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Country Home

May 2014

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redos

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porch style

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ideas for
small
spaces

schoolhouse into cool house
at home with designer Thomas O'Brien

before & after

real-life remodeling



timely turnaround Smart design, vintage details, and space-saving features give a cramped kitchen stylish room to spare.

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For 17 years, Janice and Rick Patterson bumped into each other in a dingy room that somehow sufficed as a kitchen. Long and narrow, it was barely big enough for two, says Janice, an interior decorator. Wedged between the dining and living rooms, the space still had 1950s dark paneling and red laminate, an assault on the character of the historic home in Old Chatham, New York. When it was time to tackle the remodeling, the Pattersons collaborated with architect Kate Johns to accomplish three main goals: gain more efficient work space, add light, and modernize the kitchen without making it look brand-new. >



BEFORE



Top: The 1950s kitchen was trapped at the back of the house, allowing barely enough space for Janice Patterson, above, and her husband, Rick, to be in the room at the same time. Right: A three-quarter wall hides food preparation but gives guests in the dining room a view of the cook. Details convey the historic character of the home: beaded-board backsplashes echo the era of the home's first kitchen; the refurbished white pine floor adds warm tones underfoot; and cherry countertops tie into the dark finish of the home's beams.



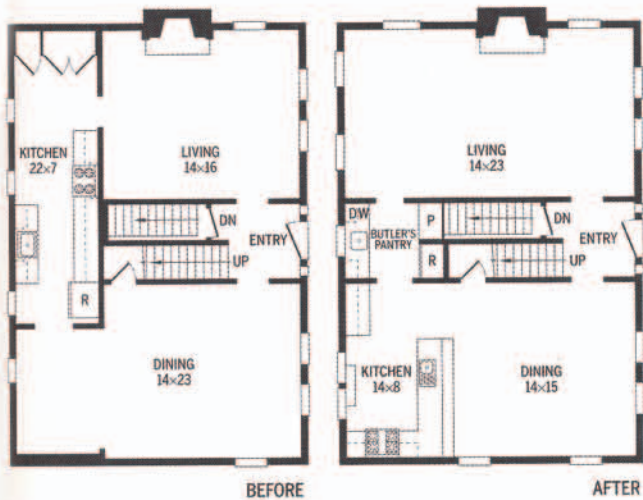
before & after

The plan Built as a cider house in the 1700s, the home was turned into a residence in the early 1800s. "This is a wonderful house," Johns says, "and none of us wanted to do anything to alter it in a negative way." To begin, Johns and the Pattersons studied the layout. The dining and living rooms occupied most of the first floor, with the kitchen squeezed behind the central staircase. For the scale of the house, which measures just 1,500 square feet, the dining room was too large. They decided to borrow a third of the dining room to extend the kitchen, turning the space behind the staircase into a butler's pantry.

The nitty-gritty To open up the kitchen and connect it to the downsized dining room, they designed a 48-inch-high wall that

hides the mess of food preparation but allows guests and cooks to converse. While the kitchen includes a stove and small vegetable sink, the dishwasher, refrigerator, and large sink are all relegated to the butler's pantry, which can be closed off with pocket doors, allowing all the mess of cleanup to be hidden.

The separate kitchen and pantry areas were a smart solution, but their success is measured more by the clever use of every inch within those spaces. The three-quarter-high wall, for instance, is deep enough for dual duty: On the kitchen side, it features pull-out storage; on the dining room side, shelves hold a sound system and CD collection. In the butler's pantry, a large refrigerator was recessed under the staircase. Other space-



Right: The partial wall that divides the kitchen and dining room was designed, in part, to accommodate sound-system components and a collection of CDs. *Far right:* Tucked under the staircase, in an area previously used for a closet, a pro-style refrigerator shares space with built-in recycling bins and pantry storage. *Right bottom:* A stainless-steel counter and sink in the butler's pantry make cleanup easy, as does the two-drawer dishwasher. The window is one of several added in the remodeling to bring more light into the space.



saving features include storage slots for platters next to the stove and open shelves for cookbooks.

Appliances, too, were chosen for efficiency. A narrow range boasts a warming shelf on top for plates and serving pieces. Dishwasher drawers handle small and large loads. And the pro-style refrigerator features a freezer drawer.

Throughout the remodeling, design details were selected to reflect the home's history and balance the modern sheen of the appliances. All of the cabinets are painted, a decision that connects the redo "to the early years of fitted kitchens," Johns says. Janice chose light-colored paint for the cabinets and walls to play off the tones from an Oriental rug in the dining room.

Because the kitchen is now more visible, the Pattersons wanted to provide the best possible view to guests. On the far wall, they decided to forego the look of stock cabinets; instead, a local cabinetmaker built glass-front units that form what looks like a traditional freestanding china hutch.

The wood countertops also are a nod to history: Cherry echoes the rich wood tones of the original ceiling beams and dining room furniture. And the white pine floor adds warmth. "One of the first things we did was rip up the linoleum and uncover the wood," Janice says. "All its sweetness was there."

The result The project turned a sour space into a convenient and attractive area for cooking and dining. Since Rick does most of the cooking these days, he may be the best judge of the change. His favorite feature? "Everything," he says. **CH**

