

# Double the View

With a perfectly placed mirror, a small kitchen opens up to a bird's-eye bay view

BEFORE

**K**nown for its houseboats, artists, and top-notch tourist traps, the little town of Sausalito, Calif., overlooks the bay just north of the Golden Gate Bridge. If you're lucky enough to have a house on the hill above town, a view of Richardson Bay and Belvedere Island can be yours. Getting the most of that view was on the mind of Imok Cha when she asked architect John Hopkins to rethink her kitchen.

Hopkins recast the kitchen within the same footprint as the original with just a couple of changes to the plan. Surprisingly, one was to shrink the kitchen a bit by moving the wall between the master bedroom and the kitchen 12 in. to the north. This brought the upper cabinets flush with the wall, rendering a crisp line of built-ins that suits the demeanor of this midcentury Modernist house.

**Design:** John Hopkins, Architect, Berkeley, Calif.  
www.hopkinstudio.com

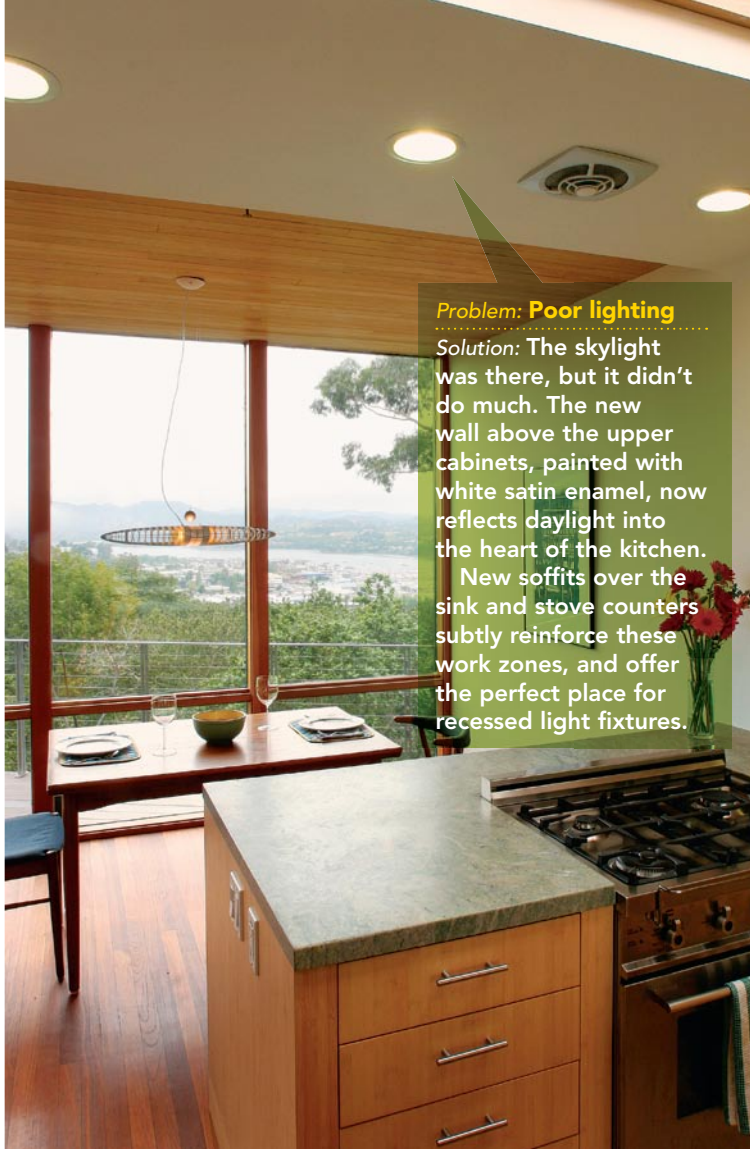
**Construction:** Owner/  
contractor, Imok Cha

**Problem: No place to sit and chat**

**Solution:** Deepening the cooktop counter made room for a breakfast bar and space for a couple of stools.

**Problem: Dreary finishes**

**Solution:** Crisp lines in natural materials—bamboo cabinets, cypress ceilings, Douglas-fir windows and doors, and refinished existing teak floors—are in keeping with the home's midcentury modern heritage.



**Problem: Poor lighting**  
**Solution:** The skylight was there, but it didn't do much. The new wall above the upper cabinets, painted with white satin enamel, now reflects daylight into the heart of the kitchen. New soffits over the sink and stove counters subtly reinforce these work zones, and offer the perfect place for recessed light fixtures.



**Problem: No connection to the living room**  
**Solution:** Removing the built-in barbecue and replacing it with a small desk and a pass-through extends the sightlines from the kitchen into the sitting area.

## Cool detail

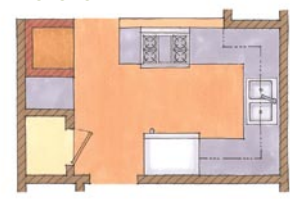
Verde Esmeralda granite countertops have a honed finish rather than the typical polished finish, making them appear softer and eliminating the reflection from undercabinet lights. The retro-modern tile backsplash was made locally in Sausalito by Heath Ceramics.



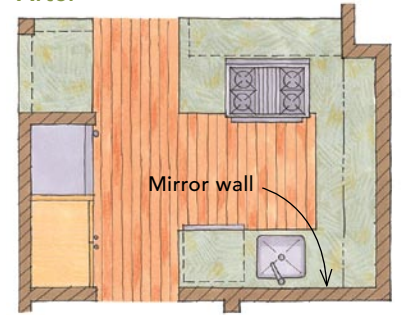
## "aha!" moment

Giving up a whole wall of potential storage for a counter-to-ceiling mirror doubled the view. The placement of appliances, storage, and workspaces was driven by this signature element.

Before



After



◀ North 0 1 2 4 ft.