

Special Remodeling Section: Kitchen Choices

Southern Living®

MAY 1999

*Personal Style
Makes a Room*

3 Top-Rated Cakes:

- Lemon Meringue
- Piña Colada
- Orange Cream

**Show Off With
A Window Box**

**Roller Coaster
Thrill Guide**

**Calm & Carefree
Bald Head Island**

Angled for Impact

Sometimes making the best use of space means taking some of it away. Here's a case in point.

When Bill and Alice Bahrenburg purchased their Johns Island, Florida, home, its selling points were a wonderful location and nice floor plan. But the interiors definitely needed some sprucing up. The Bahrenburgs turned to local designer Rod Mickley for ideas and inspiration.

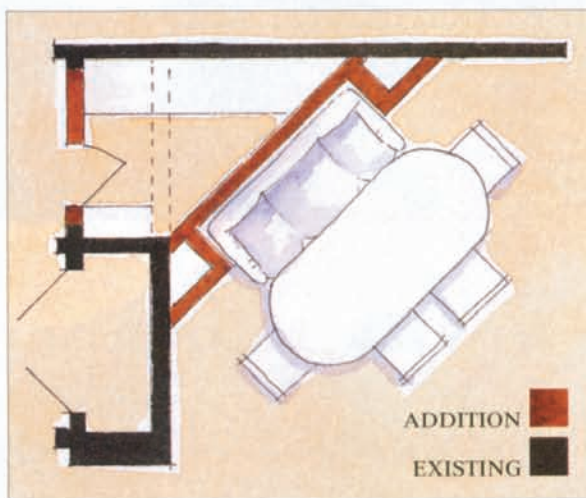
The house lacked architectural details, so Rod started with heavy crown molding and elaborate door framing and baseboards. New wooden floors replaced existing carpeting.

The dining room called for special attention. Although it's slightly smaller than before the remodeling, its impact is significantly larger. A new angled wall features built-in seating for the dining room table; the arrangement provides an attractive focal point in a room that needed a new focus.

Directly off the living room, the dining area is part of the main circulation path through the house. Because the room would see a lot of traffic, Rod decided to push the table back out of the center of the room. To make this concept work, he added the angled wall with a niche. Flanking pilasters and a bold sweeping arch with a key at the top adorn the opening.



PHOTOGRAPH: JEAN ALLSOPP



Eight botanical prints add a colorful composition within this niche and complement the room's wood finishes and neutral fabrics.

BANKING ON SUCCESS

Good food is paramount to a memorable dinner, but comfortable seating ensures guests will linger at the table over dessert and coffee.

Rather than a simple bench, Rod designed an upholstered, spring sofa to insert into the niche. "For dining, the seating should be firmer, taller, and slightly wider than a conventional sofa," says Rod. "It should be designed to help your guests 'sit up straight' at the table."

To reduce the formality of the mahogany dining room table, Rod selected rattan-style armchairs painted a warm shade of taupe. Thick seat cushions are upholstered in a muted plaid.

"The new arrangement allows guests when seated to look out to the living room with its nice views," says Rod. "As an architectural element, the niche makes the room much more interesting."

And on a practical note, the new wall offered a serendipitous solution to another problem. The angle created enough extra space for a rear hallway closet to be expanded into a walk-in pantry. *Lynn Nesmith*