

REBORN IN BAY HEAD

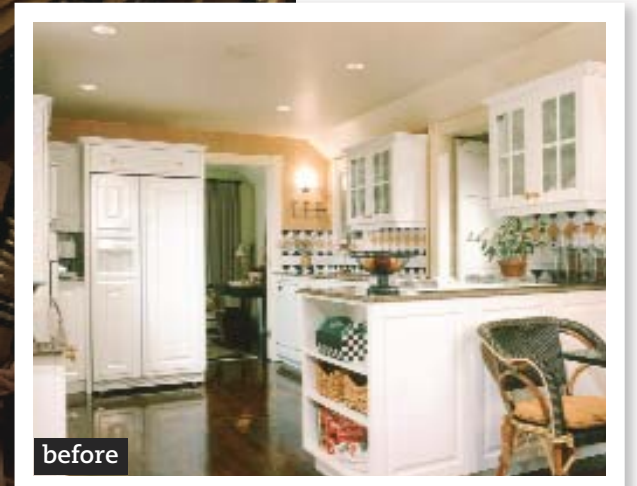
Re-creating a kitchen to mimic itself in a larger version is no small feat, but designer Tere Bresin does just that and adds a dreamy second-floor retreat

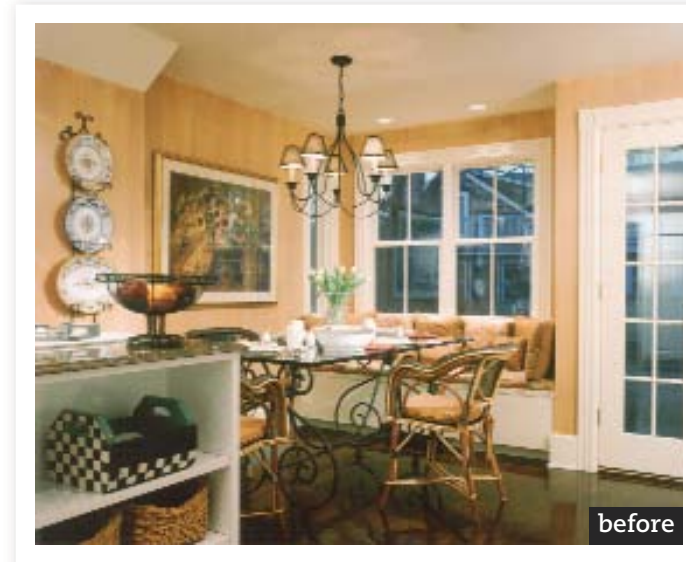
WRITER JILL P. WENTZ

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INTERIOR DESIGNER TERE BRESIN, PROFESSIONAL MEMBER ASID

The renovated kitchen in the 137-year-old home flows effortlessly with access to the dining room, a wraparound porch, the family room, an office and a bathroom. Two sinks, two dishwashers, island seating and increased table and banquette seating make entertaining easy. The terra cotta, black and white tiles are set on the diagonal in the backsplash of the old and new kitchens, making it hard to believe they aren't the same tiles at all.





before

The kitchen's original painter was asked to create and apply a russet glaze for the walls that would mimic the same shade in a sunflower poster that was moved from the wall above the breakfast table in the original kitchen to the opposite wall in the new one. When the new iron light fixture for the breakfast room arrived, the owners weren't pleased with the height, so a local ironmonger shortened the drop.

A HOUSE AT THE SHORE CONJURES UP LOTS OF DIFFERENT VISIONS FOR NEW JERSEYANS.

Most people probably wouldn't picture a century-plus-old home, but the owners of an 1876 Dutch Colonial with magnificent gardens and property that runs along the ocean's edge can't imagine spending their summers anywhere else. Besides a love of the ocean, the owners have a deep respect for the historical significance of their Bay Head

house, one of the oldest in their beach community. When their children left and the homeowners became empty nesters, they decided to expand the kitchen for easier entertaining. Their choice for interior designer was easy: Tere Bresin, a professional member of the American Society of Interior Designers and principal of Beret Design Group Inc.





By using creative space planning, Bresin was able to change two second-floor bedrooms into three bedrooms and a sitting area, all of which are accessed by the main staircase in the original part of the house. Sea horses, a favorite of the wife, add playful touches in the guest area. Matching nightstands, mirrors and swing lamps anchor the bed in the guestroom, which offers two armless chairs as perfect places for relaxing.

in Upper Montclair. Bresin had successfully guided them through major renovations in 1995 that included a new kitchen. This time there were only a few caveats. The couple loved their kitchen and wanted to retain the look, and it was important to the wife that the new sinks and commercial range be white.

After pushing out the far end wall, the kitchen grew from 254 to 485 square feet, allowing room for

more cabinetry and countertops, lots more storage space, an island that seats three, table seating for six instead of four, two sets of French doors leading to the front gardens, an open archway that connects the kitchen with the family room, and a doorway to a French wicker-decorated porch, which was part of the 1995 renovation.

All of the cabinets, tile work, lighting and appli-

ances were replaced. Downlighting dots the ceiling and complements pendants, sconces and undercounter lighting to create multiple layers of light. All of the architectural details in the renovated kitchen were borrowed from the original part of the house.

Although everything was replaced—except the original floor, the breakfast room table and a custom china cabinet to the right of the back staircase, the new kitchen looks remarkably similar to the old one. The wood floor was added on to and finished in dark walnut to mirror the earlier one as well as the floors throughout the original part of the home. The bottom half of the china cabinet was retrofitted with shelves and drawers that replaced a pullout shelf, which previously served as extra counter space and was now unneeded.

Fortunately, Bresin was able to order three barstools for the new granite-topped island and an additional café chair for the breakfast room that match the kitchen's original three. A longer version of the much-loved banquette was rebuilt to nestle between new built-in bookcases, where baskets of table linens and napkins share space with china treasures. A tray ceiling and Tibetan rug in greens and russets accentuate the larger breakfast area, where the banquette now serves as close but separate seating.

Another plus to extending the kitchen was the possibility of added living space on the second floor. When the architect suggested a third staircase for access to a new guest room and sitting area, Bresin countered by suggesting borrowing space from a second-floor bedroom, which would eliminate the need for a third staircase. The homeowners agreed with her. Space was taken from one of the second-floor bedrooms to create a foyer with access to the bedroom on one side, a wall of closets on the other and a passageway that leads to the new sitting area and guest bedroom.

Soft taupes, creams and sea foam—remi-

niscent of the nearby ocean—wrap the peaceful setting of the guest room retreat. A small sleeper sofa, an ottoman, a swivel chair and a television beckon visitors to linger in the sitting room. Matching closets flank the entrance to the guest bedroom with windows that view the front and right lawns and gardens. To configure the shape of the bedroom, Bresin used the space up to the framing of the Dutch Colonial's exterior, which created interesting angles and delighted the homeowners. ■

Jill Wentz is a freelance editor and writer based in Holmdel.

SOURCES Throughout: interior design, and custom cabinetry design, Tere Bresin of Beret Design Group Inc. in Upper Montclair; custom woodwork: Gary Thorgensen in Bay Head. **Kitchen:** pulls, knobs and sinks, Hardware Designs Inc. in Fairfield; Vio-letto granite countertop and island top, fabricated by Stonecraft in Dover; backsplash, glazed tile in a pattern by Beret Design Group through Mediterranean Tile & Marble in Fairfield; appliances, Liebherr refrigerator and Miele dishwashers; Bertazzoni range, Reno's Appliance in Fairfield; French café chairs at island, through Beret Design Group; triple pendant fixture and sconce, West Essex Electrical & Lighting in West Caldwell; recessed lighting, Halo; walls, custom glaze by Tom Burns of Burn Painting Contracting in Mendham; ceiling, "Dove White" by Benjamin Moore. **Breakfast Room:** custom steel table base, through Beret Design Group with glass by Reflections Custom Mirror & Glass Co. in Flanders; banquette, designed by Beret Design Group; window seat, made by Gary Thorgensen with custom cushion by Beret Design Group and cushion and pillow fabrics by Pierre Frey; Tibetan rug, David Anthony in Midland Park; built-in cabinetry, Gary Thorgensen; doors and windows, Andersen; single pendant, West Essex Electrical & Lighting. **Guest Bedroom:** bed, Stanley Furniture Co. in High Point, North Carolina; pillow and sham fabrics, Kravet; mirrors, Classique Home in Ashburn, Virginia; chair, J. Redmond Designs Inc. in Thomasville, North Carolina; draperies, J.F. Fabrics Inc. through Beret Design Group workroom; carpet, Shaw Tuftex. **Sitting Room:** sleeper sofa, homeowners purchased at Macy's; print and sea-horse pillows, homeowners; accent table, Sherrill Furniture; swivel chair, J. Redmond Designs Inc.; ottoman, custom through Beret Design Group; built-in shelving, Gary Thorgensen.