



**Engineering progress
Enhancing lives**

VeloDramatic Design

Matte black and fingerprint-free, RAUVISIO noir cabinetry brings European flair to modern townhome kitchen.

na.rehau.com/projects



Townhome gets clean and modern update

When a designer sets out to update his own home, he usually brings a strong vision to the project. In this case, Michael Robertson, owner of VeloDramatic Design, was updating a townhome that he and his wife have owned since 2004. They'd lived with numerous compromises in the original plan, and Robertson viewed this renovation as a chance to replace textured walls and dated bullnose corners with modern minimalism and unique materials.

While a kitchen remodel was not in the original scope, the installation of new Carlisle engineered hardwood flooring throughout led to the decision to renovate the cabinets and the rest of the kitchen.

For Robertson, the dream kitchen began with material choices. Not a big fan of traditional options, he wanted the space to feel like a high-end European kitchen. He explains, "I was in search of interesting materials to execute the design. Unfortunately many European products are not yet available here. But in my search, I was happy to discover REHAU RAUVISIO noir After Dark."

He continues, "I wanted clean, sleek and modern. Matte surfaces are totally my aesthetic, and with the RAUVISIO noir After Dark, I really loved that I could use matte black and not have to worry about fingerprints. It's easy to wipe it clean, so from an upkeep point of view, it's really nice. The fact that it's hygienic is another big plus."



Santa Clara's Strong Cabinetry handled fabrication and installation, and Robertson liked that principals Scott Strong and his father Ron brought complementary approaches to deliver precision. "Ron is an analog guy, he used a story stick, and then you have Scott who's used to programming production on their CNC – the blend of analog and digital was perfect. I really appreciated how detail oriented their process was."

Imposing those clean, modern lines on a production-built townhome did create construction/installation challenges. He explains, "That main kitchen cabinetry wall happens to be the demising wall between this and the adjacent townhome unit, so the city was very focused on the wall



during the permit process. We used LVL engineered lumber to make the wall structurally flat, added generous blocking, insulation and sound proofing, then pre-installed a monolithic backsplash fabricated from a single slab of Sahara Noir marble with no penetrations. We absolutely needed to give Strong Cabinetry a flat substrate to work from."

Electrical code compliance was another challenge. "I believe many modern designs are spoiled by ugly, surface-mounted receptacles. We satisfied the 24" countertop spacing requirement by routing receptacles into the RAUVISIO side panels (it machined beautifully), and one on the underside of the upper cabinetry using the Flushtek system. Island receptacles were also flush routed into the RAUVISIO."

The clean lines of the RAUVISIO noir After Dark material set the tone for the rest of the space, with no exposed handles or hinges, and everything paneled to maintain the minimalist look. He notes, "The island features a Miele induction cooktop and range hood above it, and the two appliances in the front present the whole as a big, black, monolith."

Project: Georgetown townhome, San Jose, CA
Project type: Townhome remodel, completed 2023
Designer: VeloDramatic Design
Cabinet Shop: Strong Cabinetry
REHAU products used: RAUVISIO noir™ After Dark
Photographer: VeloDramatic Photography

From a functional standpoint, the space was also re-envisioned to create a better workflow. The original layout contained a poorly placed peninsula and a layout that made it difficult for two people to be in the space at the same time. To make the kitchen more functional, walls were moved and a full bathroom was turned into a half bath, allowing the kitchen to be extended by an additional two feet. A new island was added, topped with Cambria Blackpool Matte, which Robertson notes, "provided a nice complement with the REHAU material." The island allows him and his wife to enjoy meals together. A hallway that led to the bath was reconfigured into a pantry for added storage.

The design incorporates clever accessibility features that add plenty of convenience. Upper cabinets employ Blum HK servo-driven upswinging doors. There's a motorized garbage drawer, knock-to-open Miele dishwasher and Rev-a-Shelf pull-out pantry. The island includes a heavy-weight motorized pot drawer and there's a ladder built into the pantry to allow Robertson's wife to more easily reach the upper cabinets. Overall the new kitchen maximizes storage and minimizes clutter.

Like many renovations that began during the COVID-19 pandemic, the project presented challenges, including supply chain issues, contractor availability and a permit process that was slow to adapt to an online-only reality. In some ways, however, this actually worked in the renovation's favor. As Robertson jokes, "COVID lasted so long, we abandoned any notion of budget...at every opportunity, we just said, 'What's going to work for the design and went for it.'"

The end result was a new kitchen that offers the clean, minimalist look that Robertson desired with unique materials and streamlined functionality that make the space a pleasure to live in.



For updates to this publication, visit na.rehau.com/resourcecenter

The information contained herein is believed to be reliable, but no representations, guarantees or warranties of any kind are made as to its accuracy, suitability for particular applications or the results to be obtained therefrom. Before using, the user will determine suitability of the information for user's intended use and shall assume all risk and liability in connection therewith.

© 2023 REHAU 100.950 06.2023