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LESS IS MORE

Who says a kitchen must be large to function well?
We found two small spaces where style and storage go hand in hand.

Compact in Chatham

For many busy families, the kitchen is more than a place for cooking and eating. Often, it serves as command central. That's the case in this Chatham home, where the kitchen functions as a home office, scheduling center and hangout for two young-adult children and a steady stream of their friends. "People, people, people," jokes the mom. "This kitchen is always filled with people." Fortunately, with smart planning, everyone and everything are

accommodated in style.

The family (which prefers not to be identified) moved into the home on New Year's Eve, 1999. "That was our millennium. We threw a big party and met all the neighbors," says the homeowner. (We'll call her Jane.)

The four-bedroom colonial had a perfectly fine kitchen, says Jane, "but it just wasn't our style." They proceeded to gut the 175-square-foot space. Out went the busy wallpaper, Formica countertops and builder-grade cabinets and tile. In came a clean, contemporary look. "We like sleek," says Jane.

Working with Tom Brokish, a master craftsman from Maine, the family was able to keep the basic layout, but with some new features. First, they built in the corner

banquette. "We wanted this to be a built-in, eat-in kitchen," says Jane. The L-shaped banquette provides that; it's where family members eat virtually all their meals. The seat cushions are upholstered in industrial-grade fake leather. "It's indestructible," she says. "Pen, marker, anything will come right off."

The egg-shaped table was a real find; its pedestal base makes it easier for anyone taking a seat to scoot to the back. "We went through three tables before we found this

BY LAUREN PAYNE • PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAURA MOSS



one,” says Jane. “I think it’s genius for that space.”

The wall between the kitchen and dining room was removed to open the space and allow for a peninsula with seating. The area has become a home office of sorts. Opposite the peninsula, a tall, double cabinet conceals a “vertical office” that includes the printer, the stereo and all its controls, and the family calendar. It looks like a seamless wall of cabinets. You’d never know it hides an office. Another smart feature: The office has four drawers, one for each family member’s mail, phone, chargers and other junk.

The family credits Tom Brokish for much of the kitchen’s smart design. “He’s a brilliant craftsman

with such attention to detail,” says Jane. For instance, all the base cabinets are extra deep, maximizing storage space. Even the pantry has deep drawers.

Other favorite features? The family cites the terrazzo flooring (“very easy with the dog”) and the pot-filler water spout above the cooktop (“it’s used constantly”).

For the finishing touches, the family consulted with interior designer Jules Duffy. “We infused it with tangerines and plums,” Duffy says. “We added warm colors so you’re drawn in.”

The family couldn’t be more pleased. Declares Jane: “For us, a run-and-go family, the space just works.” ■



1 STYLISH SPACE This Chatham kitchen is compact, but filled with style. A deep window ledge holds potted herbs. The pot filler above the cooktop is used constantly.

2 BUILT-INS The corner banquette is a super space-saving idea. Hidden storage under the benches holds rarely used items. The transom windows above allow natural light to stream in from the mudroom.

3 CLUTTER KILLER One large cabinet keeps the family organized. Each family member has his or her own drawer to eliminate countertop clutter. Underneath the vertical office is a deep pantry drawer for snacks.



4 PARK IT HERE An oversized cabinet hides countertop appliances. “I love that I can tuck away the waffle maker, the toaster, the blender, the coffee maker,” says Jane.

5 COMMAND CENTER The peninsula serves as Jane’s home office. It’s a focal point for the entire household. The terrazzo floor takes a beating without showing any wear. “It’s indestructible,” she says.

