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of a spectacular home in Wayne.

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BY BILL DONAHUE | PHOTOS BY JODY ROBINSON

A True Masterpiece

Master Design Cabinetry plays a pivotal role in transforming the kitchen, the basement, and other key areas of a spectacular home in Wayne.

When a family in Wayne, Pennsylvania, initiated a kitchen-first transformation of their home, they enlisted a Chester County-based builder to make it happen. The homeowners then asked the builder to recommend a locally based artisan who could design custom cabinetry as a cornerstone of the renovation. One name rose to the top: Master Design Cabinetry, which is based in East Earl, Pennsylvania, near the hub of fine craftsmanship known as Lancaster.

“The homeowners [in Wayne] had elegant taste and wanted top quality,” says Don Wall, a design professional with Master Design Cabinetry. “They essentially wanted to turn the kitchen into a showpiece that was better suited to their lifestyle, with some unique features for storage and special details for the island and pantry.”

With every prospective client, Don encourages a visit to Master Design Cabinetry’s showroom in East Earl. Such visits enable homeowners to get an in-depth understanding of their options and “to see what’s possible.” They also give designers such as Don the opportunity to learn more about each homeowner’s lifestyle and storage needs, as well as how they would like to use the space going forward.

The showroom was close enough for the Wayne homeowners to make an in-person appointment—two, in fact.

“The interior designer was wonderful, but the cabinetry design was on me,” Don adds. “In those kinds of situations, it really helps to be a good listener—to hear what the homeowners have to say, and to be honest with them if they want to do something that isn’t going to work. I can’t just *think* what they want; I have to listen carefully and put together a design based on what they tell me and show me.

“These clients in particular had a very large kitchen with vaulted ceilings, so we had a lot of opportunities to design some spectacular custom cabinetry,” he continues. “We wound up doing some really neat features in terms of pull-outs and other special features.”

For example, the couple imported a range from France and wanted the wooden hood above the range to match the same turquoise—a nice pop of color against the off-white paint. Perhaps the detail Don will remember most about the kitchen is the walk-in pantry built to resemble a cabinet door.

“It’s funny, because the pantry was kind of an afterthought,” he adds. “It’s not just like walking into a service door; it’s actually built into the cabinetry, so it’s sort of hidden. It’s a big pantry; it even has a Sub-Zero fridge inside it. That aspect of the job led to some unique challenges, but we made sure it all tied together and looked great.”

While the kitchen was the starting point, the project wound up expanding to other parts of the home, including an office on the main floor, and a wine room, a wet bar, a media center, and a six-foot walnut bar done up as an Old World Irish pub in the basement.

“They were so pleased with what they were seeing that it just kept growing,” Don recalls. “The wine room is probably 20 feet by 15 feet, and it includes a tasting area and a fireplace; it’s a really beautiful space. The homeowners initially thought they would match the wood in the wine room to the wet bar, but instead they went



The kitchen has a walk-in pantry built to resemble a cabinet door.

with painted cabinets and these high-quality wire inserts you're not just going to pull off the shelf, and some really elegant lighting.

"The whole job required a lot of collaboration and attention to detail," he continues, "but it ended up being one of those extra-special projects that stand out."

The job required Master Design Cabinetry to work closely with principals from Stoltzfus Construction and Kiersten Marie Interior Design, as well as a prominent Chester County architect, an electrician, and other skilled tradespeople. To make sure everyone was on the same page and working toward agreed-upon timelines, all parties communicated by way of group text and email.

The project began in December 2021 and finished in September 2023, with the duration affected partly by kinks in the supply chain. The homeowners are ecstatic with the end result, according to Don—so thrilled that they have reached out to Master Design Cabinetry about another project.

"We do this work because we like to create things that make a difference in people's homes, and we always appreciate those glowing reviews," he adds. "If you're looking for inexpensive, we're probably not the right fit. But if you're looking for something unique that's going to give you more enjoyment out of the space and maybe change how you use it, that's where we shine." ■

DESIGNED FOR SUCCESS

Master Design Cabinetry has earned its reputation as a maker of exceptionally well-crafted cabinets tailored to homeowners' lifestyles and living spaces. Its bespoke creations are made of North American plywood and other high-quality materials designed to produce elegant, long-lasting results.

While the company builds cabinets for installation in home across the nation, it focuses primarily on the Mid-Atlantic—New York, eastern Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, and Delaware, as well as the District of Columbia—and will often travel to jobs within a two- to three-hour radius from its headquarters near Lancaster.

Don Wall, a design professional with Master Design Cabinetry, has more than 40 years of experience in construction and design, nearly 30 of which he has been working in custom cabinet sales and design. He believes a successful renovation involving custom cabinetry will require an experienced, responsible, and creative designer. He offers some sage advice for homeowners who may be preparing for renovations in the near future.

- Before hiring a designer or builder, request references from previous clients. If possible, see the designer's work in person.
- Gather photos from Instagram, Pinterest, or print magazines as examples of preferred designs to share with the designer. A capable designer should be able to use those ideas and expectations to create a compelling design.
- Timing is always key. Planning should start six to eight months before the expected completion of the job.
- Expect to pay more for bespoke or custom designs, such as exotic materials, high-quality inserts, and unique finishes.



The project included a walnut bar done up as an Old World Irish pub, as well as a spacious wine room.

