

# K+BB

## Nature's Magic

By Erinn Waldo

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Eco-friendly design has begun popping up everywhere, but one kitchen went a step further in its redesign. Crafted by Barbara Krai of [Barbara Krai Interior Design](#), this Clearwater, Fla., kitchen underwent a therapeutic transformation.

“I wanted the space to have a peaceful aura,” said Krai, referring to her clients’ yoga practice and vegan lifestyle. “So I worked on creating a space that would be warm and welcoming, kid friendly and [provide] an inspirational space and healing environment.”

The original kitchen was far from reflecting its owners’ cleansing lifestyles. With a four-seat booth and a closed off dining room, the kitchen had only a small space that disregarded its water views. “They felt isolated in the enclosed kitchen,” commented Krai. There was not enough room to add the appliances they wanted, which included two sinks, two dishwashers and a large refrigerator. By opening into the attached dining room and incorporating a structural post, the owners could have the room they needed for a family of four.

“In addition to the new kitchen appliances and more seating space, aesthetics were very important to them,” explained Krai. She first showed the owners blue granite, which later became a catalyst for the rest of the design. “With their waterfront location and the desire to

incorporate as many natural elements as possible into the design, it was a natural choice,” she added. Natural cherry wood cabinets give the space warmth while contrasting with the granite and travertine stone floor. Above these, glass and stainless steel cabinets lend light and tie into the appliances. “I wanted to keep the upper cabinets from being too heavy and enclosing the space,” Krai said.

Since the previously enclosed space now opens into the dining room, seating was created for four at the island and six to eight in a booth. With a 36-in. height, the bar on the island allows for more usable counter space and an open view. Meanwhile, the booth sports leather with a Crylon finish for the seats and a washable textured fabric for the channel backs.

“The booth had to be very user friendly and kid forgiving since it would be used for homework and craft projects as well as dining,” explained Krai. Counter space, a recessed television, a custom office area and a cork wall for displaying the children’s artwork add to the seating area. To keep a cozy feeling in the booth, Krai created an open barrier with two varieties of preserved grasses, which are lit by an LED strip.

Inside the booth, a copper table was created using a copper sheet with a swirled finish, which was also coated with an epoxy finish. A solid cherry bullnose edge then borders the table. “How delightful it is to dine on a shiny copper table!” exclaimed Krai. As copper has been shown in research to have healing effects, the material frequents the design and appears again in the copper leaf ceiling and the hood of the central fireplace.

“The use of myriad unique and very textural and artistic elements playing off each other create the dramatic but also warm and inviting space,” said Krai. “The overall feel, as my client says, was ‘magical.’”



A tiny, isolated kitchen was a far cry from reflecting the lifestyles of a yoga instructor and a vegan. Crafted by Barbara Krai of Barbara Krai Interior Design, this Clearwater, Fla., kitchen was transformed into a peaceful, yet kid-friendly space.



“When we started to look at materials, the first thing I showed them was the blue granite, which they fell in love with,” said Krai. “Because of their waterfront location and the desire to incorporate as many natural elements as possible into the design, it was a natural choice.”



Natural cherry wood cabinets add warmth and contrast with the granite and travertine stone floor. Above these, glass and stainless steel cabinets lend lightness and tie into the appliances. “I wanted to keep the upper cabinets from being too heavy and enclosing the space,” explained Krai.



A large booth makes up for the previous dining space with room for six to eight. Leather with a Crylon finish covers the seats, and a washable textured fabric was used for the channel backs. “The booth had to be very user friendly and kid forgiving since it would be used for homework and craft projects as well as dining,” explained Krai.



A round copper table was created using a copper sheet with a swirled finish, which was also coated with an epoxy finish. A solid cherry bullnose edge then borders the table.



To keep a cozy feeling in the booth, Krai created an open barrier with two varieties of preserved grasses, which are lit by an LED strip. “In keeping with the natural healing theme, all the plants had to be natural,” added Krai.



"I personally love the way all the textures in the booth come together: the rich blue leather and chenille seating, the shiny copper top table, the accent-lit linen wall, the rich cherry wood, the warm Venetian plaster and the amber crystal light – all set off with the border of grasses and green glowing glass," she said.



"The tropical underwater seascape stained glass window, which was inserted in a window with no view, is a colorful touch of whimsy," explained Krai.



To replace the previous kitchen's large marble fireplace, Krai proposed to add in a round fireplace with a 360-degree glass and a copper hood and flue. These elements tie into the copper leaf cathedral ceiling and copper surface of the dining table at the booth. "The fire is a natural element they wanted in their space," said Krai.



"The use of myriad unique and very textural and artistic elements playing off each other create the dramatic but also warm and inviting space," said Krai. "[My client] says that guests come and don't want to leave. This is the best compliment I can imagine."