



# Projects: Multi-Room Design

## Weekend in the Country



A couple in the New Jersey suburbs had begun to outgrow their mid-century modern ranch, but they loved their home’s location near a wooded area and stream. Instead of moving, they brought on Princeton Design Collaborative and Tucker Distinctive Kitchens to expand and transform their home.



April 26, 2019

A couple living in the Princeton, N.J. suburbs originally bought their home for its proximity to Manhattan, its close-knit community and the forest view in the backyard. Over the years, their home became a weekend getaway for friends living full-time in the city looking for a peaceful retreat. However, the homeowners were beginning to outgrow the house with their collection of heritage Asian art and their love of entertaining large groups of people.

Homes in the surrounding areas paled in comparison to the existing home's location and original character, so the couple turned to the team at Lawrenceville, N.J.-based **Princeton Design Collaborative** to add a second floor and transform their home into a modern refuge.

### **A Challenging Modern Kitchen**

The existing kitchen was small and cramped, so it was vital to the homeowners that the new space was conducive to entertaining and feeding a crowd. They also felt strongly about adhering to the home's original mid-century style.

"With family visiting often and the enjoyment they get from entertaining friends, we knew the key to success was in the planning," said John Conroy, principal and founding partner of Princeton Design Collaborative.

To make the kitchen as large and open as possible, the team completely reconfigured the first floor and combined the kitchen with the dining room, creating a long linear space in the back of the house. Several bedrooms were relocated to the new upstairs; the two bedrooms on the first floor were eliminated and became part of the new living and dining space, and the original master suite became a guestroom.

On either side of the working kitchen are spaces for dining; all of which face the views out the backyard. A large island with seating for six also provides for additional entertaining.

Cabinet layout and design was crucial for this high-functioning kitchen, so the firm worked with custom cabinet manufacturer and designer Andrew Tucker of Trenton, N.J.-based Tucker Distinctive Kitchens on this space. Since the clients wanted a distinctly mid-century modern look, precision was key.

"A clean, modern aesthetic is more difficult to achieve than traditional design," said Tucker, explaining that features like crown moldings in traditional projects help disguise uneven angles.

Using Euro-style cabinetry, they laid out a streamlined space with glossy, white-painted, handle-less cabinetry around the perimeter. Glass upper cabinets with interior steel frames break up the white, and white quartz countertops set off the stone mosaic backsplash in a herringbone pattern. The suite of appliances includes a column refrigerator, convection stove top, double ovens and two paneled dishwashers that blend with the cabinetry. One conventional appliance, however, is missing.

"When we initially sat down with the clients, we discussed their interest in not having a freezer," said Tucker, explaining that the clients only ever cook with fresh ingredients. "Instead, we gave them a larger refrigerator and installed it with trim to give them a more built-in look without the price."

### **Client-Inspired Bathrooms**

The powder room on the first floor needed to also cater to entertaining, and the clients hoped it would additionally reflect their Asian-American heritage. To do this, the team outfitted the space with a tactile pebble tile floor and blue mosaic tile backsplash that covers the entire wall behind the sink and the toilet.

“This backsplash mosaic is made in large-format tile, so it lays out very quickly and is economical,” said Conroy, adding that it has a subtle Asian feel to it. “The pebble tile floor we chose for its a beachy, South Asian look.”

The new master bath upstairs also has hints of Asian design combined with mid-century modern architecture. Situated in the front of the home under a characteristic butterfly roof and featuring story windows, the new suite fits into the original architecture but has several advantages over the original cramped master.

A walk-in shower was created along the back wall and offers views out the classic story windows, which is more than a step up from the originally tight and uncomfortable master shower. The space also boasts modern plumbing and a light gray tile for a Zen-like, modern appeal. Now with a floating double vanity, LED lighting and a toilet enclosed in a separate water closet, this master suite invites the couple to spend time there.

“These clients were succinct in what they wanted, and they allowed us to fly with it, and that’s why it became so successful,” said Conroy.

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### Source List

**Source List:**

**Architect:** John Conroy, Princeton Design Collaborative

**Designer:** Andrew Tucker, Tucker Distinctive Kitchens

**Kitchen**

**Cabinetry:** Custom by Tucker Distinctive Kitchens

**Countertops:** Porcelanosa

**Faucets:** Grohe

**Refrigerator:** Electrolux

**Sink:** Kraus

**Powder Room**

**Backsplash Tile, Countertops & Floor Tile:** Porcelanosa

**Faucets:** Grohe

**Master Bath**

**Countertops & Tile:** Porcelanosa

**Faucets & Shower Fixtures:** Grohe

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