

# GO WITH THE FLOW

BY MELANIE MCGEE BIANCHI  
PHOTO BY DAVID DIETRICH

In what she humorously guesses to be an industry record, Kathryn Long, ASID, of Ambiance Interiors, was able to complete a speedy, studs-up renovation of a North Asheville kitchen. Challenged to transform a tight, dated space into something functional and stylish, she worked with contractor Scott A. Pillar of Empire Building and cabinetmaker Carl Giesenschlag of Wildwood Studios to get it done in ten weeks.

Long is quick to note her collaborators' efficiency and logistical prowess. And Pillar returns the compliment: "It was a smooth project for everyone involved," he says. "The outcome was great, and it was good working with the owners and with Kathryn. She knows what she likes, but is flexible, as well."

Long clarifies that "this is not a huge, open kitchen, as so many new ones are. We had to work in the existing space." The house had been added on to in the early 1980s, when



## RESOURCES

**Interior Designer:** Kathryn Long, ASID, Ambiance Interiors

**Contractor:** Empire Building

**Cabinetry:** Wildwood Studios

**Countertops:** Mountain Marble \*

**Decorative Painting** on ceiling and center island: Lyna Farkas

**Fixtures and Hardware:** Bella Hardware & Bath \*

**Floor Tile:** WNC Ceramic Tile; installed by Maher Brothers Flooring

**Wallcoverings:** Sourced through Ambiance Interiors; installed by Bill Brooks

**Backsplash Tile:** Sourced through Ambiance Interiors, installed by Maher Brothers Flooring

\* Asheville Kitchen & Bath Show, see page 87

Long began working with the clients. However, that addition left the kitchen with only indirect light.

"So it was important to create some contrast," she explains. That happened via light tile floors paired with medium-tone alder cabinets, stacked to the ceiling — and a new, repositioned, light center island with a dark top. The "Bismark Brown" granite countertops from India feature a thick ogee edge, while an intervening

apron sink gleams in white. A sage-and-cream checkered backsplash charmingly anchors the look.

Still, "it was important to keep the mood of the adjoining den, with its rich woods and colors," says Long. "The house style is French Norman, and that has always been considered in every remodel." (For instance, the leafy Zoffany wallcovering in the kitchen and dining room relate well.)

The owner reveals why she and her husband waited to renovate the kitchen last. "I think you have to live in a space for a while to figure out what you really want from it," she says. "I didn't cook a lot when we first moved in. But with a big family, I found myself in the kitchen more and more."

She says she's "very happy" with her new kitchen: the cheerful tile floor, the reoriented island, the appliances that Long made sure worked the best with her client's culinary process. "It's hard to believe the room didn't actually get bigger," says the owner. "It just flows so well."