



Open spaces and pop-outs enhance an old home's views

Remodeling a 1960s home on Bainbridge Island opens up the views, creates a contemporary-but-comfy vibe and adds a little space with strategically placed pop-outs.

By [Valerie Easton](#)

photographed by Benjamin Benschneider

ARCHITECT BERNIE Baker's design was so seductive his clients couldn't put off their remodel a moment longer.

Jeff and Candy Kanter are boaters who moved from Napa, Calif., to Bainbridge Island, drawn by the weather and water. They bought a low-slung, two-story, 1960s house in a development of them. The view was glorious, but not the house, which was under-engineered and damaged by wind and earthquakes. Baker convinced the couple that the house could be made not only structurally sound but much more interesting. Working with contractor Whipple Construction of Sammamish, both were accomplished with style.

"It wasn't our goal to add square feet," says Jeff. A new entry and powder room, plus kitchen and living-room pop-outs, add about 600 square feet for a total of 3,200. These fresh new spaces modernize the house, ridding it of a '60s vibe while scooping in light and capturing views. Interior spaces flow more functionally throughout, especially in the new, enviable kitchen that's been opened up to the living and dining rooms as well as the view. In the main rooms, an arbor-like structure of interior beams draws the eye up to the expanded roofline. "We'd been mentally confining ourselves to the original roofline before Bernie opened our eyes," says Jeff.

Baker started the process by asking the Kanters each to write up a list of what they wanted in the house. He wasn't asking for solutions, but rather ideas about how his clients wanted the house to feel and work. Then he set to blending varying expectations and hopes into a harmonious structure. Jeff emphasized that he wanted the house to feel warm, not coldly contemporary. What the couple got is a timeless style that's both Asian and Northwest in its simplicity, and emphasis on the nature just outside the windows. "The structure is the backbone of the aesthetics," says Baker, pointing out the beams overhead.

"The view was really the main feature here," says Baker of the quiet interior colors that mimic nature so as not to detract from it. The endless mutability of Northwest sea and sky is translated into soft grays, greens and blues inside the home, and the window trim is painted so your eye isn't drawn away from the view.

"Even washing dishes isn't too much of a chore," says Candy, now that the kitchen has been opened up. The floor is warm-toned Patagonian rosewood, the center island is built like a cabinet with little copper-clad feet and curved copper top. The Kanters originally picked out granite for the countertops, but decided it was too shiny. They settled on mottled green tile to reflect the color of Puget Sound when it's roughed up by the wind.

But it's the little pop-out in the living room that best demonstrates the satisfactions of Baker's design. What used to be a few feet of old deck is now a "sky box" with views out to Mount Rainier all the way north to Mount Baker, of the ferry gliding past and what feels like most of the Western Washington sky. "We used to be a lot more active before we had this view to look at," says Candy. "This is my feet-first house . . . I'm not leaving any other way."

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