

A Marvel in Marble

BY ALANA WILLIS





FROM the moment they purchased their 1950s-era Denver house, Pam Nuñez and Rick Best knew they'd found their forever home.



Because of this, the couple refused to sell their house and move to a larger one when they became confronted with space issues. They instead opted for an extensive, 6-month remodel to add a two-car garage, a master bedroom, and perhaps most importantly, a more functional, open kitchen.

“The house had a very tiny galley kitchen prior to the remodel,” recalls Pam. When the couple’s partnership with the original architect didn’t work out, Pam contacted contractor Luke Jones of AAA Home Improvements, a local

firm specializing in all phases of residential remodel and construction. “Pam had worked with an architect previous to starting with us,” explains Jones. “We were able to build off of these concepts to create a floor plan that fit what was important to her.” Jones quickly realized that, of all aspects of the couple’s major remodel, the kitchen space was the most important area to them.

To help Pam and Rick achieve the most usable and attractive space for their kitchen, Jones came up with a creative solution. “By moving the kitchen into what was the garage and placing the laundry room between the kitchen and front door, we were able to create open spaces between each room but still break up the home and maintain the identity of the individual spaces,” he explains.

Once the design concept was nailed down, the first step was to build a new two-car garage in the couple’s backyard, to take the place of the original garage that would now be the kitchen. Despite the enormity of the transformation and the sheer scope of the project, Pam and Rick stayed positive and easy-going. The close collaboration between contractor and homeowners led to an extremely creative and effective exchange of ideas, and together with interior designer Patti Lockwood, who assisted with cabinet design and material selection, Pam’s dream kitchen began to take shape.

“We worked together with Pam and Patti to come up with the current design,” Luke says. “We wanted to create the maximum amount of storage and work space while still maintaining a sit-up peninsula.”



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One existing design element in Pam and Rick’s former garage worked particularly well for their new kitchen space- the vaulted ceiling that draws the eye upward and gives it an open and breathable quality. “I wanted to take advantage of the peaked ceiling in the old garage in my new kitchen which made it feel bigger,” Pam says. “We added bead board to the ceiling to give it a more

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comfortable feel.”

Jones agrees, “I think that the vaulted ceiling was the highlight as it made the space feel so much larger but also gave us the flexibility to do a tiered cabinet design.” Getting the vaulted ceiling to center over the kitchen required removing the existing ceiling and constructing new vaulted framing, which posed something of a challenge for Jones and his crew. “The biggest hurdle was finding ways to re-support the existing structure in order to remove load-bearing walls,” he remembers.

Two-tone Bridgewood Advantage cabinets add a modern take on the farmhouse-style kitchen. Sleek stainless steel appliances by GE Monogram provide all the professional conveniences and functions to easily accommodate cooking for both small and large parties. Perhaps the biggest statement in the kitchen is the honed Bianco Rhino marble countertops acquired from The Stone Collection, chosen by Pam after looking at more than 450 different slabs. “While so many granites are beautiful, I couldn’t see this kitchen with countertops

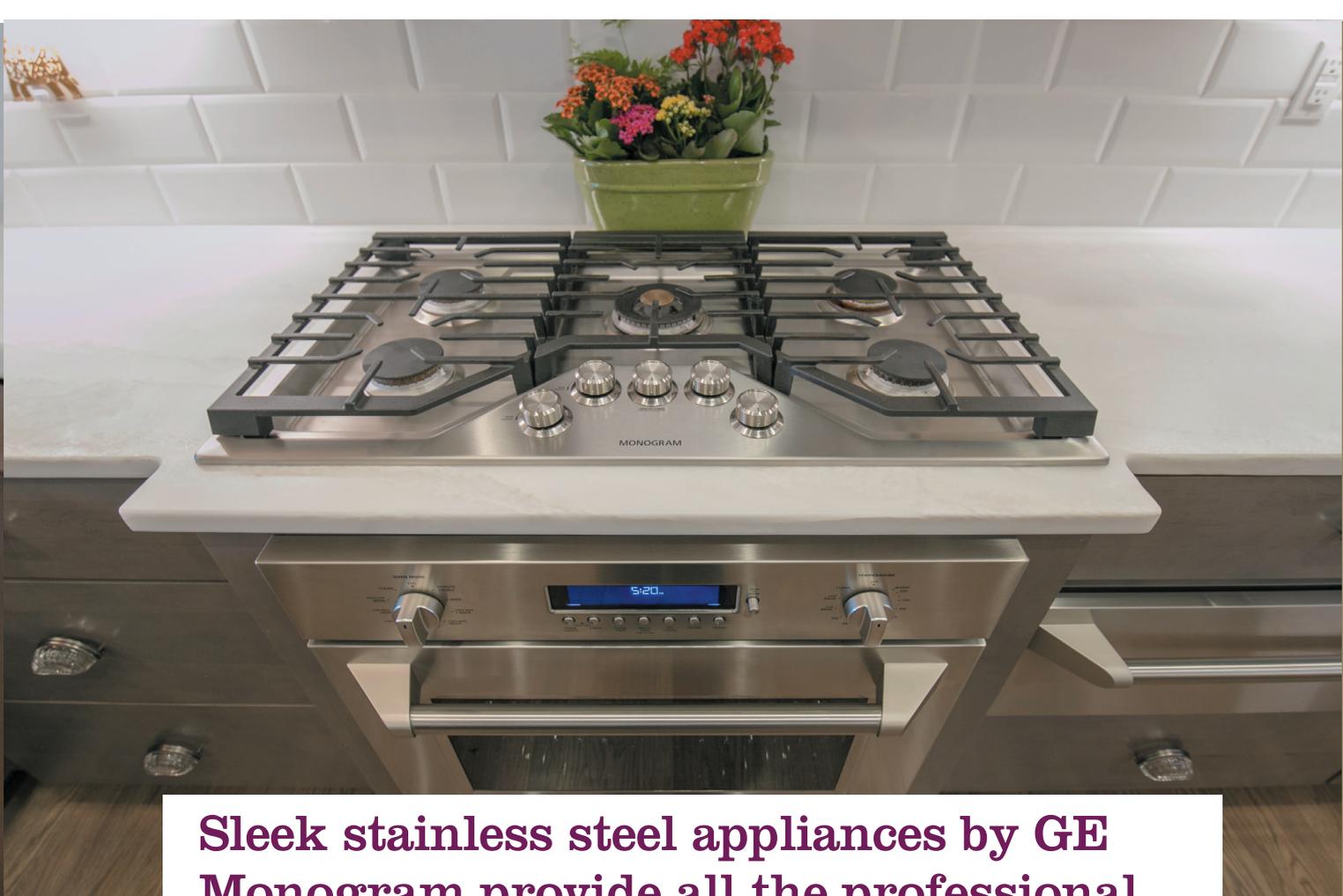


that were too busy,” says Pam. “I saw the beautiful white marble and it did the job!”

An ornate bronze light fixture from Urban Lights was selected after a lengthy quest for the perfect accent. “During our remodel we had recessed lights installed everywhere which left me to purchase only one light feature,” says Pam. “I searched for 4 hours for the right feature then I slept on it and went back the next day and purchased it.”

A white subway tile backsplash completes the brilliant, minimalist design of the kitchen. Pam was particularly drawn to the tile because of its classic simplicity. “I decided very early on my choice would be white subway tile which I could look at every day, week after week, month after month and not get tired of it.”

Upon completion of the Nuñez’s remodeling project, they were able to finally see the end result of a renovation that had been half a year in the making, and they were not disappointed! “I think my remodel is lovely,” says Pam. “I put so much thought into every detail to make certain things matched and looked good. I’m really proud of it and would have done nothing different in retrospect.”



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Pam has already managed to throw two small dinner parties, and plans on hosting more gatherings in the future. "I'm planning on an end-of-season party and a girls' happy hour in a few weeks. Maybe a holiday party too....I'll see" she muses.

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