

ROOM WITH A VIEW

Staging: Joy Wilkins
Designer and Contractor: Custom Kitchens by John Wilkins Inc.



When Edward Foster came down with Parkinson's disease in 1995, he and his wife, Isabella, knew they would ultimately have to make some major life changes to accommodate his mobility. "We love where we are and have a great view," says Isabella Foster of their Ballena Bay home. Since they couldn't bear to leave their water setting, they decided to commit to some extensive remodeling so Edward could fully participate in family life.

Functionality guided the floor plan and major elements of the kitchen design. The large center island has two heights—one for Edward, who has long legs and stands nearly 6 feet, and one for 5-foot-4 Isabella. For countertops and cabinetry, Foster steered away from "too slick" materials. "I'm from Italy," she says, "We have so much granite and marble there that it doesn't impress me much."

The new kitchen is now a nexus for a variety of family activities. A breakfast table and seating area are adjacent to the center island, and a countertop and small glass cabinet separate the kitchen from a dining area. To communicate with the living room, which sits half a floor below the kitchen, an arched pass-through was added. Now instead of facing a wall when she does the dishes, Isabella can talk with company and enjoy a view of the channel.

MODERN RUSTIC

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When Madelyn Chaber met with Joy Wilkins of Custom Kitchens by John Wilkins Inc. to discuss her kitchen remodel, Chaber had a very specific list of wants. “I knew I wanted a copper sink and copper stove hood,” she says. She also wanted a center island that looked more like a piece of furniture than a piece of built-in cabinetry.

“Rustic” comes up a lot when Chaber talks about the look and feel she sought. Limestone countertops and pale yellow cabinets with a slightly distressed Old World finish give the kitchen’s perimeter a nearly ethereal quality. “I like the idea of keeping the outside edges soft and light,” she says. The room’s centerpiece, an island topped with rich Red Dragon marble, adds deep earth tones.

Chaber’s son, 14-year-old Charlie, was resistant to remodeling at first. “He thought it was a waste of time,” says Chaber. Now that it’s done, he enjoys it and likes to tour his friends through while making them guess where the dishwasher is—challenging, because it and the refrigerator hide behind cabinetry facing. ■