

GOING WITH THE FLOW

The first floor of architectural designer Anja Aigner-Morris' two-story home on a narrow lot in Ocean Beach felt cramped and outdated. "There was a need," she says, "to get a better flow throughout the entire floor."

Top priority in the reorganization was to make better use of the spare room in the back of the house. Because it was not connected to the other spaces, the room was used only for laundry and storage.

"Leaving the kitchen at the center of the house was the obvious choice, not only because of saving costs," says Aigner-Morris. "There also was a desire to create a kitchen that truly is at the heart of the home — a 'communication space' that could link all public spaces together."

A "feature wall" now anchors the L-shaped island in the new kitchen. "This is the one element of the kitchen that tries to create a dialogue between kitchen and living space," she says. "The wall helps to define the different spaces without disconnecting them."

The kitchen's back wall was removed to open up the space toward the spare room in back. A small enclosure off the hallway was built to house the new energy- and space-saving tankless water heater and the stacked washer and dryer. Moving the appliances enabled Aigner-Morris to give the dining area, originally situated between the living room and kitchen, its own space in the former spare room.

"This also helped open up the entire space to the backyard, creating opportunities for indoor/outdoor dining," the designer says.

A built-in wood bench that runs along



"Great use of geometric balance. The juxtaposition of open versus solid space is amazing. Warm cabinets and cool floors, warm greens and cool grays all combine to make an inviting and uncluttered kitchen."

— Leslie Coben

Photography by Tony Garcia

the entire length of the new dining room wall keeps the table off to one side, leaving the space feeling more open.

The kitchen's warm upper rift-cut red oak cabinets were left without pulls and appear to be equally spaced wood paneling. An integrated hood fits flush beneath a cabinet and slides out when needed.

Floor-to-ceiling cabinets wrap around the laundry and water heater to maximize storage space. Opposite the island, the cabinets house refrigerator and pantry; facing the new dining room they contain a built-in display niche.

Black-and-green-patterned *Ocelot* soapstone was used for the countertops and integrated sink. Along with the dark slate floor, these dark horizontal surfaces supply contrast to the lighter cabinets, finished with satin sheen, and a Bisazza mosaic tile wall.

"We all loved this kitchen the moment we saw it. This is a place that I would love to live."

— Lance Stratton



"A well-thought-out design that is functional yet simple in style."

— Kristianne Watts

