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Everything and The Kitchen Sink

Nothing was left untouched in interior designer Laura Burton's kitchen makeover

BY GENE MENEZ

The Burtons' renovated open-concept kitchen features a new island (right, top) with a built-in dog food station (right, middle) and drawers (right, bottom) to replace cabinets that were lost in knocking out a wall.



Laura Burton loves washing dishes and watching football. And maybe the only thing she loves more is washing dishes while watching football.

So imagine the frustration she felt for two decades while working in a kitchen that was completely closed off from the family room.

"I love watching football, and our main TV is in the neighboring family room," Burton says. "One of the things that I used to hate was that I'd have to go in the kitchen and wash the dishes and couldn't see the TV."

So in 2014, after 20 years of living with that arrangement, Burton, one of Austin's most decorated interior designers, and her husband, David, decided to completely overhaul the space in an attempt to bring life to the downstairs of their early 1990s spec home.

"We wanted to freshen it up but still be true to the traditional bones of the house

even though we kind of like sleeker things," Burton says.

Nothing was left untouched. The L-shaped wall separating the kitchen and the living room was knocked out, creating an open-concept space and allowing light to flood the area.

All of the cabinets were replaced. New LED lighting was installed in recessed cans, pendants and under cabinets, and all of those lights were put on dimmers. Durable, nonporous and stain-resistant quartz countertops supplanted old stained concrete ones.

The renovations didn't stop there. A small, rolling island was jettisoned for a larger, fixed island. The Burtons installed a porcelain mosaic backsplash as well as a tile floor with a linear look that's meant to look like a rift-cut stone. They painted the entire kitchen, which previously was sage green and dirty beige, in white and cream. Even the kitchen sink was replaced.

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One of Burton's favorite updates to the kitchen, the porcelain mosaic backsplash gives the wall texture.

"I used to joke that I was the only designer in Austin who still had white GE appliances," Burton says. "They were bad. They were old."

The Burtons got rid of their oven/microwave oven setup and instead decided to go with a range and steam/convection oven. Finally, new Bosch appliances—a refrigerator, dishwasher and oven—replaced aging GE ones.

"I used to joke that I was the only designer in Austin who still had white GE appliances," Burton says. "They were bad. They were old."

Because David is the co-principal of Enve Builders, the project took just two months, and the Burtons and their three children (ages 23, 18 and 15) couldn't be happier. Laura's favorite features are the open floor plan, the LED lighting, the backsplash and the steam/convection oven.

Even the Burtons' 9-year-old golden retriever, Oakley, came away benefiting from the renovation. The new kitchen island features a dog food station that makes feeding him easy.

"We really did this on a budget," Burton says. "We were just trying to buy ourselves maybe five more years in the house—freshen it but not break the bank with it—because it's not our 'forever' house." ■



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