



BEFORE

# Better, Not Bigger

An Atlanta couple drew on their New England roots to renovate their Cape Cod-style cottage without adding on

**B**efore settling in the South, Wendy Meredith spent many happy years in Nantucket and other quaint Massachusetts towns, so it's not surprising that she'd bring a little New England charm to her current Atlanta home. The Cape Cod-style house she and her husband, Cleve, bought several years ago had been built in the 1930s and was more or less in its original state, so the interior designer had a clean slate for incorporating her best ideas. "Before we bought the house, I would pass by it while walking my dogs, and I could just tell it had so much character," Wendy says. "But it definitely needed to be freshened up."

## FRONT EXTERIOR

Wendy called in Atlanta architect Brad Heppner, and the two immediately started

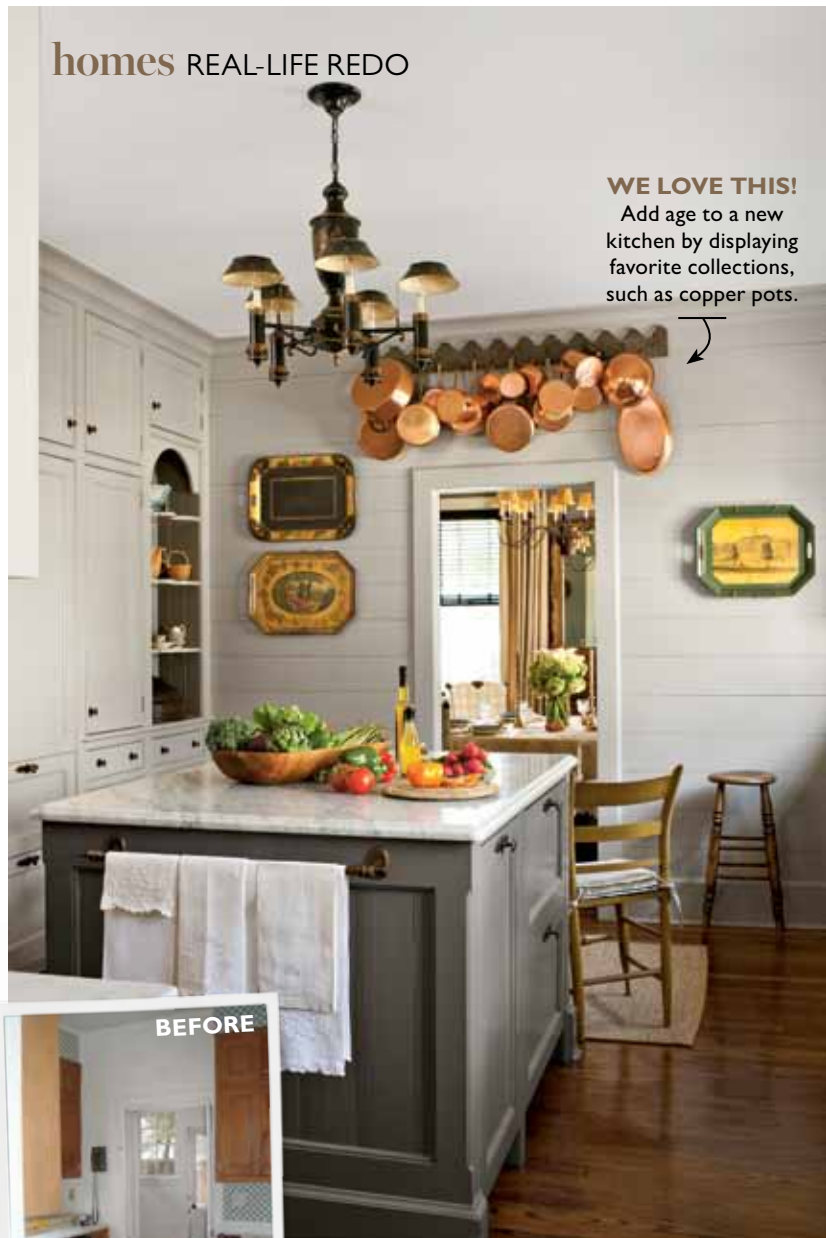
working on curb appeal as their first project. "We made subtle but important changes to the front exterior," says Brad, "such as painting the brick a warm light brown to help the house nestle into the surrounding trees." Brad also added a cedar-shingled roof, a flared awning over the front door, and charming black shutters to the upstairs dormer windows, all giving the house more architectural definition.

## KITCHEN

Inside, Wendy challenged Brad to enhance the living spaces without enlarging the original footprint. "We wanted to retain the integrity of the house and add interior details rather than additional space," he says. The kitchen now feels larger but is actually the same square footage as before. ➔

## What they did:

- Painted the brick a more natural, warmer color, Fauna (456) by ICI Paints; [icpaints.com](http://icpaints.com)
- Replaced the roof with cedar shingles that will age naturally over time
- Punctuated the house with boxwood plantings encircling a new lawn



**WE LOVE THIS!**  
Add age to a new kitchen by displaying favorite collections, such as copper pots.



**What they did:**

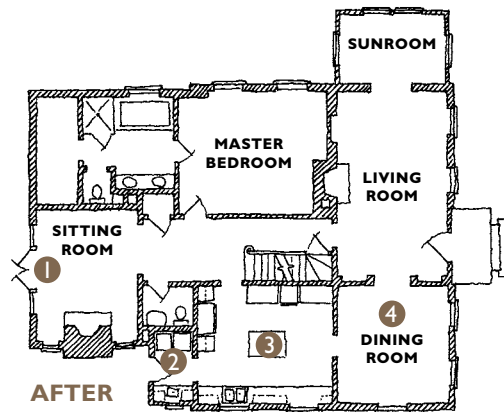
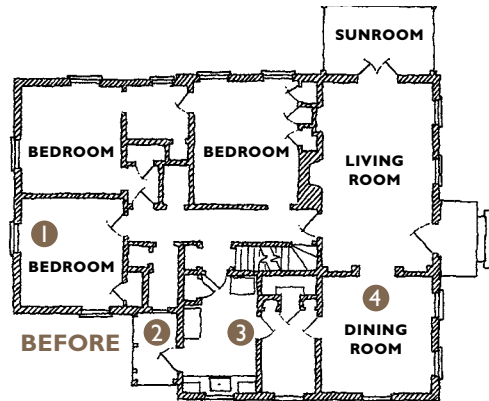
- Used furniture-like cabinetry and marble countertops to give the new space vintage charm
- Cleverly repurposed a wall of cabinetry
- Added new casement windows over the sink
- Painted the island a deep shade of gray to add depth to the neutral space

Most of the kitchen, including an adjacent pantry and breakfast area, was gutted for maximum space-planning. Brad was able to reuse an existing wall of cabinetry—he appreciated its scalloped niches and Shaker-style doors—and adapted the wall’s middle doors to conceal a refrigerator and pantry. Custom cabinets in the rest of the kitchen are slightly oversize while still having a cottage feel. “One trick of mine is to make upper cabinets 2 to 3 inches deeper than standard cabinets to allow bigger items such as platters to fit,” says Brad. For lower cabinetry, Wendy requested drawers rather than doors to make items easier to reach.

As for a backsplash, wooden plank walls (instead of tile) keep the style of the room seamless and add old-fashioned charm.

**TOUR THE SPACE**

Check out the small changes that made a big difference in the Merediths’ home.



- ① A former bedroom, now the sitting room, opens to the courtyard via new French doors.
- ② The back porch is converted into a butler’s pantry and wet bar.
- ③ Removing a wall united the kitchen and breakfast room.
- ④ A centered, space-saving pocket door now connects the kitchen and dining room.

“Wood walls have more of a cottage look, which is what we were going for,” Wendy says. A small but efficient island holds refrigerator drawers and a bookcase for cookbooks. Painted deep gray to contrast with the lighter color of the cabinets and topped with marble, it feels vintage and perhaps even original to the house. At the end sits an antique tea table where the couple eats breakfast.

The adjacent butler’s pantry was once a porch that held an old washer and dryer, but it’s now an important extension of the kitchen. While the room has the same wood-plank walls, it also has a few distinctive differences: The brick floor is quaint *and* practical, a walnut countertop brings in a new surface with patina, and open shelving offers an attractive way to display bar items. ➔



**Notice the Details**  
*(clockwise from top left)*  
1. Planked walls, a Dutch door, and open shelving add charm to the new butler's pantry. 2. An existing wall of cabinetry was cleverly retrofitted to house the refrigerator. 3. Push-out casement windows add to the kitchen's vintage feel. 4. Wendy splurged on the French Lacanche range after her daughter repeatedly raved about her own. ➔





The dining room walls are painted the same gray as the kitchen island for a seamless flow.



BEFORE

**What they did:**

- Added a wainscot of horizontal wood planking
- Replaced louvered shutters on all three windows with blinds and draperies

**DINING ROOM**

Wendy and Cleve's dining room references the past without being stuffy. Two portraits of "honorary ancestors" date from 1810 and preside over meals. "I wish I could say they're family members, but they're actually not," Wendy admits. The upper walls are painted the same gray color as the kitchen island to help connect the adjacent rooms, while creamy horizontal wood planks are found below the chair rail. Simple refinishing brought the original hardwood floors to their now beautiful state.

To keep the vibe friendly, Wendy chose a round table and antique chairs covered in simple linen and checked fabrics. A dainty scalloped edge on the chairs and table topper adds a decorative touch. A distinctive 13-arm meeting-house chandelier has been in her family for years. ➔



*“I’ve loved Dutch doors since I was a child, so I had to have one for this house.”* —WENDY MEREDITH

**What they did:**

- Converted a small brick patio and lots of grass into a lovely courtyard with plenty of seating
- Chose a variety of low-maintenance (no mowing!) plants and materials such as evergreen ground covers and bluestone tiles
- Added a new gray-shingled garage/carriage house to the back of the lot

**COURTYARD**

Wendy’s goal for the backyard was simple: “We wanted less grass and more living space,” she recalls. In her Atlanta neighborhood, lots aren’t very large, so she decided to replace the existing small brick patio with a lush courtyard. The area is now a backyard getaway where Wendy and Cleve can relax in a garden setting while their two corgis, Lulie and Gordy, run around.

A new garage/carriage house anchors the back of the yard. A picket fence, bluestone tiles, and a pea gravel drive and path make up the hardscape, which Wendy softened with a green-and-white-themed garden. Filled with camellias, a tea olive hedge, hostas, hydrangeas, and ferns, the backyard has something lush or in bloom year-round.

Then Wendy added another special touch. “In Nantucket, it’s traditional to give your home a name and display it on a quarterboard that’s affixed to your house,” she says. “Ours, ‘Glory Cottage,’ represents adoration, praise, and thanksgiving.” **SL**

