

VOL.
28

NO.
1

This Old House

RENOS THAT
IMPROVE
LIFE AT HOME

SPRING
2023

INDUCTION RANGES / WET ROOMS / LASER LEVELS / COBBLESTONE EDGING / POTTING BENCH

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Fresh look and function

A galley kitchen can work—they function fine in restaurants. But not in a house where it hinders access to the kitchen table and a busy back door opens into the cooking zone. “I felt trapped and alone when making dinner—two people in the galley just wasn’t an option,” says Sara Kodsí, who shares a 1950s Colonial Revival in Bethesda, MD, with her husband, Nadim, and their two children.

RESHAPE THE SPACE To open things up, Stephen Gordon, president of InSite Builders & Remodeling, relocated backyard access to the eating area, adding sliding French doors where a trio of windows had been. He got rid of the cabinet run that held the fridge along with the peninsula that hemmed in the galley, moving the powder-room door to where the fridge had been. Then he widened the main area by taking 2 feet from the adjacent dining room. This transformed the 114-square-foot galley into 244 square feet of functional kitchen space.

REWORK THE WORK ZONE Moving the range to the new wall and putting the fridge to the right of the sink created a comfortable work triangle. It also made space for a 24-square-foot island with storage on three sides and stool seating. A beverage bar and fridge went in where the back entry had been.

EASY DOES IT White cabinets, some with glass fronts; clear globe pendants; and a sputnik chandelier help lend “a light, fresh, calming feel” to the new kitchen, says Sara. “Now everything is close together in a good way,” she says of the workstation situation. “Plus, the island is great for food prep and serving without being an obstacle to the table, so this has truly become our gathering space.”



BEFORE The space between the fridge and the range was tight, and any open door—on an appliance or to the backyard—created an impasse. Whoever was cooking was cut off and isolated—with no sight line to keep an eye on the kids.

▲ WAY WIDER

Saying good riddance to the peninsula and stealing space from the adjacent dining room opened up the kitchen to accommodate an island and integrate the existing eating area. This allowed for a setup that puts the range, fridge, and sink within steps of one another. Adds homeowner Sara Kodsí, “Thanks to the island, we’ve doubled our storage, too.”



▲ MULTIPURPOSE ISLAND

"In addition to food prep, the island is our family's creative space," says Sara. "The two big cabinets hold all the children's art supplies." Its navy paint contrasts with the white cabinets and is echoed in the mosaic-tile backsplash.

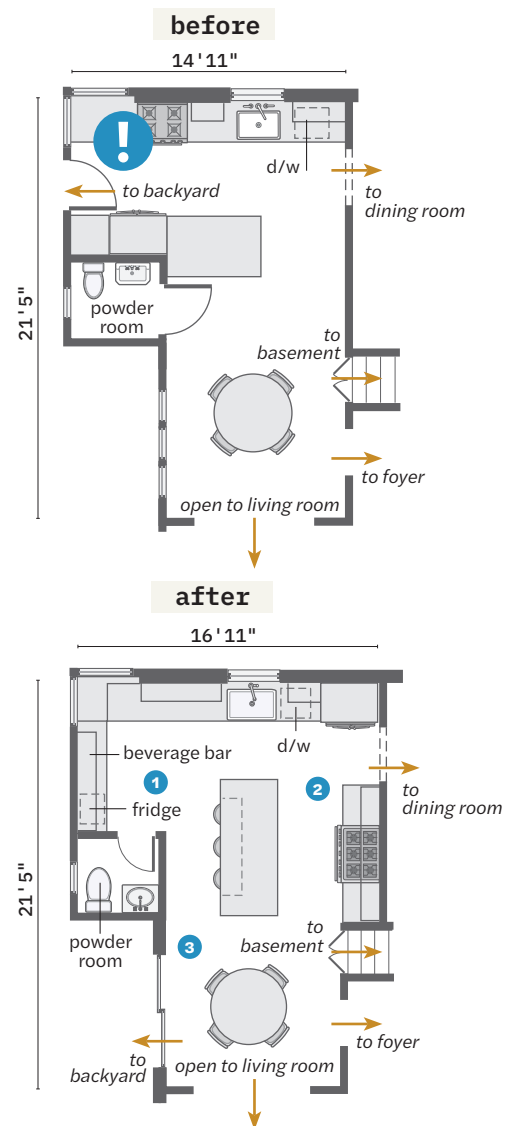
◀ BOTTLE BANK

Closing up the back entry left an alcove just right for a beverage bar and fridge. "We like that the cocktail area is off to the side," Sara says. "This way, guests can get a drink and hang out in the kitchen but not be in the work area." ■

WHAT THEY DID

Removing a peninsula and widening the room by 2 feet turned a galley into an open kitchen with a center island.

1. Closed up the back entry, demoed the peninsula and the fridge wall's cabinets, put the powder-room door where the fridge was, and built a drinks bar in the old entry spot.
2. Bumped into the dining room by 2 feet, centering a range on the new wall and placing the fridge near the sink.
3. Added an island about 3¼ feet wide and 7½ feet long with seats for three; moved backyard access near the table, which is now fully part of the kitchen.





GLOSSY BACKSPLASH

Tiny glass mosaic tiles fit with the color palette and add an element of shine and texture amid otherwise simple finishes. Photo Credit: Stacy Zarin Goldberg