



A glassed-in addition to an early-20th-century house is in keeping with its original style, *above*. The interior of the existing structure was renovated to include a state-of-the-art kitchen, *below*, contiguous to the family room. The work island has storage all around.



ELEGANT EXTENSION

A mid-80's addition to a gambrel-roofed house with Italianate touches was a pseudo-contemporary eyesore. Portland, Maine, architect Samuel Van Dam had the addition removed and built a new one in its place, creating a gracious, contextual addition to the five-bedroom home, which was built in 1910 in Boston's Chestnut Hill community.

The 12- by 17-foot addition was designed to include a fitness room on the ground floor and a glassed-in dining room directly above it, re-creating the feeling of a turn-of-the-century conservatory. The earlier renovation had turned a warren of small spaces into a single family room, but all the traditional elements had been removed. "What was done in 1985 was a sort of modern renovation that had nothing to do with the original house," says the architect. "There was very little left of the original trim, so we basically started from scratch. In creating the extension, we restored the language of the original house and integrated the dining and family rooms so one flowed neatly and harmoniously into the other."

A renovated kitchen is part of the family-room/dining room complex, but is separated from it by a 14-foot-long island that ends in an elegant curve. The island is 5 feet wide, affording generous space for food preparation and serving.

The addition's success is based largely on how effectively its elements relate to the pre-existing elements in the rest of the house, and here the architect made sure that all the details, both new and old, matched perfectly. "We added a window on one side of the family room," he points out. "Its proportions and materials matched all the other existing windows in the house."





New flooring is actually reclaimed southern pine. It extends from the renovated family room into the new dining room that tops the addition. New and old flow together seamlessly.



The kitchen is integral to both the dining and family rooms. Undermount sinks are set into the vast countertop of the island. A row of tapered grooves cut into the granite provides drainage for the homeowner's wooden dish rack.

Get a Fresh Start

“When planning an addition, it’s important to decide whether you want to continue the same architectural style and language or not,” says Samuel Van Dam. “I sometimes think a fresh start is good, particularly if the language of the house is not distinguished or you don’t really like the language, even if it is relatively well executed.

“If, for example, you want to provide light in a house that’s terribly dark or has small windows, it might be that a different architectural language allows you to better satisfy your needs. If your house has no truly defined style, seek out those aspects that are really good—discarding those you don’t like—and build on them.”



Custom poplar kitchen cabinets coated with durable white epoxy paint carry out the house’s period theme. “We looked at the casework in the rest of the house and produced similar details,” says Van Dam. The cabinets create a stylish yet efficient appearance for what is essentially a galley kitchen. The cooktop,

positioned directly opposite the double sinks, is a professional-quality six-burner unit with a stainless-steel exhaust hood tucked into the cabinet above it. The backsplash is Moravian tile from Doylestown, Pennsylvania. “It depicts various kinds of farm animals,” says the architect. —Merv Kaufman

During the day, sunlight floods the dining room, *above*, but at night, artificial light comes from three sources: an alabaster pendant designed in a vintage style, low-voltage downlights and a series of low-voltage lights recessed into a raised ceiling area already brightened with creamy orange paint. Long counters and a wide island in the kitchen, *below*, provide ample work space.

