



RESIDENTIAL
KITCHEN
\$150 - \$200K

CHALLENGES

A Kitchen Reimagined: Challenges and Creative Solutions on Saint Albans Bay

Set along the scenic shoreline of Lake Minnetonka, this Saint Albans Bay home renovation was all about creating a modern retreat that blended indoor-outdoor living, contemporary design, and practical elegance. For homeowners who split their time between Minnesota and California, the kitchen needed to be more than functional—it had to be the heart of the home, ideal for hosting, gathering, and enjoying the lake views.

When they first toured the original rambler-style home, the kitchen was outdated, closed off, and disconnected from both the living areas and the lake. It had low ceilings, dark finishes, and a compartmentalized layout—none of which aligned with the homeowners' vision for an open, airy, and modern space.

CHALLENGE 1: Disconnected Layout and No Lake View

The original kitchen was boxed in by walls and narrow openings, with no flow into the main living spaces and little connection to the outdoors. It lacked visual and physical access to the lake, which was one of the home's greatest assets.

Solution: *We removed interior walls and restructured the floor plan to create an open-concept great room. The kitchen was repositioned to frame expansive views of Lake Minnetonka, and large bifold doors were added to connect it directly to a new lakeside deck. This transformation created an effortless flow between the kitchen, living areas, and outdoor spaces, aligning perfectly with the homeowners' lifestyle.*



CHALLENGES CONT.

CHALLENGE 2: Low Ceilings and Limited Light

Low rooflines and limited window openings made the kitchen feel small and dark. The original layout restricted how natural light moved through the space.

Solution: We raised the roofline and incorporated skylights and clerestory windows to invite natural light from multiple directions. These structural changes added volume and brightness to the space, making it feel more expansive. New lighting fixtures, including sculptural pendants over the island and layered recessed lighting, ensured warmth and balance at all hours.

CHALLENGE 3: Outdated Finishes and Inefficient Storage

The former kitchen lacked modern materials, cohesive design, and sufficient storage. Counter space was limited, and there was no central gathering point like an island.

Solution: The new kitchen centers around a custom-designed island that serves as a hub for cooking, conversation, and casual dining. Sleek flat-panel cabinetry in warm wood tones adds West Coast character, while thoughtful storage solutions—deep drawers, built-in pull-outs, and hidden appliances—maximize function without sacrificing style. Durable quartz countertops and matte hardware contribute to a clean, modern aesthetic that's built for everyday use and entertaining alike.

CHALLENGE 4: Lack of Integration with the Home's Style

The old kitchen didn't speak the same language as the rest of the home. It felt like a separate, outdated zone rather than a cohesive part of the whole.

Solution: With its updated layout and materials, the kitchen now flows effortlessly into the surrounding great room and deck. A consistent design palette—neutral tones, natural textures, and modern finishes—unites the kitchen with the rest of the home. Phantom Screens on the adjacent deck provide an extra layer of comfort without obstructing lake views or airflow, allowing for mosquito-free outdoor dining and lounging.



BEFORE PHOTOS

Dark floors & stark white cabinets made space feel busy with minimal lake views. Layout lacked flow, blocking light & beauty of lakeside setting that owners wanted to embrace.



BEFORE PHOTOS CONTINUED

Kitchen had a lot going on & though it had a sitting area, the lake view was blocked by the layout & not as open as the homeowner wanted, limiting the connection to the scenic surroundings they hoped to enjoy daily.



BEFORE PHOTOS CONTINUED

Island was too small for gathering/entertaining & all finishes were dated. Space lacked function, style & needed a full refresh to match owner's modern lakefront vibe.



AFTER PHOTOS

Now the great room expands off the open layout kitchen, including a dining table, TV area, & extra entertaining space past the TV, all taking in the lake view, creating a seamless & inviting area for gatherings & relaxation.



AFTER PHOTOS CONTINUED

Open layout floods space w/ light. Waterfall island + prep area = stunning focal point, blending form & function. A showstopper that anchors the kitchen with style, space & natural light.



AFTER PHOTOS CONTINUED

Now the island is large & ready for family gatherings—waterfall edge mirrors lake vibes. Cooktop & prep zones invite all to join in, making this space the heart of the home.



AFTER PHOTOS CONTINUED

The new kitchen features an XL island w/ waterfall edge, echoing lake views. Open layout, cooktop & prep zone invite family & guests to gather, cook & connect in a sleek, serene space.



AFTER PHOTOS CONTINUED

Another view from the focal point of the beautiful kitchen—with its large quartz island, looking from patio thru kitchen to street-side entry & stairs leading to upper level. Flow, light & style all in view.



AFTER PHOTOS CONTINUED

Hidden pantry behind a panel of cabinetry was a design challenge—hinges needed to be concealed to mimic the seamless look of fridge/cab panels. Sleek, smart & fully integrated.



AFTER PHOTOS CONTINUED

Peekaboo! A simple push reveals a spacious hidden pantry & coffee bar—sleek, smart & perfect for stashing essentials while keeping the kitchen clean & modern. Accompanied with storage to the left of the coffee bar.



AFTER PHOTOS CONTINUED

Pantry is as stunning as its big sister—the kitchen. Sleek design, smart storage & a compact coffee bar make this hidden space a stylish & functional fav!



AFTER PHOTOS CONTINUED

From the island's end, enjoy views of stairwells to UL & LL levels, plus a sleek paneled wine cabinet, blending style and function in an open, modern space that enhances the home's inviting atmosphere.



EXTRA BEAUTY SHOTS





VERY HAPPY CLIENT/HOMEOWNER

“We couldn’t be more pleased with the incredible work _____ did on our home. From start to finish, the entire process was smooth, professional, and handled with a level of care and attention to detail that truly stood out. The craftsmanship is outstanding, and the quality of the finished product speaks for itself. Our whole-home remodel came with significant challenges even before construction began: We were working against a firm timeline.

The scope included a completely reimagined floor plan along with the addition of new livable space. The engineering needed to accommodate the existing footprint, **and the striking floating staircase was complex.** Construction would span the late fall, winter, and early spring months. And throughout it all, our family would be living out of state. Despite these factors, _____ approached the project with confidence and professionalism from day one. In fact, we began working with them even before we had officially closed on the property. As we collaborated on the floor plan, _____ proactively engaged with the city to understand zoning limitations and potential roadblocks. Thanks to their diligence, we were able to design within the existing footprint and building height—avoiding the need for variances and eliminating major unknowns from the timeline.

Project management and execution were seamless. _____ utilized Buildertrend, a cloud-based construction management platform, to keep everything organized. Through this, we received clear timelines, daily updates, progress photos, and ongoing communication, keeping us informed and reassured, even from hundreds of miles away. Technically, this was a remodel—but if you saw the before and during photos, you’d think we built a brand-new home from the ground up. The transformation is nothing short of amazing, and we are absolutely thrilled with the result. A huge thank you to the entire team at _____! **We’re grateful for the experience and look forward to working together again in the future.”**