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Comfy Kitchen Amid COVID-19

A gloomy, dark space gets a light and bright update.



The island gives the Boland family a place to prepare meals, eat and spend time together playing games or crafting. Photo courtesy of Nicely Done Kitchens & Baths

By Marilyn Campbell
Tuesday, May 12, 2020

When Joe and Sarah Boland moved into their colonial-style home in Burke, they were drawn to the skylights, soaring ceilings and picture windows that allowed in streams of natural light. The house had one blemish however: the kitchen.

Dark wood cabinetry, paired with black countertops, worked to create a gloomy space,

while a cooktop-covered peninsula disrupted the flow of the kitchen. The family of four, including two daughters ages 8 and 10, longed for a sunny gathering spot that harmonized with the breeziness of the rest of their home.

“We spend a lot of time in the kitchen preparing meals and just hanging out,” said Sarah. “I wanted a bright space that inspired me to want to cook more. I knew I wanted mostly white with pops of color. I knew I liked the warmth of brushed brass accents.”

The energetic and fun-loving couple asked designer Kate Couchman of Nicely Done Kitchens & Baths to bring their musings to life. “They were adventurous and open to colors, patterns and doing fun things,” she said. “They love spending time together, but there was no room in the kitchen for them to do things together.”



Photo courtesy of Nicely Done Kitchens & Baths

Sarah Boland wanted a farmhouse kitchen design, complete with a farmhouse sink.

Deriving inspiration from the family’s request for light and spaciousness blended with practicality and functionality, Couchman conceived a colonial blue and white kitchen accented with champagne-hued hardware. “This was the first blue kitchen that I’ve done,” she said. “We used a lot of touches that many people would be unsure about.”

The former kitchen’s dark slate flooring was replaced with wide-plank wood and the peninsula swapped for an island. “I knew I liked an updated, transitional farmhouse feel with a farmhouse sink,” said Sarah.

White Silestone accented with ribbons of blue and gray now tops the counters and island. The updated workspaces give Sarah inspiration that sparks her culinary aspirations, and she shares those with her daughters.

“The island is a workstation, but it’s also an eating station and fits six people,” said Couchman. “It’s multi-functional, which we’re seeing a lot of now. People are doing away with breakfast tables in the kitchen.”

The kitchen not only makes efficient use of space and lets in sunshine, but provides a venue for lively family togetherness.

“The vast island table is great for crafting, playing games, baking and doing homework,” said Sarah. “The kitchen has such a clean, bright feel, which is part of the reason we are always in there.”

The COVID-19-induced social isolation gives the Boland family a renewed appreciation of their kitchen. “The kitchen is pretty much the first space we are in after we wake up,” said

Sarah. "It is...always very welcoming. I feel fortunate that I get to spend time, especially these days, in this homey and beautifully functional space."