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Space for All

Pastry chef Gale Gand remodeled her Chicago kitchen with her family in mind. BY CHARLES MILLER

WHEN GALE GAND BOUGHT HER CHICAGO-AREA HOME 16 years ago, the kitchen floor was covered with indoor/outdoor carpet. "It's really hard to clean egg off of that," says Gale, sitting at the broad cherrywood counter in her now-updated kitchen. She shakes her head. "I guess that was a big trend when this house was built in the '70s."

These days, the salt-and-pepper carpet is long gone, and Gale, an award-winning pastry chef, partner in the

acclaimed Chicago restaurant Tru, and cookbook author (her latest is *Gale Gand's Lunch!*), has transformed her kitchen into a purposefully kid-friendly workplace with Arts and Crafts details and modern appliances. Gale wanted to get her children involved in cooking, so the space was renovated to give everyone in her family—Gale, husband Jimmy, son Gio, and twin daughters Ruby and Ella—room to cook without getting in each other's way.

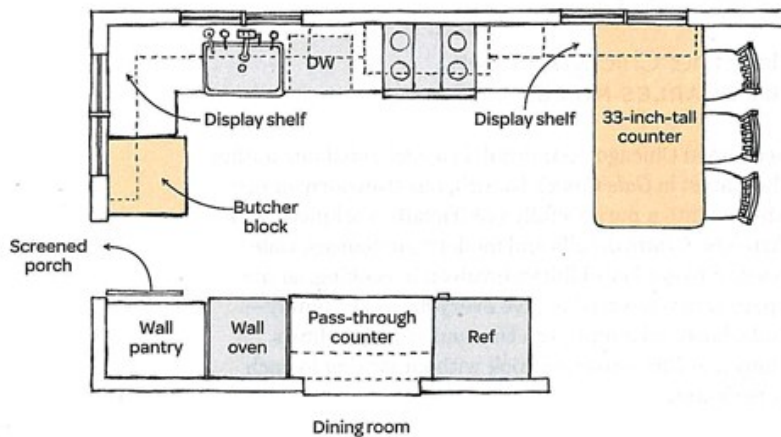


"We enlarged the original kitchen's pass-through to the dining room so that it's even more useful; it's a buffet, a landing area for groceries, and in the morning, it's sandwich central where I make lunches for the twins while Jimmy cooks breakfast on the range behind me."

The layout

The original kitchen was tiny, with the sink in the same position but with a large peninsula jutting out next to it. "The oven was awkwardly placed on the wall opposite the peninsula, and when the door was open, it blocked the passageway to the kitchen," recalls Gale. "Shelves above the peninsula separated the kitchen from a sewing room, and there was no place to sit down for a meal."

The new kitchen, designed by David McNulty, remedied those problems without any major layout changes. Removing the peninsula and sewing room expanded the kitchen to include a generous wooden counter that works as both a kitchen table (with pull-up chairs) and a workspace. A wide pass-through to the dining room offers another work station and opens the room visually, and the remaining counters and range offer enough room for all five family members to cook without bumping into each other. A high shelf runs around the kitchen above the window trim, where Gale displays her collection of vintage tin food containers and jars.



"Since I'm a pastry chef, having good ovens is crucial; I'm lucky to have two from Viking, which are reliable and powerful. I use the 30-inch wall oven (above) for home cooking, but love the 36-inch range oven because it fits full-size sheet pans. The wall microwave and warming drawer (above) are easy to access and don't take up valuable counter space."




"The wall pantry has pull-out shelves that make it easy to find ingredients, even when they're shoved all the way to the back."



"The stand mixer moves around the kitchen as needed; the twins love to use it together, one of them controlling the speed while the other adds ingredients."



"This sink works hard, with four faucets (from left to right): hot water dispenser, soap dispenser, hot and cold water faucet, and filtered drinking water."



▲ The mix of wood and soapstone surfaces in the kitchen adds warmth as well as utility. "The butcher block near the sink came from the prep kitchen at the Pump Room, a local restaurant," says Gale. "It's beautifully aged." She also loves the soapstone counters, "which don't show scratches and aren't as reflective as a highly polished surface."

◀ At just 33 inches tall (instead of the standard 36), the big cherrywood counter—a peninsula that's actually in the right spot—is the ideal work height for 5-foot, 2-inch Gale and her young daughters. "The first time I worked at this counter, I was thrilled because my elbows weren't sticking up in the air while I chopped," she recalls. "We finish it once a year with mineral oil to keep it well sealed." The pot rack hanging above the counter keeps Gale's beloved All-Clad pots and pans at hand. "They're ten years old, but still shiny and warp-free."

Charles Miller is a freelance photojournalist and former Fine Homebuilding editor who lives in northern California.



See a video tour of Gale's kitchen and **enter to win** an All-Clad 3-quart saucepan with lid at FineCooking.com/extras.