



# New York

# state of mind

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
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A new Crozet home leans urban and modern





Black Shaker-style cabinets mix with quartz countertops and an exposed brick wall for an old-meets-new feel.

You wouldn't expect a townhouse in Crozet to have an urban feel. But Ashley Jewell got a jolt of inspiration last year when she looked at a rendering of the townhouse that she and her husband, Tim, were planning to buy in the Old Trail development.

Then unbuilt, the home had a long windowless wall along one side that, unexpectedly, made Jewell think "brick." Having lived in and renovated a 1920s bungalow in North Carolina, she was ready for a change. "The rendering made me think of a row house, or a brownstone in New York," she says.

She asked the builder, Southern Development, if the wall could be faced in brick, and they accommodated. From there, the old-meets-new urban look of her kitchen began to take shape.

"I asked them to leave off the upper cabinets," she says. Original plans called for cabinets and a built-in microwave above the countertop along the brick wall. But Jewell, who has a background in interior design, envisioned something more



contemporary. Against the brick would be open shelving made of salvaged wood, plus a modern-style stainless steel range hood.

Finding the right wood for those shelves proved a challenge. Jewell eventually spotted the name Maya Wood Construction on her son's baseball jersey, and the Barbourville company became her supplier for chunky pine slabs cut from salvaged beams. Saw marks on their edges signal that they're the real deal.

The kitchen layout stayed as the builder had originally drawn it—a U plus a peninsula for barstools—but Jewell pushed the aesthetic toward a modern look. She was reacting, in part, to her former bungalow kitchen, all done in white. "Our 1920s house was shabby chic, with a lot of things whitewashed," she says. "I thought black had a more modern feel to it."

She settled on black Shaker-style cabinets, which she felt tied in better with the rustic and vintage elements than a sleeker cabinet style

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Family heirlooms line the custom pine shelving from Maya Wood Construction—everything from an antique butter mold to an old recipe book from the homeowner's grandmother.

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would have done. White subway tile covers the window wall.

Bright, light quartz countertops completed the crisp look of the basic kitchen elements. “It has such a nice light veining to it,” she says. “It’s got a little bit of gray. A lot of the other choices have a lot of variation; I was looking for a starkness next to the black.”

The real fun was in the details. Those two banks of open shelving, on either side of the range hood, provided a chance to show off an eclectic collection of china and other objects, many of which represent members of Jewell’s family. Antique butter molds belonged to one of her great-grandmothers; a glass cake stand came from another. One grandmother passed down an old recipe book and the other, a winsome zebra toothpick holder.

These things mingle with mostly white dishware and clear glass, along with some vintage cutting boards from Roxie Daisy. The collection’s



neutral palette gives the real star of the show its due: the gold-tone cabinet hardware, sink faucet and light fixture.

“I’ve always clung to gold,” says Jewell. She found modern drawer pulls in a warm brass at Schoolhouse Electric, but was even more excited to have a use for a light fixture she’d been carting around, through several moves over a number of years. “I found it in a store in North Carolina,” she says of the piece by designer Louise Gaskill, who refurbishes vintage lighting. “I almost forgot what it looked like; I knew I loved it but it had been in a box for so long. I feel like it’s finally home.” A milk glass globe is dressed up with retro-style hardware and even a bit of gold leafing.

“I’m so thrilled every day when I walk downstairs to that kitchen,” says Jewell, who moved in with her family last summer. Yet she still considers the space a work in progress (she’s trying to source an antique kitchen scale, for one thing). “My brainstorming hasn’t stopped.”