

Ideas To update Your Kitchen

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living spaces

By: Resident Kathryn Long

Since many houses in the Biltmore Lake neighborhood were built as spec homes, most of us homeowners did not participate in designing our kitchens. Many of the kitchens in custom homes were created about a decade ago. We now spend more time in our kitchens, "the hearth of the home," than ever before, so some updating is certainly appropriate. Here are some ideas from my husband Axel Graumann's and my personalizing our kitchen. Our goals were to create more visual character and better usability.

The basis of a good design was there, but we needed more storage. The center island was too small for the space. In designing a new one, I wanted to create mood and character as well as space. The new design is more "interesting found object/furniture piece" than the original. Alder wood has a lot of character and accepts stain well, hence our choice. Design details were well thought out. We now have storage for frequently used

bowls, baskets, wine and a "bar" cabinet in addition to existing space for pots and pans.

One of our goals was to provide a place at the end of the island for friends to sit on stools and join us in the kitchen, while being out of the way. This was easy to achieve in creating the new island design, because there was a good deal of wasted space in the kitchen. Axel does all the cooking, and he loves our leathered granite countertops. They are much easier to maintain than polished granite. As "cleanup" person, I love the single bowl fireclay sink and bridge style faucet, which is more intuitive to use. We also changed the lighting over the island to larger pendants to improve the scale and proportion of the fixtures to the new larger island. We also took out a poorly-installed wine cooler and replaced it with a bank of drawers that were immediately filled with napkins and place mats.



Before



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The result: a much more workable, user-friendly and beautiful kitchen!

I would like to thank the people and local companies who helped make this life-changing kitchen transformation possible.

Island: Chris Perryman, Goldsplinter Studio, www.goldsplinter.com

Sinks and faucet: Bella Hardware and Bath, www.bellahardwareandbath.com

Countertops: Mountain Marble and Granite, www.mountainmarble.com

Lighting: Lux Lighting, www.lux-lighting.com

Cabinet Update: Asheville Kitchens and Baths, www.ashevillekitchensandbaths.com

Kathryn Long, ASID, grew up in Candler, attended Enka High School, East Carolina University, and the University of Georgia. She opened Ambiance Interiors in 1977, which she and her business partner, Wayne Caldwell (also an Enka graduate) operate at 189 East Chestnut Street, Asheville, www.ambianceasheville.com.



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