

Modern Farmhouse

Photography by Robert Pelletier

A ONCE-DARK KITCHEN IS
TRANSFORMED INTO A FAMILY-
FRIENDLY SHOWPLACE
BRIDGING RUSTIC AND
CONTEMPORARY.



Before the owners

of this Montreal house even put in a purchase offer on the property, they consulted interior designer Scott Yetman and architect Todd Richards of Grenier + Richards Architects to ensure that they would be able to create the kind of dream kitchen they had in mind. The home had been owned by a large downtown church and had operated as its manse for 40 years before it was put up for sale; just off the back of the house, where the kitchen was located, sat an old garage that cut off the outdoor space and blocked out any natural light. Richards and the prospective owner — an architect herself — devised a plan to modify the old garage by sinking it down a storey and creating a walk-out terrace (actually the roof of the new garage) from the kitchen. Once the house was purchased, the renovation project got underway in earnest and a more expansive, completely new kitchen ultimately replaced the old one.

In keeping with the style of the rest of the house, traditional architectural features like a coffered ceiling, french doors with leaded-glass transoms and recessed-panel cabinetry help give the space a historic



OPPOSITE: The entire back wall of the new kitchen is windows and french doors, which flood the space with southern light. Linen drapery with a hidden heading can be closed

for privacy or light control. **TOP RIGHT:** One wall in the kitchen was fitted with traditional glassed-in upper cabinets to act as a china cupboard. Ultrasuede in a

butterscotch colour on the stools is easy to scrub clean. An antique Quebec pine buffet from a convent provides more storage. Buffet, Camlen Antiques.

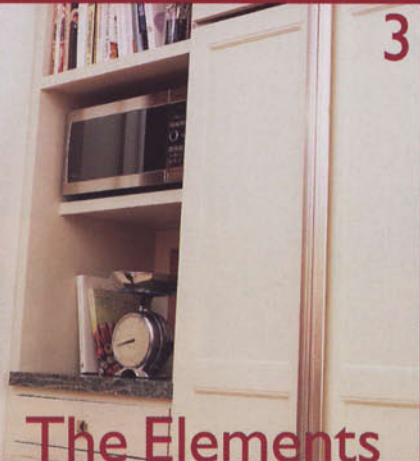
BELOW: The range hood was painted to match the cabinetry, making it unobtrusive and allowing the heirloom silver platters on the adjacent shelves to stand out instead.



aesthetic. But thoroughly contemporary touches are in abundance, too: streamlined faucets and hardware, sleek lighting and floating shelves in place of the typical upper cabinets inject the space with a truly 21st-century vibe.

In addition, geometric squares are a subtly recurring theme, with square coffers in the ceiling, square recessed lights within the coffers, square knobs modernizing the traditional cabinetry and random limestone squares and rectangles making up the floor pattern. A painted-wood range hood, rather than a stainless steel one, tones down the industrial aspect of the double professional-style range; floating shelves on either side hold heirloom silver platters that stand in stark contrast to the chic, understated sconce lights below. In selecting floating shelves instead of upper cabinets and a painted range hood, the team has successfully “made the room a little less kitchen-y,” the owner says.

The owners have three active children ranging in age from 2 to 7 and a Labrador retriever, so durability and family-friendly features were important considerations. Because the house has no main-floor family room, the



The Elements

1. A solid mahogany countertop, treated with a waterproof finish, provides rich texture to the island.
2. Durable honed-granite counters stand up to wear.
3. The panelled fridge blends into the cabinetry, avoiding an industrial

- look. Open shelves alongside hold the microwave and cookbooks.
4. The "indestructible" vintage Spanish-style table's patina and bench's sapphire Ultrasuede upholstery lend colour and interest to the room.

ABOVE: The sleek bench, fibreglass chairs and contemporary photograph (taken by one of the homeowners) offer a stark contrast to the ornate walnut and iron table that was purchased with the house. Bench, Scott Yetman.

BELOW: Traditional honed-granite countertops, recessed-panel cabinetry and a painted range hood are offset by contemporary sconces, floating shelves and square knobs. Sconces, Artemide; cabinetry colour, Off-White (3), Farrow & Ball.

owners wanted this to be a spot where the kids could play or do homework during dinner prep. A lounge area with a pair of comfy, oversized armchairs and ottomans, an island with stools that pull up under its edge and a long bench in the dining area more than suffice to keep the kids nearby. The limestone floors stand up to dog claws and have even weathered a few bike laps around the island on occasion. An ornate Spanish-style walnut table with a rustic, worn patina, which came with the house, is described by the owner as "indestructible" and was pressed into service as a dining table. Yetman contends that even the sapphire-blue Ultrasuede he chose for the bench upholstery is "mustard- and peanut-butter-proof." The island's countertop is solid mahogany treated to a water-impervious finish, while the rest of the room's counters are a tough, deep-green honed granite.

A new wall of south-facing windows on one side of the L-shaped room means the space is cheerful even on dull days, so the kitchen is usually a hub of activity. And indeed, it deftly handles all the use the family can dish out.

