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Redoing the kitchen was a top priority of the home's new owners who craved clean lines and openness in the kitchen. New cabinets were paired with blue-veined Colorado Yule marble to transform a darkly fitted kitchen into a bright, open and welcoming space for the family. The kitchen also received new appliances, flooring and hardware to further brighten the hardworking space at the back of the home off a family room.

# SHADES OF PALE

written by STEPHANIE BOYLE MAYS photography by BRUCE WOLF





"I WANTED EVERYTHING WHITE, SIMPLE AND BRIGHT. VERY CLEAN AND CLASSIC; THAT'S WHAT I GO FOR," explained Domnika Crainic of the home she and her husband bought in southwest Portland. Built in 2008, the home's layout and yard were perfect for the couple and their children. The same, however, was not true of the kitchen. "The cabinets and floors were dark, and the walls were a kind of yellow. I knew we had to redo it."

Acting as her own designer, Crainic enlisted the help of Eugene Voytenko of Imperial Cabinets, who had worked with the couple on their previous home. Voytenko built the cabinetry and was the project's general contractor. "The kitchen was really disconnected from the house and felt like it wasn't a part of it," he said.

"We moved the range and hood from the island to the back wall of the kitchen, which opened the room up and made it a part of the house. We also reconfigured the island into a rectangular shape. And we moved the refrigerator to the side where it was accessible but out of the main view."

The new cabinets are full height in the 10-foot ceilinged room. "And we built them with a double face frame with an edge detail and 1 1/8-inch thick inset doors. It's how cabinets were built a long time ago." The finished cabinets, moldings and other trim were painted white. New flooring in a white finished oak helped complete the palette.

Crainic found the project's showstopper at Oregon Tile and Marble: a blue-veined white Colorado Yule marble. Marble, however, is more difficult to install than either granite or quartz because it is softer and more porous, and it's more difficult to maintain because it is prone to etching. Its beautiful and distinctive veining adds an additional layer of complexity to the design and installation.

"Eugene and I had worked together before," said Alex Shkurinskiy, owner of Artistic Stone Design who installed the marble backsplash and counters. "And he knows I like a challenge."

"Here the challenge was to create a countertop which had mitered edges that were proportional to the kitchen. The idea is to strike a perfect balance between the thickness of the edge and the amount the counter overhangs past the cabinet," he explained.

A further challenge was installing the marble backsplash all the way to the ceiling. Such broad expanses of marble made the careful placement of seams and the stone's distinctive veining all the more visually important.

Crainic, the mother of three boys age seven or younger, admits that white marble might not be the most practical choice. "But it's our house, and it's what we wanted. We are going to be here forever so I'm ok with having a little patina."

OPPOSITE One of the kitchen's biggest transformations came when the location of the range and hood was moved from the center of the island to the room's back wall. The reconfiguration resulted in an unobstructed view of the kitchen and let natural light flood the space RIGHT A small porcelain container from Anthropologie holds wooden kitchen utensils. BELOW Veins in the marble were meticulously placed to ensure the mitered counter edges were crisp and seamless.



#### PROJECT SOURCES

CONTRACTOR: Earthchoice Construction LLC

CABINETRY: Imperial Cabinets  
[www.imperialcabinets.net](http://www.imperialcabinets.net)

COUNTERTOPS: Artistic Stone Design  
[www.artisticstonedesign.com](http://www.artisticstonedesign.com)

KITCHEN APPLIANCES: Standard TV & Appliance  
[www.standardtvandappliance.com](http://www.standardtvandappliance.com)

Kitchen Appliances: Standard TV & Appliance: Sub-Zero, Wolf, Miele; Plumbing Fixtures: Waterstone, Shaws