

BEFORE & AFTER

Small changes equal big wow factor

by KIMBERLY NICOLETTI • photos by ARTHUR WESSEL



By removing a non-weight-bearing wall that contained cabinetry, the kitchen became more open and airier.

ENVISIONING A CONDO remodel beyond its current layout can be tricky for an untrained eye. Fortunately, Todd Biekkola, partner at Sipes Architects in Minturn, does it every day.

Biekkola and his husband purchased their two-bedroom condo in Singletree five years ago and lived in it for a while to truly understand its limitations — and possibilities.

The main problem was a small and inefficient kitchen. At first, they

considered simply remodeling the kitchen but realized they needed to update the entire condo so it all looked cohesive. It hadn't been touched since the early 1990s, when Santa Fe style ruled.

The main issue in the kitchen involved a lot of corners and not enough counterspace.

To enlarge the kitchen, they took out 6 square feet from the master bedroom and eliminated a non-weight-bearing wall that contained cabinetry. This small

move opened up the kitchen. They also made the kitchen airier by removing a black refrigerator that stood out like a sore thumb in the kitchen's entryway. In fact, they took out the entire righthand side of the kitchen, which contained the fridge and cabinetry, to showcase a nice, clean wall. The fridge moved against the back kitchen wall, concealed by a panel that matches the brushed walnut cabinets.

Long and wide black granite counters, which house a sink, also provide ample room to prep food and eat. The countertop area replaced a skinny countertop that previously left no room to cook or tuck barstools under.

The team, which included contractor LRA Development in Edwards, added a dishwasher, trash and recycling area. But there wasn't a good place for the microwave. The solution turned out to work double duty: Before, the entryway



The living room originally featured a rounded Santa Fe-style fireplace. It's now a floor-to-ceiling cut limestone fireplace with a limestone slab hearth and thin steel mantle.



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didn't have a coat closet; a useless wall created dead space. So, they built a coat closet opposite the front door, leaving enough room on the opposite side, located by the kitchen, for the microwave and another large pantry.

"We thought about small moves to make some big impacts," Biekkola says.

The master bathroom also underwent quite a transformation. Before, one sink and a vanity area didn't capitalize on the long countertop. But, perhaps the worst part was the water closet; a direct sightline extended from the bed, through a long bowling-alley-lane-like hallway to the toilet. To fix that problem, the team installed a frosted glass door. Then, they added a sliding glass steam shower on one side and a second sink and brushed walnut cabinetry on the other. Rectangular floor tiles and bright lighting completed the renovation.

They also completely reconfigured the second bathroom. Before, the water closet and tub resulted in a narrow passageway, so they rotated the tub, placing it where the toilet

was, and installed the toilet on the righthand side. The change led to more floorspace. LED lighting and white, as opposed to cream-colored walls, also freshened up the space.

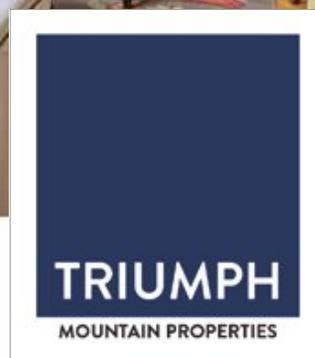
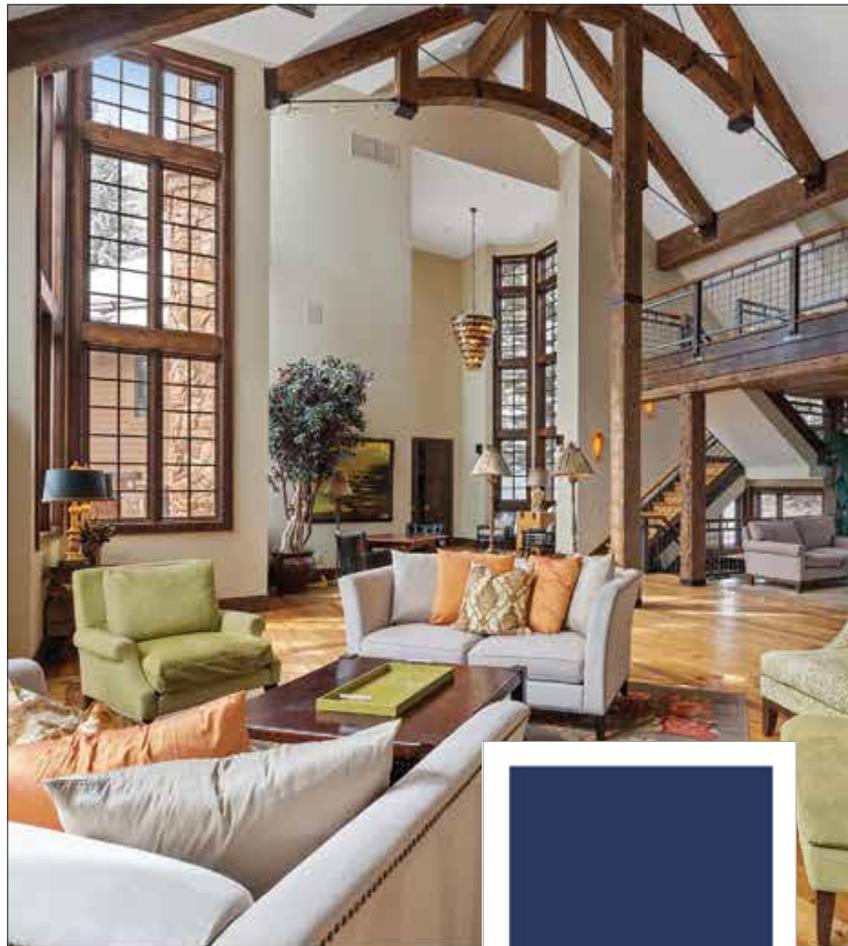
The living room featured a rounded Santa Fe-style fireplace, so they updated it with a floor-to-ceiling cut limestone fireplace, featuring a limestone slab hearth and thin steel mantle.

Modern furnishings came from Hygge Life in EagleVail and Studio Como in Denver.

The team installed Runtal baseboards, since the shallower depths allowed for a sleeker look. They also replaced old windows with Pella's superior UV factor. White oak flooring from New Box in Edwards grounded the aesthetic.

Biekkola's project proves that homeowners don't have to undergo a huge structural renovation for a complete makeover.

"New finishes can transform a small space," Biekkola says. "It's a combination of small moves that can have a big impact and rearranging layouts within the walls." 



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