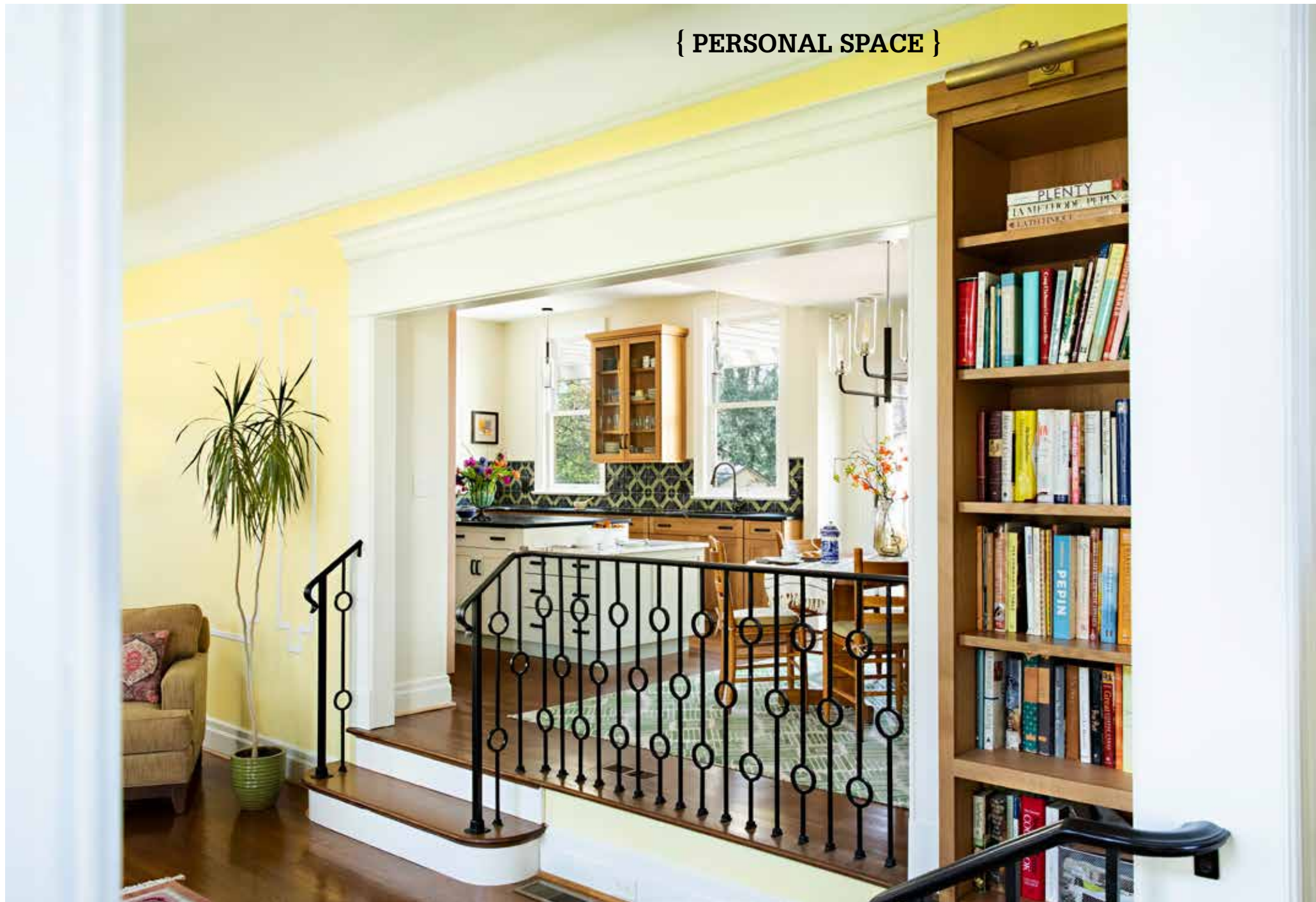
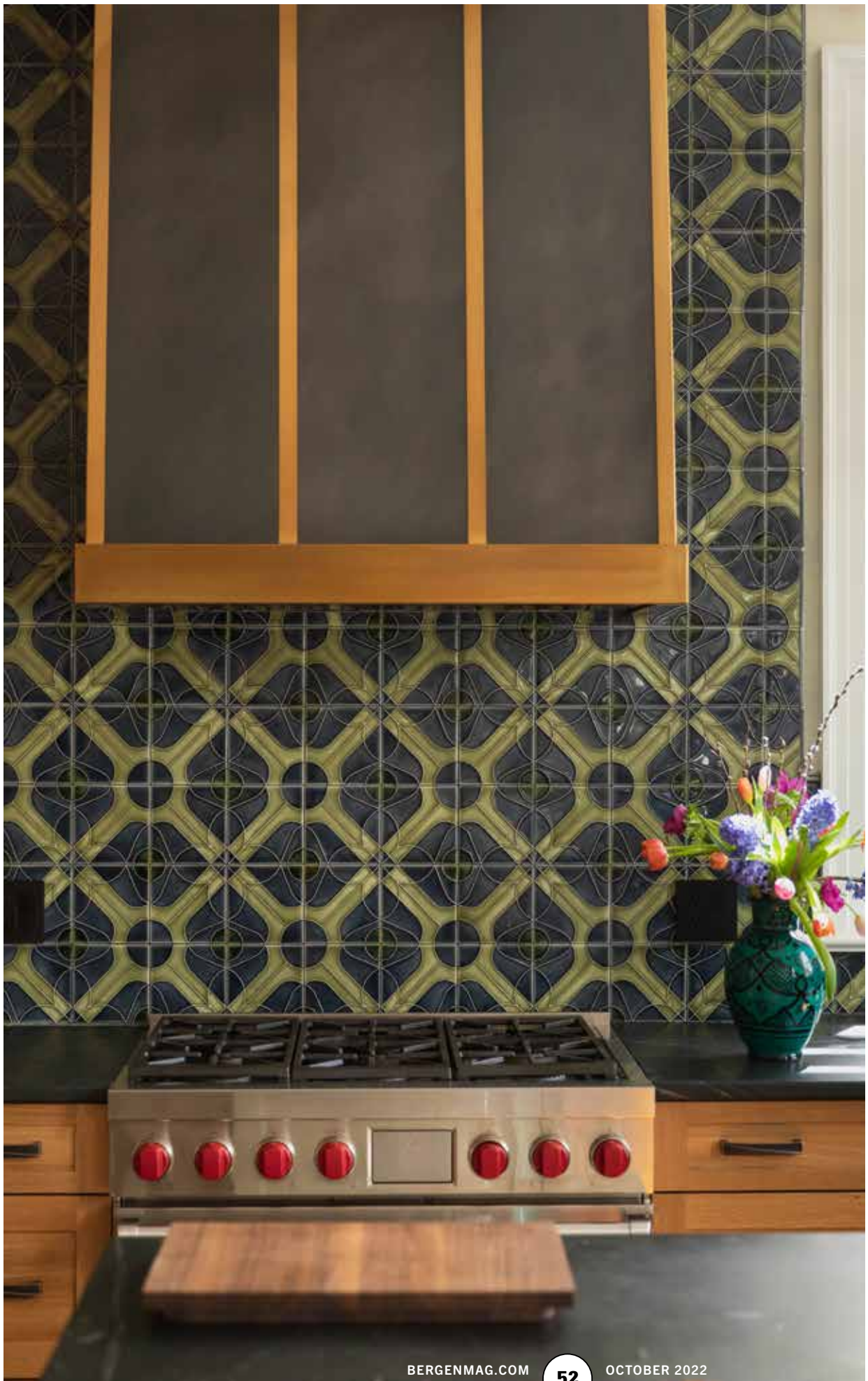


SAME ROOMS, NEW LIFE

Bold design choices and personal touches transformed an ordinary kitchen and powder room into whimsical spaces well suited to the homeowners' large family.

Text by Haley Longman
Design by Julia Kleyman
Photography by Dove + Co. Studios

Ulrich Inc. kitchen and bathroom designer Julia Kleyman says the owners of this Glen Ridge home weren't afraid to go bold with patterns and color, which was used impeccably in her redesign. "The main goal of the remodel was to add as much light and openness to the kitchen as possible to keep the conversation and laughter flowing," she says.



{ PERSONAL SPACE }

Designer Kleyman added a few special features that really made this kitchen pop, including a custom-size main sink, which allows for easy cleanup; a two-tier island conducive to baking; and radiant heating under the wood flooring to replace an existing radiator.

Before you even walk in, there's clearly something special—the Glen Ridge residence, located on a street with other historical homes, has major curb appeal. It dates from the 1920s, and it's in the Mission style, a form of architecture characterized by wooden accents and typically found in Southwestern states. This isn't your run-of-the-mill New Jersey abode, so the redesign of two of its rooms needed to catch that vibe.

To bring their kitchen and powder room to the next level, the homeowners hired Julia Kleyman, a designer at Ulrich Inc. in Ridge-wood. Another Ulrich designer had worked on this kitchen when its previous owners lived here. It was in "great shape," says Kleyman, but was outdated and didn't suit this family's lifestyle. They have lots of children and grandchildren, so they wanted their new space to feel connected and open, with better flow and better light. The footprint and the location of the windows and patio door remained as they were, but there was some other reconfiguring to be done.

"We removed the wall between the existing kitchen and the breakfast area so the cooks could interact with the kids at the table," says Kleyman. "We also removed the wall between the breakfast area and the living room and created an opening with trim details to match this unique home."

Much to the designer's delight, these clients didn't shy away from colors and texture and were happy to make bold choices in the redesign. Perhaps the boldest of all—and the undeniable "wow" factor in the kitchen—is the dramatic, graphical backsplash from Artistic Tile, with its deep rich palette of midnight blue and emerald green. "To anchor the range wall and balance the window," adds Kleyman, "we worked in a custom blackened steel hood by Amore with antique bronze detail." To further enhance the views and flow (and to make it easier for the grandparents to walk to and from each room), the Ulrich team enlarged the steps into the living room and added a metal railing featuring a circular motif, which mimics the detailing of



the backsplash. Brookhaven countertops in marine black soapstone and recessed door-style cabinets around the perimeter are equally daring design choices.

The island, meanwhile, is purposefully two-tiered; the upper level is for basic food prep, and the lower level is a special place where the lady of the house, an avid baker, can roll out dough for her cakes and cookies. “To accommodate this request, we lowered part of the island, used Calacatta Gold stone surfacing for easy dough handling and housed the baking supplies on that side,” the designer notes.

In the nearby powder room located beneath a staircase, space was limited, which is why the homeowners wanted to go big aesthetically. Whimsy was the name of the game here—inspired by the clients’ love for and vast collection of vinyl records, books and art, Kleyman used colorful “Peacock” wallpaper by Rifle Paper Co.

The combination of fox knobs from Anthropologie, a leaf sconce by Objet Insolite above the mirror and wrap-around wainscoting makes a huge impact. Kleyman and her team also replaced old tile flooring with a mixed-finish herringbone mosaic from Artistic Tile, and added a new Toto toilet, a pedestal corner sink and recessed ceiling lights.

All in all, these homeowners got more than just a fabulous new kitchen and bathroom. After the project was completed in May 2022, the “first-generation kitchen” was donated to Renovation Angel in Fairfield, which meant a tax break for the clients and a bonus for the environment, since the old materials didn’t end up in a landfill. Sharing is caring, as they say. No doubt these homeowners’ kids and grandkids appreciate their sharing nature too.

The designer reconfigured the tiny main-floor bathroom, with its dark, padded walls and wooden floors, into a charming, updated powder room. The whimsical wallpaper is inspired by the couple’s love of music, books and art.

