



▲ \$91,500 Darien, Connecticut

A custom look for a reasonable price. That's what a pair of Darien homeowners wanted, and that's what Jason Landau, principal of Amazing Spaces in Briarcliff Manor, New York, delivered.

The parameters he was given for the 368-square-foot space were less than strict, but he did have one guiding principle: color.

"The wife really wanted red paint, but I opted for a red stain on the cabinetry instead because the wood grain softens it," he says, suggesting that red on the walls themselves would have been too strong.

However, the pieces make a bold statement. The clean-lined cabinetry with Shaker-style doors and crown molding accounted for more than half of the budget, but the \$55,000 spent was worth the expense because it was crucial in giving the homeowners the look they craved. The red-stained maple also houses the microwave and wall oven and surrounds the refrigerator. On the fridge, Landau incorporated an inexpensive add-on—chalkboard facing—to aid in organization.

To complement the red, the designer went traditional with black-and-white accents. The pairing of thick Carrera marble with the jet-black center island, countertops and backsplash—at a cost of \$13,000—echoes that custom feel.