

Rethinking a



Kitchen

This remodel improves function and flow—and bucks the status quo

BY KILEY JACQUES

Contrary to current trends in kitchen design, there are times when omitting a window is the right solution to a problem. Such was the case for this Silver Spring, Maryland, kitchen and mudroom project by Aidan Design. “The push is to create spaces that are more light-filled, open, and connected to all of the adjacent spaces,” says principal Nadia Subaran, “but the first thing I told these homeowners was that they should close up a window in the dining area.”

The window was a sticking point for a few reasons. Working around it created a tight squeeze for a 36-in. range, and the dimensions of the adjacent mudroom were limited by the window’s location. Plus, the view was the side of a neighboring house. Removing the window and forfeiting the light wasn’t an easy sell, but Subaran appealed to the couple’s culinary proclivities, noting that with the window out of the way, there would be room for a 48-in. range, which would be a game-changer. Additionally, the mudroom would be able to expand, which was critical to improving its capacity to function on multiple levels.

Space was taken from the dining area to enlarge the kitchen, which meant it could now accommodate a dry bar and a large center island. The bulk of the cabinetry is full-overlay maple in Wood-Mode’s Vintage Shadow Gray, while the island cabinets are Navy. “We didn’t want wood finishes because we already had wood floors,” Subaran notes, explaining that natural wood was used for small accents, such as the floating shelves. She concedes that navy in the kitchen has been trending for the last couple of years, but explains her choice this way: “When it comes to cabinets and countertops, we always think about materials and colors that will have longevity. We’ve been doing navy for about eight years and custom grays for about 18 years—they are not a trend; they are part of the classic color palette.”

Initially, the homeowners wanted to do open shelving on both sides of the range, but Subaran explained that the scale would be



NOT TRENDY, JUST TIMELESS

Navy blue is a current trend in cabinetry finish, but for this designer, that’s simply coincidence. She chose dark blue because it’s a timeless color.





AGAINST THE GRAIN

By deviating from common kitchen-design “rules” in several areas of this remodel, designer Nadia Subaran was able to deliver a hardworking space that better serves the homeowners and looks good doing it.

WOOD FLANKS THE STOVE

Although wood countertops are commonly used as a change of color and texture on kitchen islands, these clients wanted them to flank the stove, where they help that section of the room feel softer and more inviting.



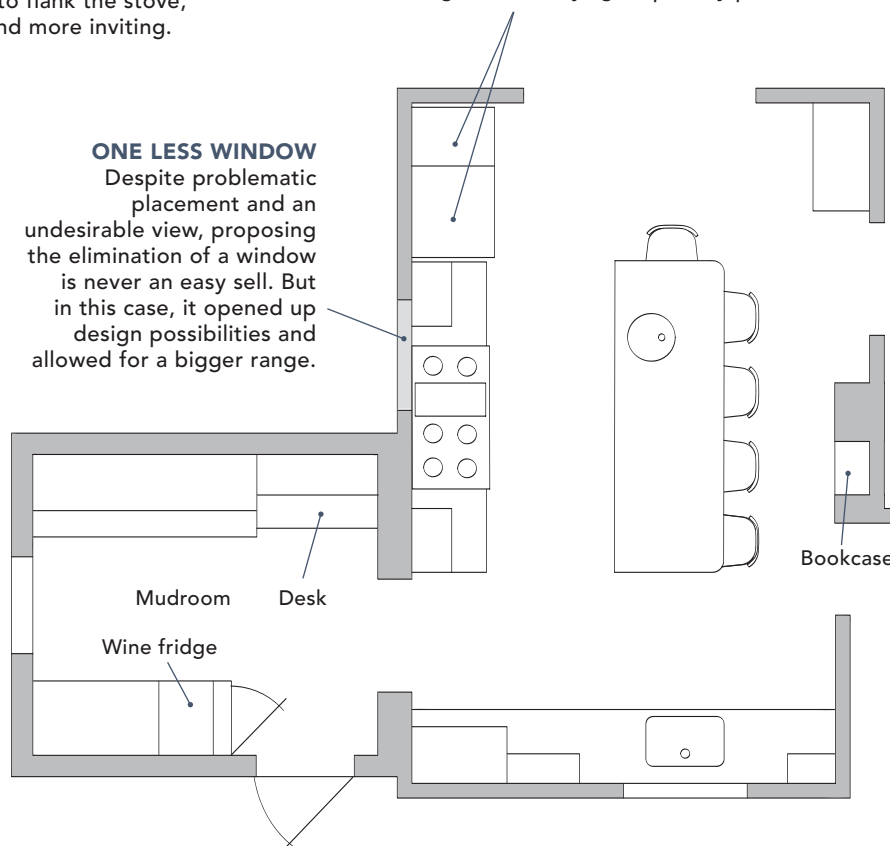
SHELVES AS A SOLUTION

A soffit above the sink left an uneven wall space that would have made placing cabinetry awkward. Running the tile all the way to the ceiling and installing floating shelves on either side of the sink window create an open and balanced feel while still offering some storage.

ONE LESS WINDOW

Despite problematic placement and an undesirable view, proposing the elimination of a window is never an easy sell. But in this case, it opened up design possibilities and allowed for a bigger range.

0 2 4 8 ft.



all wrong—the size of the range would dwarf the shelves. Instead, she used shelves on the sink wall, which resolved an awkward space created by an existing soffit that couldn’t be moved. A generous cabinet was added to the far right of the sink to house the appliance garage and more storage space.

Breaking up the refrigeration units was key to the layout. In this case, the refrigerator and freezer are side by side, but Subaran has had success separating the two completely in other kitchens. “From a design perspective, the benefits are huge: Refrigerators are one of the most used appliances in the kitchen; the freezer is the least,” she explains.

The mudroom was designed to perform a number of duties. The homeowners requested space for lockers, shoe drawers, a mail-drop

desk area, a full pantry, storage for dog supplies, and a wine fridge. “We probably spent more time on design revisions in the mudroom than in the kitchen,” Subaran recalls. In addition to the clever use of space, the room is noteworthy for its exposed exterior wall, the stones of which were used as a starting point for choosing the color scheme. Scribing the desk to the stone makes that corner a mark of fine craftsmanship.

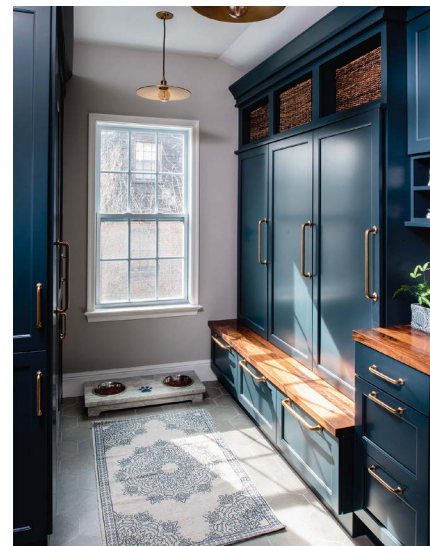
In the end, it’s the small details and creative workarounds that help this kitchen and mudroom addition stand apart. □

Kiley Jacques is design editor. Photos by Robert Radifera, courtesy of Aidan Design.



SCRIBED TO STONE

The use of floor-to-ceiling cabinetry in a mudroom off the kitchen solved storage problems and provided a much-needed landing zone. Rather than trying to make the new room match seamlessly, it was treated as an addition, complete with existing exterior stone wall.



SOURCES

CABINETRY Brookhaven Edgemont
Recessed by Wood-Mode

APPLIANCES Thermador range, Sub-Zero refrigeration and wine unit, Zephyr range hood, Sharp microwave, U-Line undercounter refrigerator

FAUCET Mountain Plumbing Products

SINK Franke

COUNTERS 3-cm Victoria Falls
Quartzite for sink, island, and dry bar;
walnut for range wall and mudroom

BACKSPLASH 2-in. by 6-in. Encore
Ceramics C22 Silver Crackle Glaze
ceramic field tile; 1/4-in. by 6 1/2-in. mini-
quarter-round with Laticrete grout and
caulk in Sauterne

CABINET HARDWARE kitchen, Lewis
Dolin; mudroom, Top Knobs Aspen