

REMODELING

SPECIAL SECTION



AFTER

"I really wanted the cooktop off the island," says the homeowner. Because of the home's open layout, it was the first thing visitors saw when entering the foyer. Architect Mark Maresca flip-flopped stove for sink, replacing a large Palladian window with cabinets and a hood and adding two smaller windows on each side.



ARCHITECT MARK MARESCA

In his Greenville clients' kitchen, Maresca eliminated windows for the sake of contrast. "We made the kitchen dark to even out the light level among the rooms," he says. "In the morning room, which has the best view, your eye is led outside. The kitchen becomes more of a sanctuary." At night the space is lit by a range of light sources, including small-aperture ceiling lights (small can lights that provide sharp spots of light), under-cabinet lights, and a row of elegant pagoda-shaped hanging fixtures that Maresca designed for The Urban Electric Co.

More subtle than the lighting in the before-and-after photos are the room's proportions. Maresca gave the kitchen a pleasing verticality (important in a room filled with horizontal banks of cabinets) by removing the soffit above the old cabinets



BEFORE

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With the West Indies pineapple finial, Oriental rugs, and cane chair, this kitchen could almost double as the library. That was the point. Because of the room's prominent location, Maresca sought a less kitcheny look and chose Carrara marble countertops and ebonized mahogany cabinets. To add vertical dimension, he removed a soffit and extended the upper cabinets to the ceiling, capping them with a Georgian-style molding. Dovetailed drawers hint at the craftsmanship. High-quality cabinets that look like fine antique furniture "never go out of style," says the architect.



and extending the new upper cabinets to the ceiling. He moved a pair of structural columns and beefed up the walls that frame the opening between the kitchen and sitting room. Not only does the two-foot-deep wall give the architecture more weight, but it also hides the ice maker and bar appliances housed in built-in cabinets on the morning-room side of the wall.

Dark cabinets with cinnabar-red interiors were another part of Maresca's plan to give the kitchen more character. "I wanted this kitchen to look refined," he says. That meant adding cabinetry details reminiscent of a Regency period cabinet—restoration glass doors with delicate divided light patterns and drawer fronts with small beaded edges. Nickel pulls give the kitchen a timeless feel.

That's important to Maresca, who intentionally avoids kitchen trends, such as appliances that happen to be in vogue. "Kitchens are the rooms that become dated the quickest," the architect says. "Nothing in this kitchen screams that it's the latest and greatest. That timelessness is more pleasing, more sophisticated, and elegant with a sense of reserve." ♦