

THE
BOSTON

Globe

06.06.04 /// MAGAZINE

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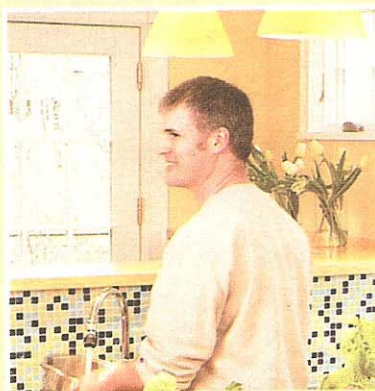


LELIEVRE KITCHEN

EXTERIOR



BOB LELIEVRE



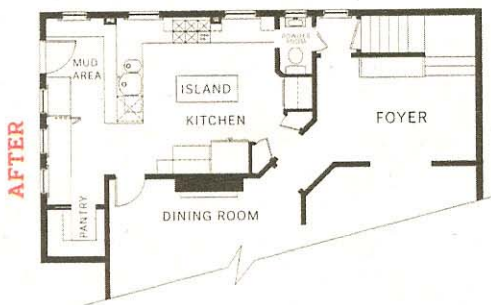
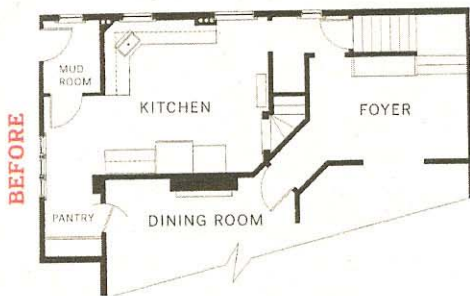
BEFORE



AFTER



WALLS CAME DOWN in order to open the kitchen (right) to the windows and doors that overlook the backyard. When not in use, the stools are tucked beneath the granite-topped island, which floats on three metal columns. Above: A half-wall defines the rear entry and provides storage.



New Era

Unlike their Victorian predecessors, these two contemporary families have created welcoming centers for more than cooking.

In the Victorian era, most kitchens were deliberately cut off from the rest of the house. The goal was to keep the mess, smells, and noise of cooking from penetrating the dining room. Doors, winding hallways, and a butler's pantry were used to put distance between where food was prepared and where it was consumed.

Today, kitchens are more likely to be the center of the household — a place where kids do their homework, the dog lounges, and even the company helps chop tomatoes. So when the owners of two 1897 Dorchester homes recently faced kitchen renovations, both wanted more welcoming spaces. However, one family wanted a totally modern and open scheme, while the other wanted to create a space that reflected the vintage qualities of the home. Both houses will be among the 14 featured properties in the eighth annual Codman Square House Tour, a community fund-raising event.

When Bob Lelievre and his wife, Lisa, decided to renovate their kitchen, they did not feel restricted by the style of their Victorian house. "We're not wedded to period architecture and style," says Bob Lelievre. The space, which had last been renovated about 20 years ago, had "no flow," he says. "We gutted it and made some major changes." To help with the renovation, the couple hired architect David Pill of Pill-Maharam Architects in Winchester.

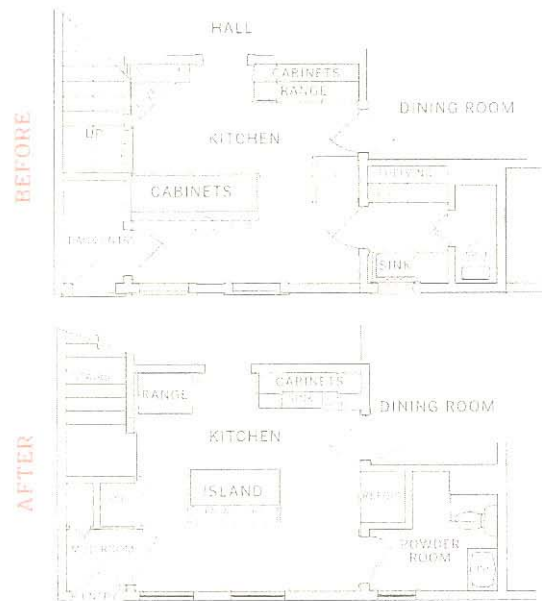
In addition to wanting a more efficient and family-friendly kitchen, the Lelievres needed a powder room on the first floor. To accommodate that change, they took out the back stair-

Tina Cassidy is a member of the Globe staff.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE HENDERSON; "BEFORE": PHOTO BY DAVID PILL







case, which they found superfluous. Now, a new half-bath can be accessed from a small hallway off the main entry hall.

Pill also eliminated an enclosed back hall, which had kept the kitchen dark and cut off from the backyard. In its place, he created a kind of mudroom defined by half-walls that leave it open to a bank of new windows across the back of the house. Now the 240-square-foot kitchen is flooded with natural light.

Granite-topped counters and an island where the family of four eats most meals are highlighted by custom cherry cabinets in a modern nod to Mission-style woodworking. The new floor is bamboo, a material that is environmentally friendly, comes prefinished, and is reasonably priced. The Victorians would have appreciated such utility.

While it might appear that Joe and Lisa Levinger took a less radical approach to renovating their 160-square-foot kitchen, there is little left of the old, inefficient space. The existing kitchen had no sink – they had to use one in the adjacent bathroom – and plenty of pink laminate. The refrigerator door, when pulled open, would hit a central peninsula, and the stove had no hood, so smoky meals often triggered the fire alarm. They wanted the small space to be more efficient, have modern amenities, and still fit with the rest of the shingle-style house.

They called upon The Kennebec Co., a Maine-based firm that reproduces period millwork, to create new dark-stained oak cupboards. They altered the layout of the room slightly by changing a few doors but stuck with the original footprint. An island with plenty of plugs for appliances and a green granite countertop replaced the awkward peninsula. A Bosch dishwasher is hidden behind a wooden panel made to look like an old flour bin. And wood slats in front of the sink mimic the vents that would have been necessary in a Victorian kitchen, where sweaty tin sinks needed ventilation. **BC**

On Tour

Two tours highlighting architecture and urban gardens in Boston's neighborhoods are being held next Sunday. The Codman Square House Tour is from noon to 5 p.m. and includes 14 houses. Tickets are \$25. Information is available at www.codmansquarehousetour.com or by calling 617-265-7460. The Roslindale House Tour is from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and includes seven gardens, six houses, and a church. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$22 on the day of the tour. For details, visit www.roslindale.net or call 617-325-6102.