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ANNOTATED ROOM

# Their Dream Renovation



A Maryland couple saved for a year to fund a kitchen redesign, completing the rustic look of their home

By VAISHNAVI NAYEL TALAWADEKAR

**W**hen they purchased the modest-sized, woodland house in Towson, Md., in 1999 for \$570,000, businessman David Watts and his wife, Nancy Watts—aged 59 and 58 respectively—fell in love with its natural wood finishes, especially the hewed cedar walls and chestnut beams in the family room.

Over the years, they complemented the rustic elements with additions of their own, including naturally shed elk and deer antlers from their property, repurposed as cabinet hardware.

“Yet, while the other spaces largely echoed the woods around, the white kitchen stuck out like a sore thumb,” says Mrs. Watts.

In 2020, after saving for almost a year for their dream renovation, the couple contacted Tanya Smith-Shiflett, founder and chief designer of Unique Kitchens and Baths (UK&B).

“They wanted the kitchen to be reflective of the surrounding nature,” said Ms. Smith-Shiflett.

Here are some of the design elements of the \$275,000 renovation.



**1.** The cabinetry wears a natural maple finish, designed by Lauren Liess for UK&B. The island—which measures 9 feet by 4 feet—serves as the heart of the kitchen. It is outfitted with two columns of drawers, while the rear plays host to shallow cabinetry with touch latches for extra storage. In addition, outlets hidden along the interior provide easy access for plugging in appli-

ances, laptops, and phones. “Our cabinets do not look like typical kitchen cabinets; they look like furniture,” says Mrs. Watts. // **Price:** \$78,000

**2.** Dolphin gray tiles from Peacock Pavers define the floor. “The tiles are cool and smooth to the touch, and they feel great on bare feet. Since the kitchen is right off the pool, I needed

something that would hold up to wet feet and paws. They dry almost instantly,” says Mrs. Watts. // **Price:** \$9,600

**3.** A pair of Hinkley Clarendon Bronze/Heirloom Brass pendants overarch the island. // **Price:** \$1,054

**4.** Ms. Smith-Shiflett chose Helen’s Stools from deVOL for

the island counter, adding an English flair to the country aesthetic. // **Price:** \$395 each

**5.** The hand-painted Ventana Bronze Carrara Marble Deco tiles on the backsplash were the first thing to be chosen for the kitchen. // **Price:** \$12,175

**6.** The hood—composed of a Zephyr insert and a custom-trim

panel by UK&B—was built onsite by the contractors using a kit from Archways. // **Price:** \$3,800

**7.** The counters are Calacatta Miraggio quartz from MSI Surfaces. “As a low-maintenance surface, quartz was the obvious choice,” says Ms. Smith-Shiflett. // **Price:** \$11,000 including installation