



# Qualified Remodeler

Dedicated To Professionalism In Remodeling

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## KITCHEN REMODELING



To suit the homeowners' culinary talents, the remodeled kitchen features commercial-grade appliances, including range, oven, refrigerator and dishwasher. The island's prep sink, with high-arc faucet, is large enough to help create independent work zones.

## A 'Winning' Personality

**R**emodelers wield a great deal of power. Once they are made aware of a client's particular needs, and are granted the funds necessary to fulfill them, it's up to them to get the job done. The remodeler is the one who creates (or re-creates, as the case may be) the space and defines its personality. A good remodeler quickly learns not to abuse his or her power, understanding that the space he or she is remodeling needs to

reflect the client's wishes — not his or her own. For this very reason, good listening skills play a big part in achieving a successful balance of power and client satisfaction.

Joshua Baker and Larry Weinberg, principals of Arlington, VA-based BOWA Builders, Inc. of America, always make it a point to be good listeners. When Robert and Mary Lafsky contacted BOWA about remodeling the kitchen in their Great Falls, VA, home, Baker took in

*all* the background information.

The Lafskys defined the kitchen as their favorite room in the house, but, according to Baker, it was obvious why his clients wanted to make some changes. "The existing room lacked light, efficient work spaces and character," he notes. The Lafskys also enjoyed entertaining and cooking, which made the room's flaws even more conspicuous. "Our task was to create a space with all the components of a gourmet kitchen

'Our clients were looking for more than just a kitchen renovation. They needed a complete overhaul of their favorite room in the house,' says contractor Joshua Baker. Baker felt the original kitchen was lacking in three areas: light, efficiency and character.

To fulfill his clients' objectives, a remodeler infused a gourmet kitchen with light and well-defined character



while complementing the elements present in the clients' Craftsman-style home."

#### Letting in the light

Conferring with architect Thomas French, of Thomas French Architects in McLean, VA, as well as with

BOWA's design director, Stefani Eckenroad, Baker decided the first priority was to get an adequate amount of light into the space. The options for adding windows, however, were limited. Three of the kitchen's four walls were interior, and the only exterior wall was also the only one

The custom cabinetry reflects the home's Craftsman details and Stickley furnishings.

To incorporate more natural light, three skylights were added, the existing window was replaced with a larger unit, and French doors were installed in the dining area (shown at rear). The decorative post on the peninsula counter was designed to trick the eye into thinking it serves a structural purpose; it also adds balance.

available for wall cabinets. The alternative? Skylights. Three units were installed over the work area to provide "a flood of natural light during the day," says Baker. To further increase the amount of natural light, the existing window was replaced with a taller unit (the original sill was lowered to accommodate the bigger window), and a 5'-wide French door and sliding glass door were installed in the adjoining dining area.

A new lighting plan includes track lighting installed in each of the skylight wells to create a "daylight effect after dark"; halogen under-cabinet lighting; and task-oriented recessed "pinhole" light fixtures, which are all controlled by dimmers.

Setting the style was the next objective. Baker took a cue from the home's dominant elements. "The kitchen's character was inspired by the Lafskys' extensive collection of Mission-style furniture. Taking our lead from an antique armoire in the living room, we selected quarter sawn oak and hand-blown antique glass as the feature materials for the space," he explains.

The great attention paid to material selection and detail is reflected in the custom cabinetry. "We did research on the Stickley style to set a historic precedent for the cabinet company [T.W. Murdoch Co.]," explains Eckenroad. A full-scale cabinet door was built and finished for the clients to examine before they made their final decision. The Lafskys' involvement was important in creating the

furniture-like cabinetry they had envisioned for the space, complete with mortise-and-tenon construction, antique glass panes imported from Germany, 'butterfly' detailing and a custom blend of stain and catalyzed lacquer designed to complement the Stickley furnishings found throughout the house.

including range, oven, exhaust hood and dishwasher.

Granite was selected as the countertop material for its aesthetic and functional characteristics. Baker and the Lafskys visited Stone Craft's warehouse to select the actual granite slabs. A high gloss finish was chosen "to reflect incoming natural light, [and] to add to the room's brightness," Eckenroad notes.

Eights weeks after the start of the project, the Lafskys' 500-sq.-ft. kitchen was complete. Having used a temporary setup with their old refrigerator and sink during the renovation, they were happy to have their kitchen back. Of course, what they got back was very different from the original. The remodeled kitchen, while not increased in size, sports double the amount of storage and counter space, "giving them the ability to create a simple dinner for three and the occasional 11-course meal," says Baker. Even more importantly, "it combines the aspects of a state-of-the-art kitchen with the personality and tastes of our clients." ♦



The peninsula and ceiling-mounted cabinets 'provide a sense of separation between food preparation and dining areas while maintaining an open feeling and maximizing light transference,' says BOWA's design director, Stefani Eckenroad. The custom cabinetry features hand-blown imported glass.

## Form and function

Function was as important as style to the homeowners, who enjoy cooking and entertaining. "Each cabinet was designed for a specific task, and includes such items as spice racks of varying size, space for oversized canning pots and pans, and storage for food preparation equipment," says Baker. To coincide with the Lafskys' culinary abilities, commercial-grade appliances were installed,

## Major Products

- Weather Shield windows and French door
- Velux-America skylights
- Viking commercial-grade range
- Dacor convection oven
- Sub-Zero refrigerator
- Miele dishwasher
- Blanco primary sink
- Kohler island prep sink
- Delta faucets
- C.S.L Lighting

## RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR

JOSHUA E. BAKER AND  
LAWRENCE WEINBERG  
BOWA BUILDERS, INC. OF AMERICA  
ARLINGTON, VA



Joshua Baker and Lawrence Weinberg, principals in BOWA Builders, Inc. of America in Arlington, VA, met the challenge posed to them: to remodel a fully buried basement into a luxurious space with functionality and decorative details.

The dark, existing basement was hampered by low-hanging mechanical and plumbing lines; these were hidden beneath curved

soffits. A series of classically detailed arched openings and vaulted halls were designed to open up the space, and more than 60 lights were installed to brighten it.

Details include a Superior gas fireplace with a granite hearth; a custom media unit and wet bar with beveled glass and granite countertops; a custom column that actually masks a structural post at the stair landing; and a redwood wine cellar.

