

Small Wonders  
163 SQUARE FEET

BY PATRICIA CONNELL ■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHERYL UNGAR

# COMPACT IMPACT

Plenty of  
good things  
come in  
this smart  
package

Cabinetry incorporating  
drawers, glass-fronted tilting  
bins, open shelves and  
conventional cupboards  
supplies the homeowners with  
a battery of versatile storage.



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DESIGNER:  
Lynne Anderson, CKD, CBD  
Linteriors  
Fraser, Colorado

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Glass on the front and back of the hanging peninsula cabinets lets the kitchen bask in abundant natural light "borrowed" from the adjacent dining area.

THE KITCHEN WAS SMALL AND DARK, WITH AVOCADO-green appliances and a cramped laundry at the back door—the antithesis of the open, airy and efficient space that Denver homeowners Allison and Jeff Harden envisioned.

The couple are devotees of feng shui, the 5,000-year-old Chinese "art of placement" whose goal is to help people live in harmony with their environment. Having applied its principles in other areas of their home, the Hardens called on feng shui practitioner Leslee Ann Handy to offer suggestions to their kitchen designer, Lynne Anderson. In theory, this arrangement could have been anything but harmonious. But as "Lynne was already grounded in feng shui," says Allison, the collaboration proceeded smoothly and successfully.

### Material Harmony

Wood, metal and earth—three key feng shui elements—are employed in the kitchen to great yet simple effect. The cabinets are solid natural maple, accented with metal pulls. Stainless

steel appliances are a sleek contrast to the warm wood; Leslee made a point of requesting them because "metal strengthens both Allison and Jeff," according to their Chinese astrological charts. Anderson and Handy agreed on the cork flooring, a natural material that muffles noise and cushions steps—as well as any falls by daughter Sevi, 3, and son Riley, 7.

"Earth" makes its appearance in the existing brick wall that holds new double ovens, and in a mosaic tile backsplash with oak-tree accents. Jeff, a horticulturist, is especially drawn to oaks, and the Hardens see these tiles as not just decoration but as a symbol of their family. The tree motifs are complemented by counters of green-hued Silestone, a quartz-based, low-maintenance composite.

The center island is multifunctional, with storage cabinets, a recycling bin, a Häfele drawer-fitted ironing board and glass-fronted tip-out bins. One of the tip-outs is kept stocked with snacks that are easily accessible to the kids—"their favorite part of the kitchen," smiles Allison. Rounded corners on the



## Floor Plan



The basically U-shaped floor plan got a boost from the existing brick wall. It brings additional function to the layout by housing a pair of wall ovens.

## Small-Kitchen Smarts

**GO VERTICAL:** Bring cabinets all the way to the ceiling; this will make the ceiling look higher while maximizing storage. Stash seldom-used items on the highest shelves.

**BRIGHT AND LIGHT:** As designer Lynne Anderson says, "lighting and lightness" are both crucial. The Harden kitchen incorporates multiple light sources, including a skylight and various types of artificial lighting, while pale wood and the see-through peninsula cabinet enhance "lightness." Be careful with undercabinet lighting if counters are made of a dark, polished material, which can either soak up light or create glare. Undercabinet lights should be installed at the front of the cabinets so they illuminate the whole counter.

**APPROPRIATE APPLIANCES:** In a small kitchen it's worth paying extra for a built-in-or, much less expensive, built-in-style refrigerator and an ultra-quiet dishwasher. "In small spaces, the last thing one needs is a noisy, clanking dishwasher," notes Anderson.

**DON'T GET CORNERED:** Make efficient use of angles and corners. In this kitchen, the angled island top means more space between the island and the main counter. Angled corner cabinets provide enough room for an appliance garage and, below, a full-round lazy Susan.



Clipping one corner of the island and installing 45-degree base and hanging cabinets on the facing wall softens the room's angles and opens up the work aisle.

butcher-block island top—as well as a clipped-off corner facing the work area—reduce hazards and conform with feng shui principles.


Anderson is emphatic about the big difference it made to bring plenty of light into the formerly dim, confining kitchen. A new skylight over the island “really opens the room up,” she says, and the peninsula cabinet, glassed on three sides, lets in light from the dining area and enhances the sense of spaciousness.

A stacked washer/dryer and a secondary sink are hidden behind three large paneled doors when not in use. Anderson notes that built-in (or built-in-style) appliances make the space seem larger because they don't protrude into the room.

At first glance, visitors might not suspect that the design of this practical, hardworking kitchen was influenced by an ancient Chinese philosophy. No matter. They can't help but sense its good vibrations. ■



Principles of feng shui were followed when finish materials for the kitchen were chosen.



The biggest surprise in the kitchen? A concealed, step-saving laundry center. With a drip-dry rack and stacked washer/dryer behind doors on one wall of the room and a fold-out ironing board (opposite) on the island, wash chores are centralized.