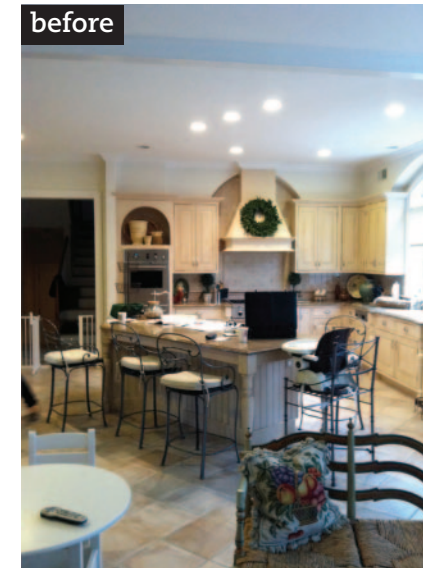




All About Transitional

A designer takes a tired kitchen from traditional to transitional — with an edge

Peter Salerno replaced the former kitchen's J-shaped island with a rectangular island that squarely faces the family room. The new configuration makes for a better flow between both spaces.



North Caldwell homeowners swapped their traditional and tired kitchen for an up-to-the-minute space with transitional style

that's big on personality and filled with unexpected elements.

"This kitchen is all about transitional," says Peter Salerno, a certified master kitchen and bath designer and owner of Peter Salerno Inc. in Wyckoff. The former space was typical of nearly 20-year-old kitchens. Whitewashed maple cabinetry — "chalky white with a little bit of a pink undertone" — gave the room a light, pastel look, Salerno says. The countertops were granite but "without character or personality," he adds. The overall style was traditional.

Salerno retained some traditional elements in the new kitchen but mixed them with transitional, but edgy, elements. The result: sleek and clean with a touch of wood, a version of transitional that's "a little more avant garde," he says.

MAKING A STATEMENT

The new cabinetry is maple — the same wood as the old cabinetry. It's painted white, not stained, and features simple lines with a double-stepped molding and

An island composed of an unusual knotted butternut — similar to walnut — is a striking element in the kitchen. Designer Peter Salerno envisioned it as a piece of furniture that would make a statement and contrast with the white perimeter cabinetry.



a double square edge around each door for a more contemporary feel.

The island makes its own design statement in butternut with a charcoal gray limestone top. “Butternut is in the walnut family, but it has more character. It’s knotty and could be considered rustic, but the detailing is not rustic,” he says. “Those details include forged pewter nails that are irregular because they’re made by hand.

“It’s all about someone admiring the cabinet, get-

ting closer and seeing more definition. The angels are in the details.”

The butternut contrasts with white perimeter cabinetry and also gives the island the appearance of a piece of furniture. “It’s like putting a spice in the food and the food pops,” he says. “You do something more dynamic and the next thing you know, it makes the white and the wood of the cabinetry look richer.”

The stools at the island and the pendant lights above it contribute to the kitchen’s edgy style. With



their contemporary shape and black leather seats, the stools are unexpected. They’re a different species of wood from the island but are stained to match it for a unified look.

“The light fixtures were a big part of finishing the island,” Salerno notes. The stainless steel fixtures introduce a note of industrial design and correspond to the stainless steel of the range hood and appliances.

FLOW & FUNCTION

Salerno retained the original kitchen’s footprint but tweaked it to improve flow and functionality. The former island had been J-shaped, “an odd configuration that didn’t correspond to anything,” Salerno says. He redesigned it as a rectangle that faces the fireplace in the family room, which is open to the kitchen. “It was about making it more of a complete entertainment area,” he says.

Like the island, a large server on one wall of the family room has the appearance of a piece of furniture. It’s also butternut with forged nail details. “Everything

about it says ‘I’m different,’ but it still coincides with the kitchen,” Salerno says. “If it were white, the whole wall would have been monochromatic. Now it’s an accent piece that makes the space pop.” The server is also functional as a place to stow silverware, cookware, placemats and other kitchen essentials. ■

Robin Amster is a Madison-based writer and editor.

SOURCES design and Mastro Rosolino custom cabinetry, through Peter Salerno Inc. in Wyckoff; backsplash, Stratta Tile Boutique in Wyckoff; countertops and flooring, Stone Surfaces Inc. in East Rutherford; lighting, Circa Lighting in Savannah, Georgia; stools, Cherner Chair Co. in Ridgefield, Connecticut; range hood, Rangecraft in Fair Lawn; appliances: Wolf range and warming drawer, Miele dishwasher, GE microwave, and Sub-Zero refrigerator, wine refrigerator and refrigerator drawers, all through Oberg & Lindquist in Wyckoff.

The large server (at right in the photo) is made of the same butternut as the kitchen island and, like the island, looks like a piece of furniture. The two pieces tie together the kitchen and family room. Salerno repurposed the space next to the server from a desk into a wine bar with cabinetry for storage. “Don’t you want to see something nice here like a wine bar instead of a desk piled with papers?” he asks.

AS FEATURED IN FEBRUARY/MARCH 2014 OF

designNJ
NEW JERSEY'S HOME & DESIGN MAGAZINE