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WINDY CITY RENOVATION

A house becomes a home for a family of five with personalized bathrooms and a kitchen for gathering

By Chelsie Butler

When a Chicago couple needed a kitchen and multiple bathroom renovations in their newly purchased home, they turned to Melissa Lewis of Melissa Lewis Interiors. She had worked with them when they built their former house as a transition from the city to the suburbs.

"Luckily for us, with longevity comes an innate sense of trust, and that enabled us to pitch and subsequently execute these big ideas with ease and a whole lot of fun," said Lewis, who took her clients on a visit to the O'Brien Harris Cabinetry showroom, and they knew that was also a great fit for the project.

The main goals for the new kitchen were to make it more functional for their large family and open it up to the rest of the home. They also wanted a kitchen that would accommodate frequent entertaining. For the baths, the dated primary and boy's and girls' spaces needed major facelifts and more personalized storage solutions for a bespoke experience for each family member.

A Place for Day-to-Day & Special Events

To make the kitchen more spacious and inviting for family and guests, Lewis removed a wall between it and the breakfast area. She also framed out an arched opening between the two spaces to achieve symmetry, an important detail of the new design. The color palette – walnut, warm white paint and reeded glass with dark antique details – was chosen for its timelessness and approachability.

The surfaces add much color and contrast to the space, especially the Calacatta Corchia marble countertops that extend as a backsplash on the sink and range walls. The 12-foot-long island countertop is a honed granite that features inverse cove detail, making it appear as if several picture frames are incorporated onto the surface. The warm walnut flooring was added to match that in the rest of the home.

The homeowners wanted to keep the

Left: Two full-height units on either side of the sink are the only upper cabinets in the space. They are adorned with reeded-glass doors and satin-brass cremone bolts.



This newly renovated kitchen designed by Melissa Lewis Interiors was updated with a 12-foot galley island, Calacatta Corchia marble countertops with gray and emerald veining around the perimeter with a full-height backsplash, a second oven and a custom plaster hood. The homeowners chose to keep the existing La Cornue range as a statement piece.



Above: The two sisters share this bathroom with ample storage space for both at the double vanity. The unit features a U-shaped pullout, a bank of center drawers, a tilt-out top drawer for toothbrushes and ponytail holders and porcelain cabinet knobs.

Right: The vanity in the son's bath features furniture-like legs and an integrated stepstool that can be tucked away when not in use. A polished-nickel faucet and hardware, satin-brass, flush-mount sconces; a pivoting vanity mirror; and a marble mosaic floor tile complete the look.

La Cornue statement range from the former kitchen, and Lewis added a second oven. A custom-paneled, full-height refrigerator/freezer, refrigerator drawers and two paneled dishwashers were also included, along with a hand-troweled hood for the ventilation.

Lewis likes to mix metals in her projects, so she chose a polished-nickel faucet with a filtration system and soft-brass sconces. There is a statement pendant with four white shades over the large island, and integrated lighting provides task illumination at the range.

Storage Strategy

The cabinetry in the home was custom built by O'Brien Harris, and it was designed so that every item has a place with its ample tray, canister and spice pullouts; knife block; and drawers for utensils, pots and pans, Tupperware and water bottles. Lewis and Ann Stockard, senior design lead at O'Brien Harris, came up with a storage game plan, completed a first pass of drawings and placed Post-It Notes to detail where everything goes.

The kitchen is lower-cabinet focused to preserve the natural light coming in from the large window behind the sink. The Hyde Park door style features a cove that mimics the scalloped detail at the end of the galley island, which Lewis calls the space's signature detail. The island also houses a microwave, trash pullouts and the additional oven.



The only upper cabinets in the kitchen are on either side of the sink wall, and they feature antique, reeded, mirrored-glass doors to add depth and elegance. Lewis said they were designed with architectural cues from the rest of the home.

"With arched openings clad in walnut trim used throughout the house, these cabinets are a nod to the finishes and details you see repeating in the space in a variety of ways," she added.

Primary Perfect

The goals for the homeowners' bathroom were to invoke a refined, furniture-inspired style and create a calming, uncluttered space. The his-and-hers walnut vanity features an updated bamboo look with raised legs. Hidden outlets in the drawers allow the discreet storage and use of personal appliances. The door and drawer perimeters incorporate a band of molding to coordinate with the bamboo-like legs, and the cabinet hardware and faucets match in a brass finish.

The lighting plan comprises cans and faceted sconces in an octagonal shape on either side of the vintage-style mirrors. Medicine cabinets were not necessary because tall cabinet units on either side of the vanities were already part of the home's existing architecture.

The floor tile is a tumbled Bardiglia marble in shades of navy and light blue that complement the walnut vanity. The countertop was fabricated from honed Calacatta Bluette slabs, which Lewis says dovetails in with the natural stone floors and shower surround.

Outfitting the Childrens' Baths

The couple's kids were also in need of spaces with more personalization to meet their individual needs. A rich blue tone was chosen for the son's vanity, which includes an integrated pull-out stepstool so he can access the mirror and the integrated stone shelf. A drawer toward the bottom of the unit provides additional storage. The blue/gray quartzite countertop features scalloped detail that is also seen in other areas of the home, and the blue shade is also seen in the marble mosaic floor tile. Flush-mount sconces in satin brass complement the cabinet hardware and the overhead light fixture.

The girls' bathroom is shared by two sisters and was designed to be youthful, fun and feminine. A double-sink vanity in forest green features arched details that mimic those in the kitchen, and its dainty feet give the piece a furniture-like feel. The walls are comprised of half-height ceramic tile and a peachy wallpaper with a floral motif. Four sconces with peach canopies flank the two woven wicker mirrors, and a transom window brings in light from the hallway. The Dolomite marble floor tile in a picket mosaic and polished-gold faucets round out the look in the girls' bath.

Overcoming Project Hurdles

According to Lewis, the team had an extremely limited window of time from when they could begin construction and when the family wanted to move into the home. This was even more challenging since they were renovating both the first and second floors – all bathrooms and flooring and the kitchen. Tactical planning was necessary, as well as long-standing relationships with team members and complete transparency with the clients.

"It was a record-time construction project given how much there was to tackle," said Lewis. "It may have not felt like that to the family, but it really was, and they were total champs the whole time." **KBB**



Above: The husband and wife share a double vanity in the primary bath, which was designed with customized storage options for both their needs. The walnut unit features bamboo-inspired legs – a detail that makes it look like a piece of furniture.

SOURCES: DESIGNER: Melissa Lewis, Melissa Lewis Interiors PHOTOGRAPHER: Sarah Crowley KITCHEN: CABINETRY: O'Brien Harris CREMONE BOLTS: tonah Architectural Hardware DISHWASHERS: Bosch FAUCET: Newport Brass HOOD INSERT: Best MICROWAVE & WALL OVENS: Wolf PENDANT: Urban Electric RANGE: La Cornue REFRIGERATION: Thermador SCONCES: Visual Comfort SINK: Kallista PRIMARY BATH: CABINETRY: O'Brien Harris FAUCET & HARDWARE: Waterworks MIRRORS: Mirror Home SCONCES: Linkley Lighting BOY'S BATH: CABINETRY: O'Brien Harris CEILING FIXTURE: Hudson Valley Lighting FAUCET & HARDWARE: Brizo FLOOR TILE: The Fine Line MIRROR: CB2 SCONCES: Visual Comfort SINK: Kohler GIRLS' BATH: CABINETRY: O'Brien Harris FAUCET: Brizo HARDWARE: Emtek MIRROR: Two's Company SCONCES: In Common With WALL TILE: The Fine Line WALLPAPER: Morris & Co.