

Kitchen Upgrade

The liberal use of stone and the addition of a window helps adapt an Oconomowoc kitchen for indoor/outdoor use.

BY TERRY SCHUSTER | PHOTOS COURTESY OF KYLEEN DZPLOCH PHOTOGRAPHY



A transformative kitchen design of an Oconomowoc home on a six-acre wooded lot included the use of stone and the addition of a window that helped it transition to an indoor/outdoor feel. The family's wish list included more sunlight in the space, a focal point on the hood, better organization and a tie to the outdoor entertaining space.

They also needed a better functioning laundry/mudroom and powder room. "They have two young children who are big into sports, which requires a lot of shoes and sports equipment," explains Stacy Wild Nelson, designer for Kowalske Kitchen and Bath.

The family had moved into the 1997 home in 2016 and had been slowly updating it over the past seven years to a more neutral palette with soothing blues and greens. That posed a unique opportunity for the Kowalske team to make the kitchen appear as if it had been remodeled at the same time.

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Above: A plaster oven hood is a focal point of the kitchen.

Left: A large, sliding window brightens the room and serves as a pass-through for food and drinks to the outdoor deck bar.



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“The current homeowner has an appreciation for more than one design style, so the new look is more eclectic,” says Nelson. “Throughout the home there are traditional and modern elements, with natural rustic organic finishes along with some touches of industrial sprinkled in.”

One of the elements of the remodeled kitchen is a large sliding window over the sink, which replaced drywall and cabinets. “Their back deck is also off of the kitchen, which allowed them to add the bar counter outside of the window for extra entertaining seating and an easy pass-through for food and drinks,” Nelson says. “Their children like having lunch outside at the deck bar.”

The stone used in the kitchen is a custom mix of three different split-faced collections, and is the same stone used on the fireplace remodel six years ago. The fireplace stone was selected to have a more European and organic feel with an over-grout application.

“The stone has an array of colors that will allow for longevity of the design as color trends change but also feeling neutral at the same time,” Nelson says. “The homeowner is big into biophilic design [bringing the

Above: The stone is a custom mix of three different split-faced collections.

outdoors inside with natural materials], which allowed for the open family room/kitchen to have continuity and look like it was completed at the same time.”

The homeowner wanted a focal point in the kitchen on the back wall that would mimic the scale of the fireplace in the family room, which has vaulted ceilings.


“We went with a plaster hood that framed out the area,” Nelson says. “The hood was designed for a more artisan feel rather than going with an appliance hood or a wood hood. We needed something that would stand out from the beautiful rift sawn oak cabinets. The smoother finish of the plaster hood stands out from the texture of the stone.”

Nelson’s favorite part of the remodel is also the brightest one.


“The biggest transformation of the space is the large window that completely changed the feel by opening up the space,” she says. **MKE**

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