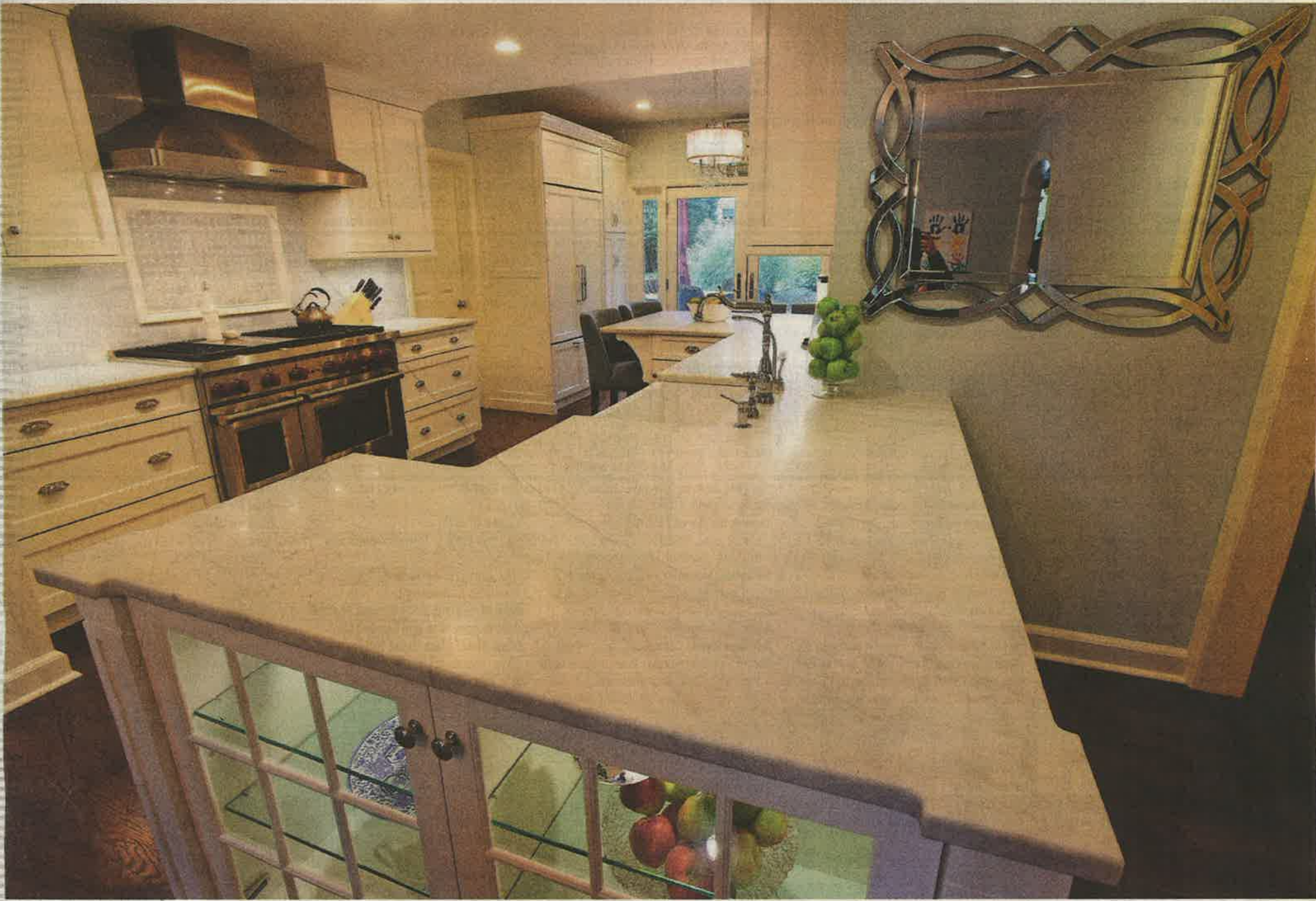


# Home



The white open-floor-plan kitchen and dining room of a Glen Rock home was complemented with well-placed lighting, wood tones and detailing in blues and grays. Photos by David Handschuh

JERSEY HOME MAKEOVER

## Going with glittering glamour

Decorative lighting, luxurious details bring out the best in a 1930s colonial

Kimberly L. Jackson For The Star-Ledger

White is among the most popular colors for kitchens, evoking ideals of cleanliness.

But walls full of white cabinetry and white countertops could result in a sterile kitchen that lacks warmth.

For architect Aparna Vijayan of the Ridgewood design-build firm Ulrich, the answer was to complement the white in an open-floor-plan kitchen and dining area with skillful lighting, rich wood tones and luxurious detailing in pale blues and grays. Polished nickel hardware added shine.

"It doesn't feel cold at all because we have so many different textures," she said. "It's a very fresh and bright. "There's a lot to look at."

The taste of the young Glen Rock owners of the home ran from modern to transitional for their 1930s house.

"They rarely used the formal dining room, so they wanted a little more of an open flow," Vijayan said. "I took the wall down between the dining room and the kitchen and redid the whole back wall."

That wall is now mostly glass, opening to a backyard deck through 9-foot, floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors with side-lights. To the right of the doors, a bar area was installed. Its sink is set in a countertop of dark wenge wood with a Sub-Zero brand wine cooler below.

"Most of the storage we managed by doing a huge peninsula," Vijayan said. The farmhouse-style kitchen sink, a built-in Sharp microwave and a Miele dishwasher share peninsula space with an abundance of cabinetry. The countertops are white Carrara marble. On the opposite wall, the Sub-Zero refrigerator and its freezer drawer are concealed behind white cabinetry. The owners chose a 48-inch Wolf commercial range with six gas burners.

Blue Celeste marble subway tiles were used for the backsplash, complementing blue-gray paint on the walls. Vijayan



### All the details of this renovation

**What they renovated:** The couple renovated and enlarged the kitchen and powder room of their four-bedroom, 2½-bathroom home. A wall was removed to reconfigure space in the kitchen and formal dining room of the 2,800-square-foot house.

**Why they did the work:** "When we bought the house, we thought it had a lot of potential. We knew we wanted to make it more functional and suitable for our lifestyle and taste," said the wife, a teacher. "We never used the formal dining room and wanted a more open concept."

**Who did the work:** Aparna Vijayan of Ulrich in Ridgewood redesigned the space, with all construction by Ulrich. "A neighbor recommended Aparna and Ulrich, and after meeting with her, we knew they were the people for the job. Aparna listened to our needs and told us what could and could not be done. Her knowledge surpassed other firms we interviewed, and she has impeccable taste, which helped when we were choosing fixtures, paint colors, tile, etc."

**How long it took:** Six weeks to a working kitchen. Including design and materials selection, about 10 weeks total from September to November 2015.

**How much it cost:** \$150,000.

**Where they splurged:** Mostly on the appliances and some additional finishes in the powder room and kitchen.



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Blue Celeste marble subway tiles were used for the backsplash, complementing blue-gray paint on the walls. Vijayan highlighted a panel beneath the breakfast bar with a mosaic of glass tiles in sea-inspired hues. "I took out the baseboard heat and put it there," she says of the heat vents now hidden in the peninsula.

The center-hall colonial, which has been home to the couple and their two children for three years, has hardwood flooring throughout. The dining room's original floor was replicated and carried into the kitchen. Everything was then tied together by a darker finish. Vijayan also improved flow through the kitchen and dining area by relocating the doorway on a powder room near the kitchen. "We made the powder room bigger and a little more glamorous," Vijayan said.

Working within the existing footprint, she borrowed space from a closet and the dining room, outfitting the updated powder room with Carrara marble countertops, natural mother of pearl tile on the vanity front, a marble mosaic floor and a mirror custom-framed in cherry wood.

Vijayan adjusted lighting to improve visibility and highlight the features of the renovated space. She had high-hat lights installed about every three feet in the ceiling. She added display lighting within the glass-front cabinets, and had lighting strips placed beneath the cabinets "to give nice task lighting."

"We changed the chandelier to a crystal one," and two smaller versions were installed over the peninsula. She also hung a complementary crystal chandelier in the updated powder room.

"I am a firm believer in decorative lighting," she said. "I think it really adds glamor to a space."



The home, remodeled by Aparna Vijayan of Ulrich Inc., includes a renovated powder room, top, which was expanded with Carrara marble countertops and a marble mosaic floor. In the dining room, above, the original floor was replicated and carried into the kitchen and tied together by a darker finish.

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**How they saved:** "We felt we would be saving money in the long run through selection of quality contractors and materials we were happy with," the wife said. The husband, a pharmaceutical executive, also thought it would be more cost effective to hire a design-build firm versus working with an independent designer and contractors.

**What they like most:** "The finished product is stunning and functional, and suits our family perfectly. We love it all," the wife said.

**What they'd have done differently:** "Given that we are considering additional renovations, we may have chosen to wait and expand the scope of the project to avoid another disruption and any architectural conflicts."

## Renovating? Tell us about it

To have your renovation considered for a Jersey Home Makeover feature, email [home@starledger.com](mailto:home@starledger.com) with your full name, email address, phone number and town/city. Attach before and after photos of what you renovated.