

WOMEN WHO INSPIRE • 11 OUTDOOR ADVENTURES • PLANT PARENTHOOD

Bethesda

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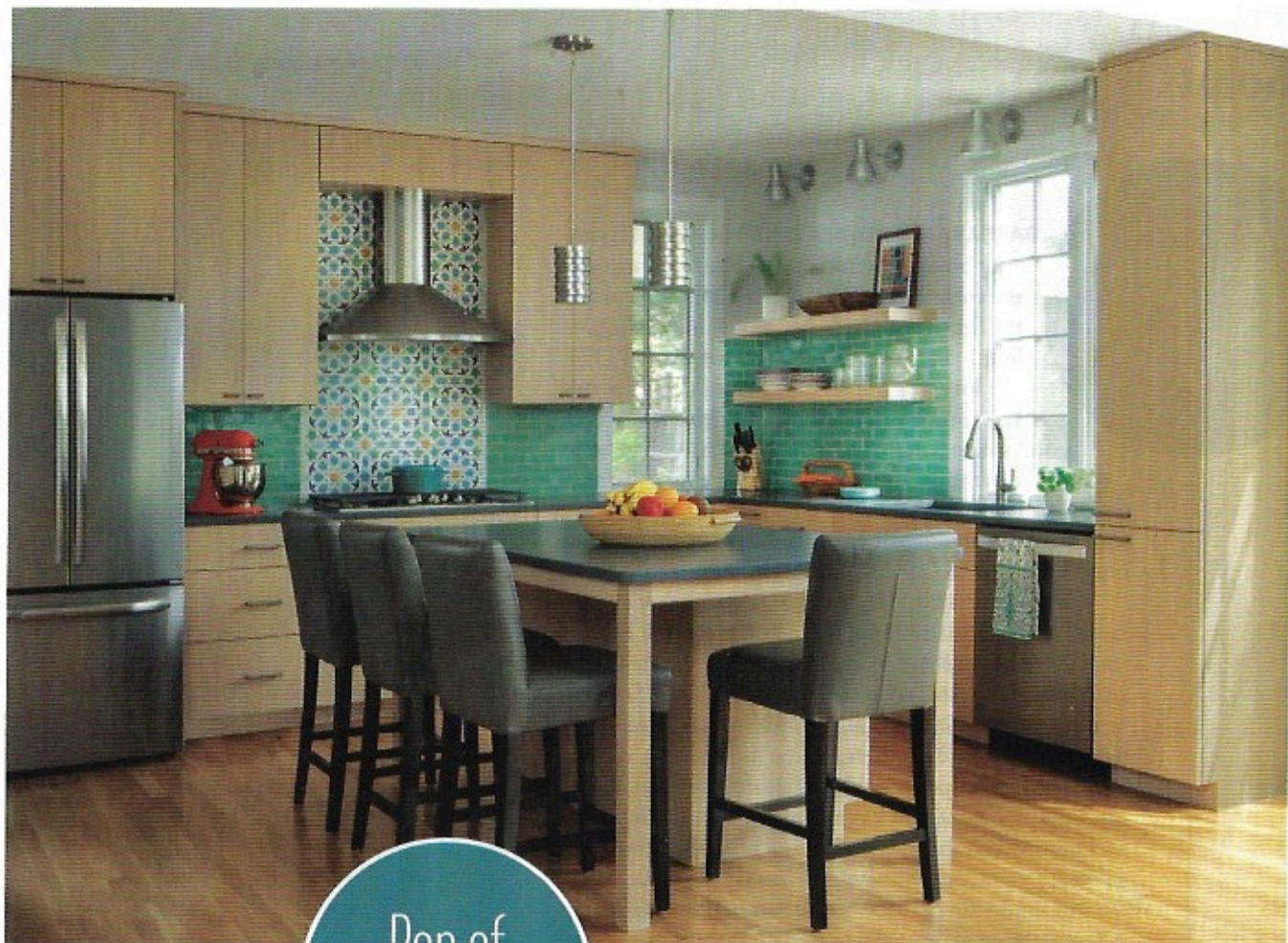
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Pop of Color

WHEN BECKY FEINBERG, 45, moved into a home in Bethesda's Wyngate neighborhood in 2017, she knew she wanted to make some changes in the future. Built in 1952, the colonial had three bedrooms, one bath and a minuscule kitchen. It was fitting for her family back then—Feinberg would soon give birth to her first child—but when she got pregnant with her second in 2019, she knew it was time for her and her two kids to make the space truly their own.

Feinberg enlisted the help of Michael Rouse, principal architect of D.C.-based MPR Architecture, and Michael Thiede of Bethesda Contracting to help bring her vision to life via a two-story addition totaling about 1,000 square feet. A key component of the project was the new colorful, comfortable kitchen flowing into the family room. For her, it all began with the tile. "I wanted it to be the focal point," Feinberg says. She was drawn to the

dark blue, light blue and orange hues—the latter is one of her favorite colors—of the handmade zellige tiles that she found online at Mosaic House, a design store in New York City. (The tiles are crafted in Fez, Morocco.) "There are dozens of geometric patterns and colors of tiles, and you just mix and match whatever you want," she says. That resulted in her custom stove backsplash, set off by teal subway tile.

"A lot of modern [designs] nowadays tend to be more stark with the materials; the artwork provides the accent colors," Thiede says. "But this is the opposite: The materials of the project are the showpieces. People shouldn't be afraid to bring materials and colors in if it's done tastefully."

The design team pulled in lots of neutrals—dark quartz countertops, modern satin nickel pendants, whitewashed oak cabinets,

floating shelves—to counter the brighter shades. "Mike [Rouse] had to remind me that everything in the room can't be screaming," Feinberg says with a laugh.

The circular hood was selected to soften the harder edges in the kitchen and to let the tile shine through.

A must-have? The island. "I wanted an eat-in, and the island accomplished that," Feinberg says. "We have almost all of our meals there."

Plenty of light was also key (Rouse remained true to the body of the home by using more traditional window elements), as was the screened porch that was added off the side of the kitchen. A pass-through window to the porch allows Feinberg to serve her kids outside. It's a clever touch that speaks to the playful, family-friendly design of the space. "We spend 98% of our time here," Feinberg says. "It's so easy to use."

As for the former kitchen? It's now the powder room.

PHOTO BY ROBERT RADIFERA



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MPR Architecture specializes in custom residential design including additions, renovations and new home construction. Michael holds a Master of Architecture from the University of Maryland, is a member of the American Institute of Architects and is registered in Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia and North Carolina. In 2020, Rouse was honored to be included in Home & Design's Portfolio of Top 100 Designers.

Q: What qualities set your company apart from other residential architects and designers?

A: In one word: listening. MPR Architecture works directly with our clients to take their needs and desires and turn them into functional, beautiful and enduring spaces. The most important part of that process is listening to our clients and having our architectural solutions respond thoughtfully to their desires and the unique characteristics of the site. As architects, we bring a creative and independent eye to all solutions and advocate for our clients through our teamwork with consultants, interior designers and contractors.

Q: Why should clients consider a residential architect like MPR Architecture?

A: Beyond helping to synthesize our client's thoughts and wishes, we offer a full range of services including design, bid and the construction process. Our main focus is creating the custom design for the project while bringing creativity, energy efficiency, and thorough documentation to help keep unforeseen costs at bay. With our clients, we help to guide decisions, analyze project costs, negotiate contracts and serve as advocates during construction. Our goal is to make the process as seamless and as enjoyable as possible for our clients, offering rational and clear advice along the way.