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KITCHEN ISSUE



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Sweet Dreams

A NEW BERGEN COUNTY KITCHEN MEETS THE NEEDS OF A BAKING ENTHUSIAST IN STYLE

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KITCHEN DESIGN BY ANTHONY ALBERT PASSANANTE, ALLIED ASID, CMKBD

ARCHITECTURE BY JORDAN ROSENBERG

Every time Karen Rosenthal would share her baked goods with friends and coworkers, they would encourage her to launch her own business. Rosenthal kept that thought in the back of her mind and, after retiring from her teaching position, she considered taking the advice. She studied the possibilities and concluded the cost of setting up a commercial-style kitchen — not to mention premium ingredients, packaging and delivery — would take too big of a bite out of revenue from a home-based baking business.

However, that didn't stop her from getting a baker's kitchen when she and her husband, Mitch, recently expanded their Norwood home. The 1920s brick Dutch Colonial wasn't large by some standards, but they've loved it from the time they first saw it 47 years ago, including the "library lions" on the front steps reminiscent of sculptures at public buildings and an intricately carved fireplace surround that a former owner brought with her when she emigrated from Italy. ("It's either a turnoff or a turn-on, but we love it," Rosenthal says.) In fact the Rosenthals have been told a national design magazine once published photos of the house, though they haven't been able to confirm which magazine. Less appealing on their first visit were the avocado color scheme, wall-to-wall carpeting and a tiny kitchen with attached powder room. The Rosenthals tore up the carpeting to reveal beautifully detailed parquet floors, lightened the color scheme and, over the years, mixed contemporary pieces with the more traditional ones. "I enjoy mixing modern and traditional," Rosenthal notes.

The tiny kitchen remained a problem, however, because the couple thought they couldn't get a variance to expand the home's footprint. They later learned they could extend the back of the house about 8 feet to meet the far end of the existing garage. They jumped at the chance because



they want to remain in the home as long as possible and, in addition to a better kitchen, that would require a full bathroom with shower in case they ever need to live on just the main floor.

They met with architect Jordan Rosenberg of Jordan Rosenberg Architect & Associates in Ridgewood, who drew plans for an expanded kitchen,



The island top is 2-inch-thick walnut with a marine-grade oil finish. "I love to incorporate wood because it warms up a room," designer Anthony Passanante says. "When you sit at the island, you put your arms down and get the warmth of wood rather than the coldness of stone." The doorway between the kitchen and dining room (foreground) was widened significantly for a more open feel.

a larger pantry, a laundry closet, a new bathroom and a mudroom entrance from the garage. They also engaged Anthony Passanante, a Certified Master Kitchen and Bath Designer, allied member of the New Jersey chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers and owner of Anthony Albert Studios in Waldwick.

Rosenthal shared with Passanante the pictures she had clipped of favorite kitchens, including the cover of a 2019 Rejuvenation catalog that became the model for her own kitchen. "Karen was an integral part of this project," Passanante says. "She pretty much knew what she wanted and was a lot of fun to work with." Like the kitchen on the catalog cover, the