

A romantic dining room with a round table, ornate chairs, and a chandelier. The room is decorated with gold-framed mirrors, a colorful abstract painting, and a centerpiece of white flowers. The chairs have red and white polka-dot upholstery. The table is set with glassware, plates, and a silver tray.

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CHEVY CHASE CHARMER

A homeowner renovates a historic home,
adding intimate yet functional spaces.

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"I love old and vintage things
that work with the historic age of
the house, but I try to incorporate
contemporary things too—what I
call modern classics," Cara says.



WHEN CARA MEDEIROS,

HER HUSBAND AND TWO CHILDREN MOVED INTO A 1907 FOURSQUARE-STYLE HOME IN CHEVY CHASE, WASHINGTON, DC, SHE CHOSE NOT TO RUSH INTO A RENOVATION, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE HOUSE HAD A SMALL KITCHEN AND NO FAMILY ROOM. "I WANTED US TO LIVE THERE FOR A WHILE TO SEE WHAT OUR NEEDS WOULD BE," CARA SAYS. "A LOT OF CHEVY CHASE HOMEOWNERS ADD A GREAT ROOM (COMBINED DEN/KITCHEN) IN THE BACK, LIKE A BIG BOX. BUT I WANTED TO EXPERIENCE THE INTERESTING ARCHITECTURE AND NOT DO ANYTHING RIGHT AWAY."

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HOW TO INTEGRATE A MODERN KITCHEN INTO A HISTORIC HOUSE

"It's all about creating balance—trying something with a modern sensibility that works with the period of the home," says kitchen designer Nadia Subaran, who worked on the Medeiros kitchen.

Subaran's tips for a well-designed kitchen:

Panel the refrigerator, freezer drawers and pantry space to look like furniture.

Design a custom hood. In this home, it is a mantel-style stove hood with corbels, hiding the internal venting system.

Create an Old World-style butler's pantry, including glass-fronted cupboards above, to showcase dishware and stemware.

Combine a mix of closed cabinetry and open shelving.

Use materials consistent with the period of the home.

Consider a brick-pattern subway tile as the backsplash to match an older or vintage-style home.

Make the island fit the home's style and period. Here, columns and a distressed black-paint finish were added. On the opposite side, built-in small appliances were installed.

Use lighting from different eras and styles. Here, an old-style sconce blends with a modern classic blown-glass chandelier, as well as discreet recessed fixtures.

Pick appropriate hardware, like the bridge faucet at the sink or the exposed hinges from inset panels on the cabinets.

Match flooring to the rest of the home for continuity.





"We definitely needed a bigger kitchen with an eat-in area," Cara says. "I wanted a six-burner stovetop, a Sub Zero fridge and an island, but I also wanted to be true to the style of the house."





The home's renovation happened slowly, in thoughtfully planned stages. Initially, Cara had to figure out how to create an ideal kitchen for the historic house and her growing family. (The old kitchen was only 12-by-12 feet.) "We definitely needed a bigger kitchen with an eat-in area," she says. "I wanted a six-burner stovetop, a Sub Zero fridge and an island, but I also wanted to be true to the style of the house."

Before work could begin, however, Cara had to get her expansion plans approved by the Historic Preservation Office in Montgomery County. She eventually ended up with a beautiful kitchen with an eating area and a built-in butler's pantry, all accessible from the new family room. Also added were the sunroom, dining room, foyer and rooms upstairs.

Above the kitchen and family room, Cara configured a master bedroom suite. As the final part of the renovation, the sunroom was fully

The living room imbues casual elegance that fits the family's lifestyle. The understated color palette is appropriately relaxing for the room.



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enclosed in order to create a mudroom with extra seating and a much-needed coat closet.

"I love the idea of destinations," Cara says regarding how and why she created several smaller-scale practical rooms. "They fit the house better. I also like that from the kitchen I can see everywhere, yet each space has a sense of destination and a degree of privacy."

All the rooms are tied together by Cara's sense of design; she seamlessly blends the old and the new. "I love old and vintage things that work with the historic age of the house, but I try to incorporate contemporary things too, what I call modern classics," Cara says. "I love our home. It's simple, clean and elegant, with a great flow to it."





The bedroom is a masterful mix of classic and modern styles, as exemplified by the traditional-style nightstand and the modern print on the accent pillows.



