

THE MAGAZINE OF SPLENDID HOMES AND GARDENS • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

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PLUS: A GREEN KITCHEN GIVES AN OLD HOUSE NEW LIFE • ICONIC HARDWARE STORES

COASTAL CASUAL

Inspired by a family's Florida retreat, a tiny cook space is remade into a spacious family-friendly hangout

Written and Produced by **MOLLY JANE QUINN** • Photography by **ERIC ROTH**



FOR TRENT LLOYD, REMAKING THE KITCHEN in the 1730s Georgian-style home that she shares with her husband and two young daughters in Newburyport, Massachusetts, was more than a necessary update — it was life altering.

“The kitchen was small and the shelves were particle-board and crumbling apart,” says Lloyd of the old space, which was last renovated in the 1960s. “Small” is an understatement; the kitchen was a scant 192 square feet, with no upper cabinets, a paltry bank of under-counter cupboards, no eating areas, and a boxed-in stove with a delightful view of drywall.

The family had already remodeled one section of the house to include a vestibule that connects the front entry to a private garden. Mindi Poston Gay, who at the time worked

for Carpenter & MacNeille Architects and Builders of Essex, Massachusetts, designed the hall. The two women reconnected when Gay opened her own firm, MPG Home Design in Byfield, Massachusetts. Together, they turned their eyes to Lloyd’s lackluster cooking space. “Trent needed something that was easy and more conducive to family life,” says Gay.

In a happy twist of fate, Lloyd’s inspiration was her family’s Florida vacation retreat, and Gay hails from Miami. With the Sunshine State in mind, the designer quickly zeroed in on a found piece of silver-flecked driftwood, which served as a touchstone for the color scheme.

Gay’s program added 120 square feet to the kitchen, which now includes a mudroom that the family uses as the

A WINDOW-FILLED addition brings light and space to the expanded kitchen. Concrete counters made with beach sand and New England peastone complement cabinets hand-milled to look like driftwood.

KITCHEN DESIGN: MPG HOME DESIGN • BUILDER: SABATINI CONSTRUCTION WOOD AND STONE ARTISTRY

kitchen

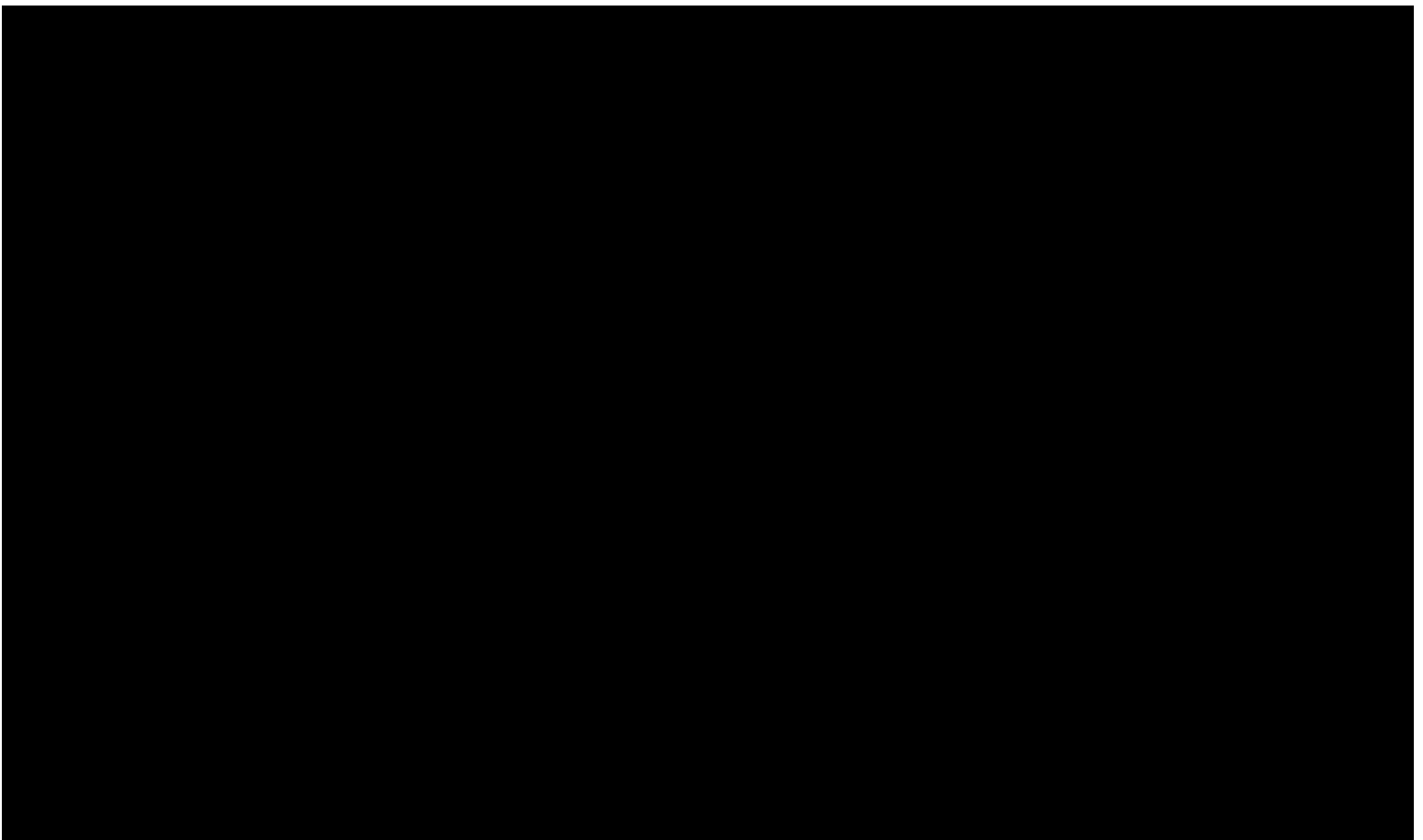


main entrance to the house. Lloyd is a landscape architect (her firm is located in downtown Newburyport), so opening up the kitchen to her gardens was essential. Gay achieved that goal with a bump-out featuring a row of triple-hung windows. The new space serves as a breakfast nook. To the right of the kitchen table, a glass door leads to the terrace; the table itself is topped with the home's original floor planks.

“Trent wanted to bring the tranquility of the ocean into their home,” says Gay, who follows the Japanese philosophy of *wabi sabi*, which emphasizes the beauty in humble materials, such as branches or stone.

As a result, materials here emphasize the perfectly imperfect, as demonstrated in the floor-to-ceiling cabinets that were fabricated by Stephen Terhune of Essex, Massachusetts. Using

THE NEW KITCHEN IS oriented to the outdoors. Roadie, the family's yellow Labrador (RIGHT), sits in the doorway to the new terrace.



kitchen



THE NEW MUDROOM is a catchall for shoes, hats, and sandy tots.

responsibly harvested white oak stained with a milky low-VOC coating, Terhune hand-milled the individual boards and treated them with a wire brush to mimic the natural gradation of wood tumbled by the sea.

Sandy-colored contemporary concrete countertops, manufactured by The Slab Lab Concrete Studio of Boston, are rugged but feel surprisingly at ease in the historic home. They also fit Gay's design sensibility; although her firm takes its name from her initials, she says the acronym MPG also stands for "modern, practical, and green."

To better connect the adjacent living room, Gay widened the opening between the spaces from 4 feet to 9 feet and added ledges topped with more of the reclaimed floorboards. Now the room is oriented to the outdoors, with the swath of cabinets leading the eye to the lush green of the backyard.

"I wanted to capture the feeling of complete openness you get when you are standing in front of the ocean," says Gay. She also

wanted to give Lloyd a workstation at the center island where she could be center stage, with views to the living room, terrace, and mudroom.

"From a mom's perspective, I love the organization of it all; before it felt messy and disorganized, and now it's really simple to clean up and everything has a place," says Lloyd. "It just makes life easier." ■

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