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RENOVATIONS FOR TWO

An expanded kitchen with reimagined renovations opens up a world of entertaining for empty nesters.

By **Brenda N. Klug** | Photography by **Arris Photography**

WHEN YOU LIVE IN A HOME FOR A LONG TIME, it can become part of your DNA. For one Fort Collins, Colorado, couple, a 1957 Mid Century Modern home did just that. The couple raised their two children there and now that the kids are adults and have moved out, the couple embraced the opportunity for a fresh start.

TOP: THE SLATS IN THE UPPER CABINETRY ARE A NOD TO MID-CENTURY DESIGN. THESE SLIDING SLAT DOORS OFFER A PLAYFUL TOUCH TO THE KITCHEN AS WELL AS PROVIDING A LITTLE PEEK OF THE DISHWARE INSIDE.

LEFT: TO MAKE THE KITCHEN FEEL EVEN MORE SPACIOUS, FORGE & BOW DECIDED TO VAULT THE CEILINGS. THE CEILING BEAMS ARE MICROLAMS PURCHASED FROM A LOCAL BUILDING SUPPLIER. ANNIE AND THE TEAM CHOSE LIGHT-COLORED WALLS FOR A SPECIFIC REASON: "THE CREAMY WALLS HELP SUPPORT A WELL-LIT, CLEAN AREA," ANNIE SAYS.



LEFT: THE LOWER CABINETS AND ISLAND BASE ARE PAINTED IN SHERWIN-WILLIAMS' SAGE GREEN LIGHT AND PROVIDE A POP OF COLOR. THE CLAY TILES ON THE BACK WALL WERE PLACED IN A HORIZONTAL PATTERN. "THE VEINING OF THE STONE ISLAND WAS ACTUALLY IN THE SAME DIRECTION, SO THEY SORT OF MOVE TOGETHER," ANNIE EXPLAINS.

BELOW: THE RICH WOOD TONE OF THE UPPER SHELVING FEEDS INTO THE MID CENTURY MODERN DESIGN AESTHETIC. ANNIE DESCRIBES HOW THE SLATS MIRROR OTHER PARTS OF THE KITCHEN. "THE RIBBED PATTERN IN THE TILE MATCHES THE SLATTED DETAIL IN THE CABINETS," SHE POINTS OUT.



Instead of downsizing or purchasing a new home, they decided to bring in the talents of Forge & Bow Dwellings to do a complete renovation, including the kitchen. Forge & Bow is a forward-thinking, boutique home-remodeling and custom home-building firm based in Fort Collins.

Annie Obermann, principal for Forge & Bow, describes how this renovation project began: "The couple were very invested in the area and truly had a tucked-away gem, so when it came time to evaluate their empty-nest home, it was an easy decision for them to renovate," she says.

MAKING SPACE

The design goals for the kitchen included functionality and an increased footprint. "The clients have a really healthy lifestyle, so they cook from home a lot. We needed to focus

on function first," Annie explains. She says the previous layout had painted cabinets, black and white tile flooring and very little kitchen workspace. "The food storage was limited to the existing cabinets, countertop space was covered with appliances and daily-use items, and a functional utility flow was lacking," she says.

A large island made of quartz was designed to increase the functionality of the space. "It was important for the couple to be able to prepare food at the same time and converse with guests," she says. This feature has quickly become a favorite for the homeowners.

The kitchen was very cramped and two walls divided the kitchen from the entry and living spaces. A more open concept was achieved by knocking down these walls. The ceilings were vaulted to expand the spacious look and feel.



ABOVE, LEFT: IN ORDER TO BRING NATURAL LIGHT TO THE SPACE, WINDOWS WERE ADDED TO FLANK THE STOVE. "THE BACK RANGE WALL WAS A FOCUS, AND THE WINDOWS BROUGHT IN LIGHT AND ADDED SYMMETRY TO THE SPACE," ANNIE EXPLAINS. DOORS TO THE LEFT AND RIGHT OF THE KITCHEN WERE ALSO ADDED TO AFFORD BETTER ACCESS TO THE BACKYARD.

ABOVE, RIGHT: THE TOP OF THE ISLAND IS CAMBRIA QUARTZ, WHICH ADDS A LIGHTNESS TO BALANCE THE VARIOUS WOOD STAINS AND SATURATED COLORS FOUND THROUGHOUT THE KITCHEN. "IT'S A GREAT SPOT FOR A LITTLE IMPACT," ANNIE SAYS.



MID MOD REDO

"Our clients kept true to mid-century architecture," Annie says. "The final design is traditional to this period." The design team used various tones of wood throughout the space to achieve the mid mod look. The alder wood-wrapped oven hood and the slatted siding door fronts on the cabinetry bring a rich wood texture to the space.

Green cabinets and brown stone tile from Savoy Classic Field Tile support the MCM aesthetic as well. The tile adds a beautiful and interesting texture to the backsplash area. The floors are white oak and they bring in a lightness that balances the other wood tones and saturated colors. The space is warm and cohesive, and the homeowners now have a welcoming, functional kitchen for this new season of life. 🌿

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/MAKE IT LOOK MOD/

Here are some tips from interior designer Annie Obermann of Forge & Bow for achieving an MCM ambience in your kitchen.

- **USE A MIX OF WOOD TONES THROUGHOUT YOUR SPACE.** White oak, alder and various shades of brown wood stains will bring that quintessential mid-century warmth.
- **KEEP THE COLOR PALETTE NEUTRAL.** Annie explains that specific color choices can help you stay true to the mid mod look. "We chose a neutral palette of earthy tones and multiple shades of brown stains," she says. This includes earthy greens and lighter creams for color contrast.
- **STYLE IT SLEEK.** Mid-century design is well known for its sleek lines. Slatted siding front doors on cabinetry are an easy way to achieve the period's aesthetic.
- **TACK UP SOME TILES.** Using brown tiles adds texture and warmth and is keeping with the mid mod vibe. Use tiles as a backsplash or on the walls behind cabinets.