

*Part of a 1,800-foot addition, the contemporary great room is the focal point of this “decolonialized” Massachusetts home. Furnishings and color were used to help delineate separate areas: retro stools flank the kitchen island, black high-backed chairs create a distinct dining area, and sofas and a massive stone fireplace anchor the family room.*

# TRADITIONAL OUTSIDE Modern Inside

*A spacious addition transforms a small Colonial into a dream house.*

FOUR YEARS AGO, WHEN CYNDY AND JOHN BERSANI purchased a small 1950s Colonial in Weston, Massachusetts, they knew it wasn't their dream home. But today—thanks to a 1,800-square-foot addition designed by Cambridge-based architect Marcus Gleysteen—their dreams have been realized.

The addition includes a family room where they can sit by the fire and watch television with their three children, a kitchen, and an informal dining area with a table large enough to accommodate the whole family and then some. Upstairs, a new master bedroom and bath answered the need for more space and privacy.

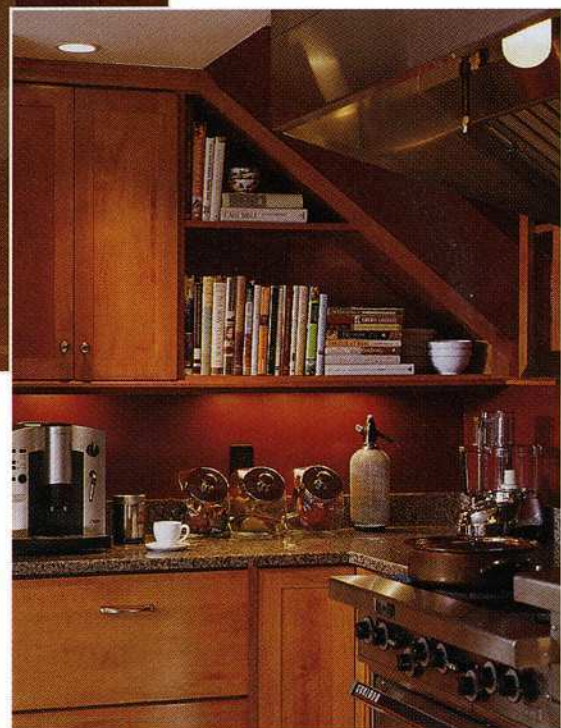
“Nothing too fancy” is how John describes their family style. “We were looking for something that didn't exude a formal, New England feel.” So Marcus designed a modern-on-the-inside, traditional-on-the-outside addition. “The house has been completely reinvented,” says Marcus. “We decolonialized it.”

The result is a family-oriented space where the kitchen, family room, and informal dining area are open to one another. Marcus also brought the outside in by using large windows and skylights.

John, a real estate developer, and Cyndy, a stay-at-home mom, both take cooking seriously. The couple chose a Garland

commercial range with six gas burners, two ovens, a griddle top, and a broiler. The restaurant-grade range came uninsulated, so Marcus built a fireproof stainless steel jacket around it to prevent a fire hazard. The commercial-grade exhaust system and ventilation hood is equipped with a sprinkler system in case things get out of hand.

“As a visual piece, the range dominates the kitchen,” says Marcus. “We tried to balance that by installing a



*In an effort to use all the available space in the kitchen, niches were carved into the cabinetry for storage. The painted walls and backsplash play off red tones in the family room.*

by STACY KUNSTEL ■ photography SAM GRAY



*John, Cyndy, and daughter Kristin prepare for a Friday-night feast around the wood-fired pizza oven.*

large-scale island to act as a buffer between the cool, hard, stainless steel and the family living areas.” The warm, naturally finished maple cabinetry also helps balance the space. When John and Cyndy cook, they can monitor what the kids have on television or talk to them while they’re at the table. They also have views of the stone fireplace and the backyard.

Interior designer Christine Welsh helped the Bersanis delineate the separate areas with furnishings and color. “One of the first things we did was to find the colors the Bersanis responded to in the rugs,” says Christine. “They really liked the warm garnet and gold colors, so those are the ones we used in the room.” Christine used the rugs to define the seating areas in the family room and dining area. She also custom designed the sectional sofa so that people sitting on it can focus on either the fireplace or the television.

Upstairs in the master suite addition, Christine played off John and Cyndy’s love of modern design with a contemporary-looking chair and ottoman and a stylized lamp. The couple asked for simple blinds instead of more formal draperies.

As the first leaves change from green to gold, the Bersanis exchange their new addition for the backyard and its free-standing pizza oven. “We use it practically every Friday night in good weather,” says Cyndy. “We start a fire at three in the afternoon and then push the embers back. It takes about a minute and a half to cook a pizza.” The family also roasts vegetables and pork loins in the oven and has even done a turkey in the wood-fired structure. It’s their outdoor fireplace in winter.

“We truly love to cook,” says John. “We didn’t build the kitchen and the pizza oven outside for something to look at. We use them.” ☆



*Varying ceiling heights in the master bedroom addition add drama to the space, as does an oversize mirror above the fireplace. Laminated woven shades, which can be lowered, cover the windows. The Bersanis chose to leave the transom area above bare.*

## **Resources**

*Architect:* Marcus Gleysteen for Gleysteen Design LLC, Cambridge, MA. 617-492-6060. [gleysteendesign.com](http://gleysteendesign.com)

*Carpentry of the pizza oven:* Perfection Unlimited Construction, Woburn, MA. 781-721-0920.

*General contractor:* Tom Grant for Eco Structures, Inc., Norfolk, MA. 508-541-4108. [ecostructures.com](http://ecostructures.com)

*Interior designer:* Christine Welsh for Brookline Design Group, Brookline, MA. 617-731-3344.

*Stonework and assembly of the pizza oven:* Dan Woolard for Woolard Masonry, Woburn, MA. 781-933-7782.