

One FOR All

THE MARSHALL FAMILY OF PORTLAND, MAINE, CHERISHES THE TOGETHERNESS THEY GAINED AFTER TURNING A COLD, CRAMPED KITCHEN INTO AN INVITING GATHERING SPOT.

Architect and interior designer Linda Banks helped the Marshalls reconfigure the former breakfast area to accommodate a 10-foot window seat facing a flat-screen TV on a swivel arm. A recent high school graduate, John Marshall (right) has spent most every Sunday huddled in this space with friends from his football team, eating nachos and watching TV. "I was always alone in the old kitchen," explains John's mom, Lucy, "so one of my goals was to create a kitchen, like this one, where the rest of the family wanted to congregate."

BY JENNIFER WILKINSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY COLLEEN DUFFLEY

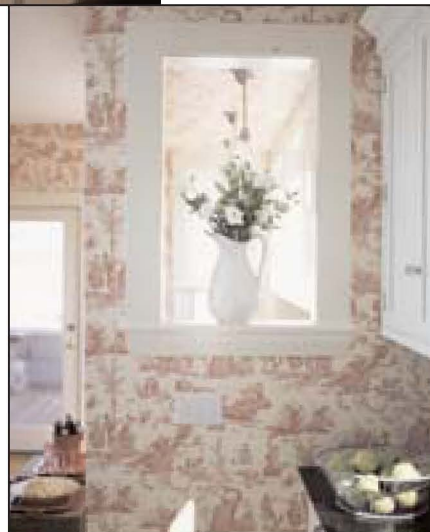


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Dan and Lucy Marshall moved into an elegant 100-year-old Victorian house in Portland, Maine, then managed to live with its sad and sorry kitchen for the next 16 years. Lucy remembers it well: “It was choppy and cramped with wasted space and a weird octagonal island.”

The faults didn’t seem so bleak when the Marshalls just had a couple toddlers running around. But the family has grown and now includes four children—Ann, 20, John, 18, Lucy, 15, and George, 13—plus the family dog, Katie, a Great (big!) Pyrenees. Dan and Lucy realized that with all the kids becoming older and physically larger, the kitchen needed to expand as well. >> on 100

Bumping the sink wall out a mere 4 feet (*top*) dramatically increased Lucy’s elbow room. Beaded board adds character to the angled ceiling. A niche (*right*) in the wall by the window seat area keeps the kitchen airy.





White cabinets, with polished chrome pulls and honed black granite countertops, are warmed by the addition of a mossy green island and a butcher block countertop along the back wall. Two stools provide seating at each end of the island for the Marshalls' four kids.

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Lucy wasn't looking for an architect/interior designer when she bumped into Linda Banks in a nail salon in Portland, but the two hit it off. "I was immediately drawn to Lucy," says Banks. "She's such a hospitable Southern gal." They stayed in touch, and Lucy eventually called Banks about her kitchen.

"I wanted to marry Lucy's sassy Southern style with Dan's Yankee sensibilities while also addressing the needs of growing teens," says Banks. "What made it such a fun project for me is that the Marshalls are a warm, cheerful family. Both parents are very hands-on and the house is always full of family and friends."

The couple's first priorities were to make the space more efficient and private (the original breakfast area had floor-to-ceiling windows, leaving the family feeling exposed to neighbors). Lucy also wanted the space to be warmer, both in temperature and decor. The challenge for Banks was to meet all of their needs while making the new kitchen look like it had always been there. "I wanted to >> on 102

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bring together the graciousness of the rest of the house with the Marshalls' relaxed style," she says.

The first step was to remove a peninsula separating the kitchen and breakfast area, creating one open space. Replacing the octagonal island with a rectangular one, bumping the sink wall out 4 feet, and adding mirrored cabinet doors on the range wall made the kitchen look and feel more spacious and improved traffic flow. Decreasing window size and adding a built-in window seat in the former breakfast area addressed both the privacy issue and the need for a comfortable gathering place for the teens. The 10-foot-long seat serves several functions, acting as a lounging and dining area as well as a spot to put on or take off shoes inside the entry. An electric radiant heat system designed for retrofitting was installed under the kitchen's subfloor to keep the room toasty even on the coldest winter days. >> on 104



Mirrored panels in some of the cabinet doors contribute a feeling of spaciousness and reflect light into the renovated kitchen. Unlike similar glass-front doors, these keep the cabinet's contents (and any messes) out of sight.

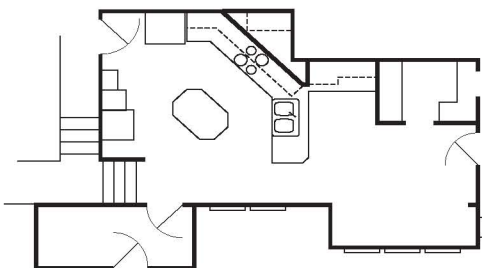
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To warm the look, Lucy relied on her favorite color: red. White-and-red toile wallcovering provides a dynamic background. Traditionally used in sitting rooms or bedrooms, the toile is an unexpected touch on the kitchen walls. The busy pattern isn't overwhelming, however, because it's interrupted by wide swaths of white cabinetry. The wallpaper's somewhat formal feel is balanced by the more casual look of white subway tile on the backsplash and the island's green color and beaded board accents.

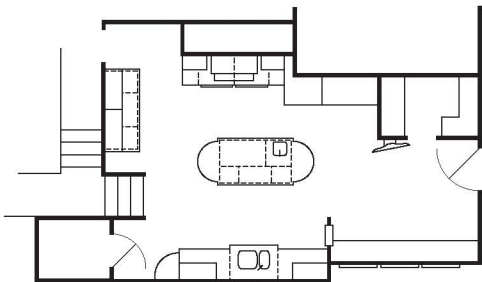
The playful overall color scheme of beige, black, and red, particularly prominent in the seating area, underscores the household's upbeat atmosphere. "For a family that loves being together," says Lucy with a smile, "this kitchen is perfection." 🏡

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BEFORE



AFTER



The Marshalls' house (above) is one of the less-ornate Victorians in their neighborhood. Before the remodel (see plans at left), Lucy described it as "a big Northeastern house with lots of charm and grace in spite of too much wasted space."