

From Dated to Elegant!

A Cramped Kitchen is Redesigned with Functionality & Creativity



BEFORE: This dated Old Lyme kitchen was in dire need of upgrades and an innovative way to utilize a small space, luckily Amity Construction was there every step of the way!

By **ED MURPHY**

This was a big ... no, make that small ... predicament.

The tiny kitchen in this historic Old Lyme home was cramped, bland and in dire need of storage space. For example, the homeowner was forced to keep her pots and pans in a closet 15 feet down the hall. A portable island on wheels added some functionality, but cut into the space, and the cabinets – a remnant of a remodel years before she purchased the home – were flimsy and dated. Also, the owner is an avid traveler who has a large spice collection from around the world, but no place to store it.

Is that enough of a challenge for you? Well, now figure in that because of the historic nature of the home, the kitchen, which measures a mere 9½ feet long by 8½ feet wide, could not be expanded.

How did Amity Construction & Design handle this dilemma? In a word: Brilliantly.

During the interview process, Jake Rota, Amity's project manager, took note of the kitchen's shortcomings, along with the homeowner's desires. She wanted an infusion of style that would reflect the historic nature of the home, upscale appliances, and storage space. She also requested that a favorite decorative plate be included in the final product.

This was where Amity's design/build process came into play. Combining the creative

elements of design with more than 30 years of construction expertise, Amity produced floor plans and three-dimensional renderings, then reconstructed a room that met those exact specifications.

Rota noticed that while the walls could not go out, he could utilize their nine-foot height by putting a row of custom-built cabinets above the typical upper cabinets. This added row was extended to run on three of the four walls, perfect for seasonal items that would be stored away for long periods of time.

Down below, the number of drawers and their capacities were increased, and he utilized every available inch of space by installing toe-kick drawers at the bottom.

Spice pullouts were installed on each side of the stove, providing plenty of space for the homeowner's extensive collection. A lazy Susan corner cabinet was also used to maximize space.

On the fourth wall, Amity installed a maple butcher-block countertop below the microwave, eliminating the need for the portable island. Recessed lighting above and below the cabinets adds plenty of light in the new kitchen. Top-end appliances, including a Sub-Zero refrigerator, Wolf gas stove and a concealed Bosch dishwasher were installed.

Creative touches that add the sense of charm and timeless elegance one would hope to find in a historic home include a large fireclay farm sink handmade in England and "leathered" countertops, a treatment that provides the granite with a textured look and feel. The new flooring consists of wide-plank oak boards that were milled from reclaimed barn beams. The process allowed them to retain a patina that can only be achieved with age.

So what about that plate? Amity drew the color palette for

the room from it. While most of the room is white, the green hue used on the accent wall was from the plate, as are the red stove knobs and black hardware. Amity also built a custom shelf on the range hood and attached the plate there.

One other special touch is the small alcove for a special salt container that's incorporated into the wall behind the oven. The owner's favorite tile coasters are attached to the back wall of that niche, adding color and another personal touch.

In the end, Amity was able to transform cramped into cozy. The finished kitchen isn't bigger, just better – in every way.

Want to explore the possibility of having the kitchen of your dreams? Call Amity Construction & Design at 860-434-5500 or visit them on the web at www.amitycd.com.



AFTER: A dramatic transformation utilized every square inch of this Historic home's 8.5 ft. x 9.5 ft. space. The new kitchen incorporates the old world charm of reclaimed wide board floors and a hand-made farmer's sink with top-of-the-line modern appliances ... Gorgeous!