

How One Designer Gave This Dark '90s Kitchen a Fresh, Scandinavian Vibe



DESIGN: [STEPHANIE BROWN](#), PHOTO: EMA PETER; GRAPHIC: MYDOMAINE

If there's something we never get tired of seeing, it's a great makeover. Whether it's transforming a retro bathroom into a modern oasis or giving a lackluster bedroom a fresh look, pros perform these design miracles all the time.

To give designers a chance to showcase their favorite makeovers—and to bring you plenty of inspiration for your own home—we're sharing the best before and afters we've seen in our series, [Makeover of the Week](#). Take notes for your next renovation.

"This mountain house is where my clients go on weekends to entertain friends and family," interior designer [Stephanie Brown](#) says. "The original dated kitchen simply did not represent the family's more modern taste and style."

Meet the Expert

Stephanie Brown is the owner of Stephanie Brown, Inc. in Vancouver, Canada. She creates spaces that are fresh, calming, and contemporary.

Before:



COURTESY OF STEPHANIE BROWN

“The original kitchen was very much stuck in the 90s with its knotty pine cabinets, speckled yellow-brown granite countertops, soft green walls, and travertine backsplash tiles,” Brown notes. “The finishes made it feel dark and dated.”

After:



DESIGN: STEPHANIE BROWN, PHOTO: EMA PETER

MYDOMAINE

“My goal was a clean and bright kitchen that had a Scandinavian feel,” Brown shares. “The wood frame details around the white cabinets create texture and warmth, while the gray quartz countertops add softness. I continued the hardwood flooring up the eating bar to establish contrast against all the black in the stools, cabinet handles and faucet.”

What Changed:

- **Color theme:** Tan + white + black = a clean and fresh finish.
- **Cabinets:** White minimalist cabinets are delicately framed in cerused oak wood and feature matte black edge pulls for a sleek look.
- **Sink:** The stainless steel sink was chosen for its durability while the matte-black faucet ties in with the black accents throughout the room.
- **Floors:** Wide-plank cerused oak hardwood floors feel both rustic and modern.
- **Stools:** The modern counter stools feature streamlined black metal bases and comfortable (yet durable) black leather seats.
- **Barn door:** The barn door is clad with hardwood floor planks to create continuity and add warmth to the space.

MYDOMAINE

- **Center Island:** The peninsula features a waterfall countertop and single-basin sink for prep along with an eating bar for guests.
- **Countertops:** The light gray quartz countertops have a non-shiny honed finish for a natural look.
- **Pendant:** The matte black light fixture makes a graphic statement over the kitchen table.
- **Window treatments:** Gray roller shades provide privacy and shade.
- **Table:** The light gray concrete kitchen table, with its cerused oak wood top and concrete pedestals, coordinates with the room's overall palette.
- **Backsplash:** The off-white backsplash brightens and enlarges the feel of the space.
- **Wall color:** The walls are painted in Benjamin Moore's Decorator's White.

Shop the Look:



MYDOMAINE



Circa Lighting Utopia Large Linear Pendant (\$2,199)

SHOP

“I love that this pendant’s linear texture and shape are simple yet striking,” Brown says.

MYDOMAINE



Once a Tree Furniture Bocca Stool (\$615)

SHOP

“I love this stool’s sleek, cube-like base and the fact that the leather seat is so comfortable,”
Brown shares.



CB2 Mariana White Wash Teak Dining Table (\$1,799)

SHOP

“This whitewashed teak table is created out of reclaimed wood and topped with a clear lacquer,” Brown notes.