

Retaining Walls

Brickwork is the main attraction in a Charlestown condo's newly renovated kitchen and bath.

By Marni Elyse Katz

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reserving the brick walls in this Charlestown condo wasn't going to be easy. "The builders and cabinet people recommended covering up the brick," designer Christine Granfield says. But recognizing that the historical elements in this 1860 building are a draw, she instead helped her clients, Lindsey Parker and Kevin Atchue, celebrate the brickwork. "The bricks and old wooden doors are what make the home valuable," she says.

The couple also asked Granfield, principal of Sea Squared Design, to fix the kitchen layout. A peninsula closed off the tiny space, making it impossible for two people to be in there at once. "If the dishwasher

Right: The condo has a separate dining area, so designer Christine Granfield filled the nook with a multifunction island that provides storage, prep space, and a spot for friends to gather.





was open, you couldn't get to the sink," Parker says. Granfield removed the peninsula and specified full-depth cabinetry with charcoal-colored quartz counters for all three walls. The range stayed on the back wall, but got a custom walnut hood that makes it a focal point. The sink and dishwasher, which had been in the peninsula, were relocated to an adjacent wall where Granfield installed a herringbone tile backsplash and walnut shelves. "Christine pulled in character to complement our desire for a clean, white kitchen," Atchue says.

The design mirrors the opposite wall, where the team had to contend with a pesky bump-out. "The cabinet [company] suggested putting a fake cabinet face over the pipe stack," Gran-

field says. "Instead, we tiled it and designed custom shelves so it's functional and beautiful." A new, walnut-topped island provides additional surface area for serving and prep, and ties the spaces together.

The team took a similar tack in the condo's single bathroom, which they reconfigured to fit a double vanity. "Retaining the brick wall was a challenge because we needed to hide the plumbing," Granfield explains. Rather than running drywall to the ceiling, she designed a useful, walnut-topped ledge, again turning an obstacle into an opportunity.

The owners love the fresh look that nods to the building's roots and note that the renovations have changed how they live. "We're never in each other's way, even when we're in the kitchen or bath at the same time," Parker says. "It's made such a difference." ■

Send comments to magazine@globe.com.

RESOURCES

Designer:

Sea Squared Design,
seasquaredesign.com

Contractor:

Four Seasons Construction,
fourseasonsconst.com

Above left:

Granfield tiled the plumbing stack and added walnut shelves to echo the design at the sink.

Above right:

The team painted the walls Benjamin Moore Mistral to match the vanity purchased online.