

/ **ATOMIC** KITCHENS /

# EAT-IN **KITCHEN RECIPE**

This 1950s home's culinary space was redesigned for improved form, function and family time.

Written by **Meryl Schoenbaum** | Photography by **Andrew Giammarco** | Design by **Kathleen Glossa, Swivel Interiors**





right: "We mixed antique pottery with new Shaker furniture, Mid Century Modern cabinets and one piece of original artwork. Lori sourced the table base from a local ReUse store (these can be fun sources for charming/unique furnishings and fixtures) and we sourced the quartzite stone tabletop from the fabricator's remnant slab yard."



**WHEN THE OWNERS OF** this mid-century ranch in Seattle, Washington, built in 1959 began their renovation journey, their project contractor, Stuart Feldt of W.S. Feldt, suggested that the clients contact Kathleen Glossa, founder of Swivel Interiors, for support with the design plan for their kitchen remodel.

"Stuart and I had worked together on other projects and after meeting the clients, Lori and Hugh, we all knew we'd make a great team," Kathleen recalls. "They had three requests: to suggest a layout for the kitchen to allow seating for the family of four while still maintaining the existing exterior walls; to assist with the planning details for Space Theory cabinets to help maximize storage and work-flow functionality; and to guide the selection of finishes, fixtures and furnishings."

#### **READING THE ROOM**

Kathleen assessed the spaces where the kitchen's form, flow and function could be improved upon. "Typical of homes designed in the '50s and '60s, the dining area was treated like a separate room. Removing a significant portion of the dividing wall would have required structural modifications and a loss of storage space, so we conceived a plan to open the walkway and continue the cabinetry so that it seamlessly wraps into the eating area and reads like a three-sided wall of cabinetry," she explains.





"We sourced components from Space Theory to design a charming custom island scaled to fit the dimensions of the kitchen."  
 "We wanted the island to be a fun mix of cabinetry materials combined with open storage for easy access to food prep tools."  
 "Stuart was invaluable in the construction of the custom island, it's the work-horse of the new kitchen."



The redesign also called for making the most of the room's natural lighting. "I was drawn to the daylight flooding in at the sink area where a run of skylight wrapped windows had recently been replaced," she says. "We agreed that any layout changes would keep the windows in place. One wall had a short run of built-in cabinets, allowing it to become a catch-all for backpacks and bags. Since real estate is precious in a kitchen, we needed this space to provide better value for our clients while also brightening up the area."

Reconsidering the cabinetry was an integral component in the kitchen redesign. "The existing cabinetry included a peninsula that allowed seating for two. We designers call it a 'traffic impediment' as our clients needed to navigate around it. I knew that to allow space for seating more than two, the peninsula had to go."

#### SPACE PLANNING

Kathleen had a list of key ingredients to add to the redesigned kitchen mix. "We wanted the kitchen to have a fresh and timeless aesthetic while still referencing the mid-century lines of the home," she says.



"The homeowners were very engaged in the decisions for the new kitchen and had selected Space Theory to provide the new cabinetry," Kathleen says. "Their curated selection of high-durability finishes makes it an easy choice for clients and designers."





As the heart of the home, it's important that the kitchen is a personalized comfort to the residents—and this redesign is a tasteful blend. "A mix of new and old details along with few complementary design styles help spaces feel authentic to the inhabitants, even in kitchens," Kathleen says.

"Lori was drawn to Space Theory both for their smart design of cabinetry as well as the aesthetics; the design lines work well in mid-century upgrades. The black walnut finish adds an elevated look to the kitchen and feels cohesive with other walnut details in the home. We mixed in some moss-gray HPL laminate ('high-pressure' laminate that is resistant to scratches and wear) along with anodized aluminum (also great for resisting scratches and wear) to add contrast to the wood cabinetry. The redesign plan required all the existing cabinetry and appliances to be removed and replaced. We also patched in new flooring where needed and refinished the wood flooring. The kitchen now includes all new cabinetry and appliances, a custom island and a new window seat where an obsolete cabinet and small window had been. We removed the existing peninsula, which opened a pinched walk pattern (a pathway in and out of the home). We also relocated the washer and dryer, which had been housed in a wall closet. This

allowed the countertop areas that flank the cooktop to widen, creating a more spacious cooking zone."

#### CREATING PERSONAL TOUCHPOINTS

"Although it's a high-task area of the home, the new kitchen has a cozy, happy vibe," she says. "The new window seat really drives that, but many other details—like the dishware display, floor-to-ceiling wood cabinetry wall, floating island and original artwork—all play an important role in layering in the comfort, personalization and charm."

And, most importantly, her clients and their kids gave their new kitchen a five-star rating. "Lori's favorite detail about the new kitchen is their custom island. Collectively, the whole family really enjoys the ability to share meals and seated conversations in the kitchen. It ends up as a family gathering spot on weekends too." 🍷

SEE RESOURCES, PAGE 112

## SEATING FOR EATING

Kathleen discusses the elements of a well-curated kitchen seating area.

The recipe for great MCM kitchen seating starts with high-quality seat cushions upholstered in fade-resistance fabrics because in sunny spots inexpensive foam will break down over time; lots of pillows (the more, the better—my inspo is always Jeannie's bottle from the classic TV series "I Dream of Jeannie"); and table and seating scaled to fit the allowable space. The finishing touch is a light fixture centered on the composition (we chose Schoolhouse Electric Co.'s Ray model in the finish Dune for this kitchen).

Lori sourced Marvin's SkyCove window, which allowed the team to create an eat-in kitchen without having to move any (existing) walls." "We relocated the (existing) washer/dryer closet, freeing up space to help create an inviting spot for family dinners."

