

THE KITCHEN GETS ITS TURN

In the beautification of a Tudor home in Ho-Ho-Kus, the most vital room is saved for last.

Design by **Anthony Passanante, Anthony Albert Studios**
Photography by **Meghan Balcom**
Text by **Donna Rolando**

Truth be told, Chris and Letitia didn't hate their old kitchen. Though dated, it proved functional, and they'd grown used to it. So they waited almost 14 years for the time when the heart of their six-bedroom, Tudor home in Ho-Ho-Kus would reflect their own style. The couple with two school-age children redesigned other spaces, one by one. But the kitchen they let cling for years to an artsy look with 3D vines and branches, a vestige of the former owner's décor.

Inertia ended when Anthony Passanante of Waldwick's Anthony Albert Studios tackled the kitchen redesign. "It just felt like the timing was right, and we wanted to change," reflects Letitia. And today, after an enjoyable—even fun—experience working with Passanante, the couple is signaling a strong thumbs-up.

Favorite parts? "For me it's probably a three-way tie," says Chris, "among the island, which is a Brazilian quartzite that really dazzles people; the black, industrial-like handmade hood that Anthony put together for us—it's a real striking piece, and that giant sink." (He's referring to a 4-foot-long Galley sink with a brass faucet.)

His wife adds that her favorite eye-catcher is the somewhat rustic, handmade tile backsplash by Mediterranean Tile that stretches

A Ho-Ho-Kus couple finds lots to love in their new kitchen where their courage with color opened the door to Blue Roma quartzite counters. Besides the beauty they craved, designer Anthony Passanante gave them a new layout in which cooking, entertaining and everyday living all got easier.







to the ceiling and “looks so beautiful” illuminated by aged brass sconces by Visual Comfort. (With both of their children finally old enough for a babysitter, she says, the couple could enjoy shopping along with Passanante for tiles and more.)

Passanante was happy to work with a couple with no fear of color. He recalls with pleasure the Roma Blue quartzite (imported from Brazil by Dente Trading Co.) with striking veins that helped define the room’s look. “And the hood I had custom-made by my metal worker.” That craftsman, he notes, gave the steel a patina finish and sanded the edges for an industrial vibe.

“We didn’t want your typical white kitchen,” Passanante also remembers. So the slim custom cabinets with aged brass hardware are a soft gray. The cabinetry helps the Sub-Zero fridge pull a disappearing act. As the designer explains, in this highly visible spot, “I didn’t want a big piece of steel, just nice and clean and covered.” Another decorative touch, floating shelves mirror the light brown of refinished oak floors.

Though it was a challenge, Passanante was willing to go the extra mile for a recessed coffered ceiling, the key to cohesiveness between the kitchen island and a brass-trimmed table in a windowed alcove. “The ceiling was a lot of work, getting it raised up, shifting openings, some structural work,” he recalls.

While beautification was the couple’s major focus, Passanante also endeavored to improve the kitchen’s flow. “I do find it easier to cook because the layout is more functional,” says Letitia, noting cookware and utensils now within easy reach. Though spacious, the former kitchen layout seemed disconnected. Passanante’s plan: Relocate the pantry, shift doorways and reangle the island with its leather RH stools.

“Everything became more modern, more luxurious, more spacious and guest friendly,” says Chris.

And because their old kitchen still had some life in it, the couple were happy for a company called Renovation Angel to donate it, not dump it.

It wasn’t really so bad, you see. It’s just that what they have now is so much better.



This page: Floating shelves add a new design element as they complement the light brown oak floors. Opposite page: The simplicity of gray custom cabinets lets the Blue Roma quartzite counters and handmade tile take center stage.



Bergen

A woman with dark hair, wearing a vibrant red, off-the-shoulder, pleated dress with large fabric roses along the neckline, is sitting outdoors. She is looking slightly to her right with a soft expression. The background consists of dark green foliage.

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