIE**

With the help of a friend, Anne picked what she calls the “happy bird” fabric from a number of choices Brittany had selected. “The colors really complement her McCarty pottery and art collection,” Brittany says. “It’s classy without being too modern.”



1

2

**FRESH FAUCET**

“Of all the neat stuff in here, this is my most-favorite thing,” Anne says of the pull-down faucet. “I can have things in my hands and still work with it, and it’s attractive.”



2

3

**GOLDEN TOUCH**

A pair of traditional yet current pendants over the island provide secondary task lighting. “When she entertains or works here in the evening, these act as lamp lighting to cast a really warm, soft glow,” Brittany says.

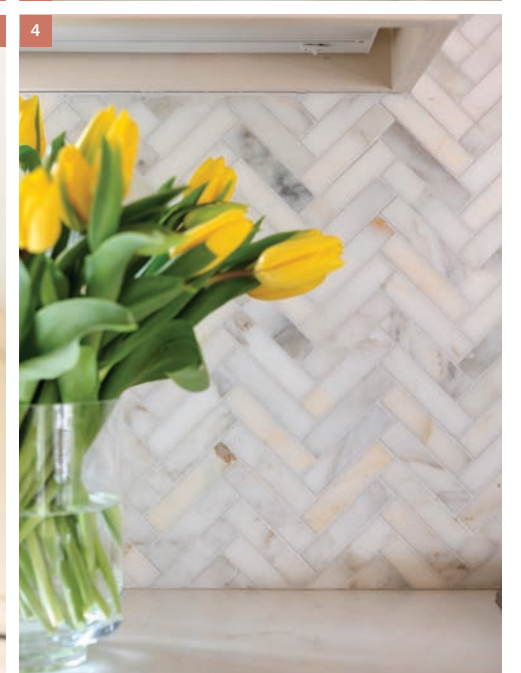


3

4

**NATURAL PATTERN**

Brittany took the marble backsplash tile, which is laid in a herringbone pattern, all the way to the ceiling. The continuation not only provides visual interest but also makes the space appear larger.



4

*Design Resources*

**ARCHITECT** Carolyn Lindsey Polk, AIA, Yeary Lindsey Architects **CONTRACTOR** Bill Sneed, Bill Sneed Construction **KITCHEN DESIGN** Brittany Nixon Brun, Brittany Nixon Creative and Carolyn Lindsey Polk, AIA, Yeary Lindsey Architects **ACCESSORIES, FABRICS, AND LIGHTING** Brittany Nixon Creative **APPLIANCES** Metro Appliances & More **CABINETRY AND MILLWORK** Custom Cabinet Creations **COUNTERTOPS AND TILE** Inside Effects **GLASS** Soos Stained Glass **PAINT** Sherwin-Williams **PAINTING** Kevin Sisson **RUGS** Hadidi Oriental Rug Gallery **WINDOWS** Pella **WINDOW COVERINGS** Brittany Nixon Creative and Mountjoy’s Custom Draperies