



A kitchen that's both fresh and traditional



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL J LEE

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By **Jaci Conry** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT JANUARY 22, 2016

Ellen and Derek van Bever's kitchen overlooked a lovely three-season porch. "But we couldn't get to it," explains Ellen van Bever. The porch was accessed through the dining room of their 1902 Cambridge home. As the couple's three children got older, the van Bevers realized that they needed a larger, more functional kitchen. Since adding on to the footprint wasn't possible, they converted the three-season porch into living space.

"We were able to have more prep space in the kitchen, a place for a bigger table, and a sitting area where the kids hang out," says van Bever. Architect Bill Hubner of Incite Architecture drafted plans for the renovation and S+H Construction's John Murphy and Walter Mayne collaborated to ensure that construction went smoothly.

It was important to the van Bevers that the renovations were in keeping with the original character of the house, a Queen Anne Victorian with Arts & Crafts elements. They also avoided waste wherever possible. "It was important that we reuse as much of the former kitchen as we could," says van Bever, noting that three existing built-in cabinets with leaded glass doors were incorporated into the new design.

A previous renovation had called for ceiling beams to be installed to mask soffits that conceal mechanical equipment, says Walter Mayne. "We created a coffered ceiling treatment as an architectural element to make symmetry."

To make the ceiling even more of a feature, Restoration Hardware pendant lights were installed inside some of the coffers. The lights, says van Bever, "feel transitional but they also look similar to something you might have seen a long time ago."

White walls and cabinetry crafted by Imperial Cabinet & Millwork work as a calming backdrop for an array of colorful artwork and pottery. Counters are topped with honed black granite with grey veining and the backsplash is made of a soft green subway tile that echoes the color scheme throughout the house.

The new island is topped with Quartzite that has the appeal of Carrera marble (without the maintenance) that Ellen van Bever desired. The Simon Pearce blown glass pendants above have special meaning. "I worked there a long time ago," recalls van Bever. "The lights are very classic but they can be contemporary and beautiful. They make a statement in a subtle way."

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