



TOUR of REMODELED HOMES

NARI Milwaukee



MAY 20 - 21 • 13 LOCAL HOMES

NARI MILWAUKEE HOSTS TOUR OF REMODELED HOMES

Popular Event Returns After Three-year Hiatus

For today's homeowners, the remodeling possibilities are endless. To showcase some of the best remodels in the Milwaukee area, 13 local homes will be open for tours Saturday, May 20, and Sunday, May 21, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., during the NARI Milwaukee Tour of Remodeled Homes. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased online at naritourhomes.com.

During the Tour of Remodeled Homes, see firsthand how kitchens can be opened up and transformed into home chef dream spaces. Walk through bright and breezy sunrooms and explore basements that have been transformed from dull and dingy to colorful and vibrant with play spaces for kids and entertainment zones for adults. And, you don't want to miss updated and expanded family rooms and mudrooms and creative additions. Talk to the designers who took a homeowner's dream and turned it into reality and take a look at before-and-after images.

The 13 professionally remodeled homes on the tour range in budget from \$100,000 to \$600,000 and are clustered in groups: three are in Greendale; four are in Wauwatosa and Elm Grove; four are in Mequon, Menomonee Falls and Sussex; and two are located in Waukesha and Oconomowoc.

Greendale

Whole House Remodel - J&J Contractors I, LLC
Kitchen & Bathroom Remodel -
J&J Contractors I, LLC
Kitchen Remodel - GMH Construction, Inc.

Wauwatosa & Elm Grove

Whole House Remodel (Wauwatosa) -
Advantage Design + Remodel
Sunroom & Lower Level Remodel (Wauwatosa)
- Carmel Builders, Inc.
Kitchen Addition & Remodel (Wauwatosa) -
Dimension Design, Build, Remodel, Inc.
Whole House Remodel & Addition (Elm Grove)
- S.J. Janis Company, Inc.

Mequon, Menomonee Falls & Sussex

Whole House Remodel & Addition (Mequon) -
Winters Partnership, LLC
Basement Remodel (Menomonee Falls) -
Joseph Douglas Homes and Remodeling
First Floor Remodel (Menomonee Falls) -
Allen Kitchen & Bath
Addition (Sussex) - Renovations Group, Inc.

Waukesha & Oconomowoc

Kitchen & Laundry Room Remodel (Waukesha)
- Callen Construction, Inc.
Basement Remodel (Oconomowoc) -
HighPoint Design Build Group



Advantage Design + Remodel worked with a Wauwatosa family of four to remodel their entire home. Structural walls between the porch, family room and kitchen were removed to create an open, inviting space perfect for daily life and entertaining.

NARI Milwaukee is a 550-member strong organization that represents the best remodeling and home improvement professionals in the area. Since 1961, NARI Milwaukee has been a trusted resource for consumers. The non-profit promotes professionalism, ethical conduct and sound business practices in the remodeling industry and works to educate and inform Milwaukee-area homeowners. Consumers can have peace of mind and confidence when selecting and working with a NARI Milwaukee member. For more information on NARI and its members, visit NARImilwaukee.org or call 414-771-4071 for a free copy of "Renovate," our 2023 consumer magazine and membership directory.

For more information on the NARI Milwaukee Tour of Remodeled Homes, visit naritourhomes.com or call 414-771-4071.

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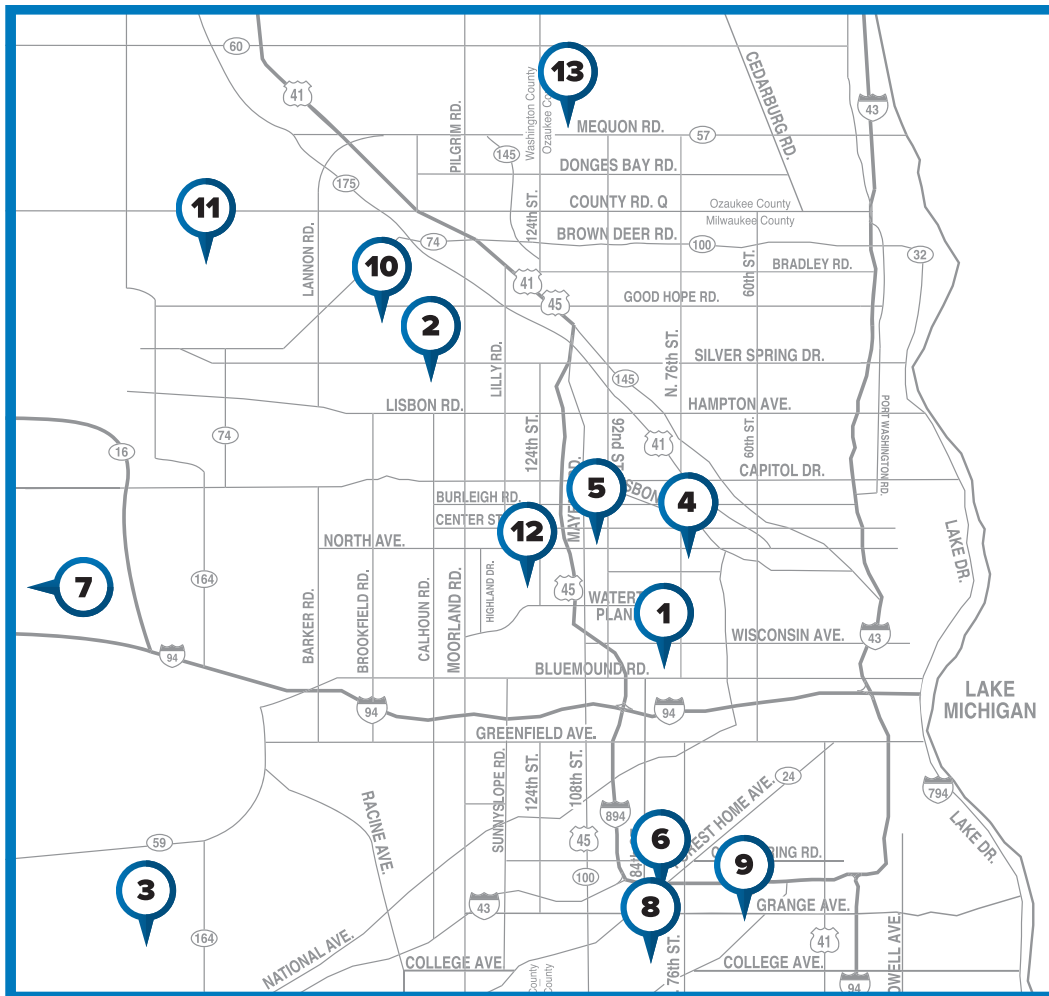
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TOUR of REMODELED HOMES

NARI Milwaukee

MAY 20-21

Join us for the ultimate remodeling showcase, with stunningly updated homes across the metro area. Visit them all! Tickets and details at NARIMilwaukee.org.

ELM GROVE

- 12 S.J. Janis Company, Inc.

GREENDALE

- 6 GMH Construction, Inc.
8 J&J Contractors I, LLC
9 J&J Contractors I, LLC

MENOMONEE FALLS

- 2 Allen Kitchen & Bath
10 Joseph Douglas Homes and Remodeling

MEQUON

- 13 Winters Partnership, LLC

OCONOMOWOC

- 7 HighPoint Design Build Group

SUSSEX

- 11 Renovations Group, Inc.

WAUKESHA

- 3 Callen Construction, inc.

WAUWATOSA

- 1 Advantage Design + Remodel
4 Carmel Builders, Inc.
5 Dimension Design, Build, Remodel Inc.

The Dangers of DIY

A new kitchen, bathroom or basement is an exciting idea for most homeowners. In fact, sometimes it's so exciting that they impulsively decide to dive in and do it themselves. And, while DIYing can yield fantastic results, there are other times when enthusiasm gets in the way of reality.

Experienced NARI Milwaukee remodelers offer some thoughts for consideration before jumping into a DIY project.

Know Your Limitations

When contemplating a project, the first item to consider is the level of difficulty. Some simple tasks can be accomplished by DIYers who have just a bit of experience.

Painting, wallpapering or replacing door or cabinet hardware are doable. A basic fence or small deck might also be achievable for a homeowner who is skilled and willing to invest time in researching the project in advance and methodically figuring out how they can tackle it.

However, if the endeavor is more complicated - like constructing a second story deck or a complete kitchen or basement remodel - that's when homeowners may run into trouble.

"Just because you can watch a video on how to do something doesn't mean it will be done properly or look like a professional job," says

Nicole Raffensperger, CKBR, owner and lead designer, Design Tech Remodeling, LLC. "The other thing to remember is that how-to videos are usually quite basic and don't cover complications or unusual situations homeowners can run into."

Know the Time

Another thing that gets in the way of completing a DIY project is available time.

"We frequently hear about homeowners who've been living in a partially remodeled kitchen for a year or longer because they couldn't dedicate the chunk of time required to complete the project properly," says Raffensperger.

The time investment begins right away with product research, selection and ordering. Sifting through all the options for cabinetry, flooring, appliances, lighting, fixtures and everything else can take an inordinate amount of time and, for some, can be overwhelming. A remodeling company can help speed up the process by working with the homeowner to identify their design style and preferences and then present curated options.

Once a DIYer has ordered and received all their supplies and materials, it's time to roll up their sleeves to start the work of remodeling. It's also the time to bring in tradespeople to handle

critical elements like plumbing and electrical.

"Homeowners might not realize all of the moving parts that need to be coordinated - from the arrival of products to the scheduling of electricians and plumbers to handling unexpected surprises," says Nick Sannes, president, S.J. Janis Company, Inc. "Staying on top of everything is literally a full-time job and it's something that a professional remodeling company handles for its clients."

Experts note a kitchen remodel done by a professional company will take four to six months or longer. Homeowners who think they can get a significant remodel done in a month or less are usually in for a rude awakening.

"Remodeling projects seem more manageable and easier to do before you are actually living in them," says Jason Cyborowski, president, J&J Contractors I, LLC. "When you're juggling a full workload, kids' activities and life in general, and then you add in remodeling your own demo'd kitchen, small steps that you thought would take just a few weeks can easily stretch into months, complicating your family's life and adding unwanted stress."

Know the Design Principles

Oftentimes, homeowner frustration is the impetus for a remodel. A home that's broken up into small spaces, a kitchen that doesn't flow

well or a bathroom that's too small are typical scenarios.

DIYers who are reconfiguring their space by relocating appliances, cabinetry and other elements should have a grasp of basic design principles otherwise the layout they devise might unwittingly cause more problems than it solves.

"We have in-depth conversations with our clients to understand how they'd like their space to function and what their needs are," says Mike Bauman, sales manager, Joseph Douglas Homes & Remodeling. "DIYers really need to think through their layout and understand how much space is required in common and pass through areas. For example, having too little a space between a countertop and the refrigerator causes all kinds of problems."

To help homeowners visualize their remodel, contractors have 3-D design software that replicates the room space with the placement of cabinetry, countertops, appliances, doors and lighting.

"Having an experienced designer who can bring your vision together in a way that will be timeless and exactly what you are dreaming of is something we do every day," adds Cyborowski.

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Basements Offer Room for Expansion

One bonus of living in a cold weather climate is the fact that almost every home has a basement. Oftentimes, it's an unfinished space that homeowners can tap into to expand their home's footprint.

"If your basement is dry and the ceilings are high enough, the sky is the limit for converting it into anything you want," says Louis Weiher, CR, CCP, president of Carmel Builders and past president of the NARI Milwaukee board of directors.

There's not much that can be done to raise the height of a ceiling, but there are a number of ways to ensure the basement is dry.

Begin by checking that the landscaping slopes away from the house so water is directed away from the foundation. The downspouts are another redirection tool, and they should extend at least four feet from the home. Inside, invest in a quality sump pump with a battery backup. If the basement still gets wet from time to time, investigate whether the drain tiles need to be replaced.

Getting a radon test is another priority when preparing for a basement remodel. Radon is a tasteless, odorless, invisible gas that can seep into homes and, in some cases, cause health problems. It's actually a natural gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water.



Carmel Builders completed a lower-level remodel to transform the basement into an inviting and fun space for family and friends. The children now have their own area - complete with a swing, chalk board and a place for all their toys.



HighPoint Design Build Group created a unique space for teenagers and adults to "escape" to. The basement features a common area with multiple screens, a theater room and a fun zone. The use of steel, reclaimed burned wood and solid pine trees from northern Wisconsin gives the space its own custom look.

Fortunately, there are a variety of radon mitigation systems available. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, some systems can reduce radon levels up to 99% and most are quite affordable.

Finally, there's air quality. If the space feels stuffy or smells stale, an energy recovery ventilation (ERV) system can be installed. An ERV uses two fans - one pulls fresh air from the outside into the home and the other sends the stale, pollut-

ed air out. As well as swapping out "dirty" air for clean, ERVs also trap pollutants, contaminants, pollen and allergens.

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Are you frustrated with the current housing market?



If your family needs more space, consider an addition to your existing home rather than searching for a larger home. For many homeowners, it is a smart investment that increases livable square footage while boosting a home's value.

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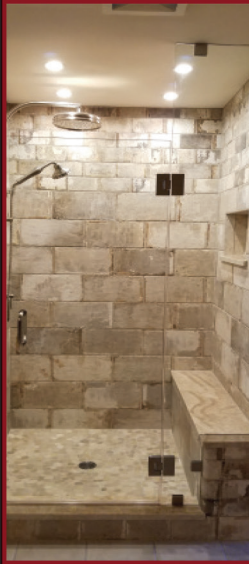
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Expansion

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Basement Connections

Something many homeowners don't think about is how connected they want the basement to be to the rest of the house.

"If you'd like to incorporate the basement into the first floor, removing doors and opening up the top and bottom of the staircase makes a big difference," says Weiher.

In older homes, the stairs can be quite steep and might not even be up to current code. To create an inviting space that everyone can easily access, rebuilding the staircase is something to consider.

Basement Dreams

Since the possibilities of repurposing a basement are almost endless, homeowners should evaluate what they currently have and what they feel they're missing.

"No matter the size of your house, you already have the functional areas of a kitchen, bathroom and laundry so most people are looking for more communal space, additional bedrooms or a place to accommodate their hobbies and interests," says Weiher.

When working with a remodeler, homeowners should think about how their entire home functions and what they need to fit their lifestyle and family situation.

"It's really important to avoid duplicating what you already have," says Dave Hoffman, design partner, HighPoint Design Build Group. "We lead our clients through a series of questions to determine what we can add that enhances or improves their home life. We want to give them a destination that they absolutely love and regularly use."

Basement Creations

Because the basement represents "found" space, homeowners can get creative with what they'd like. Remodels range from bedrooms, bathrooms and rec rooms to bars, work out spaces, wine cellars and everything in between.

Hoffman shares two examples.

Families with children in sports oftentimes lack enough space to accommodate equipment, backpacks or duffel bags, shoes and other athletic gear. Creating a mini locker room in the basement can keep things organized and eliminate the clutter and congestion that a small mudroom on the main floor often leads to. It can also help get kids out the door more quickly since they're not digging through piles of gear and uniforms.

A combination bar and pantry is a creative solution that can meet multiple needs. The bar provides an entertainment space and, when it's paired with a carefully thought-out pantry, it can serve as an overflow area for kitchen storage. The basement pantry alleviates overcrowding upstairs by storing canned goods and infrequently used appliances. An extra fridge fre-

quently comes in handy and is another complement to the main kitchen.

The basement can even serve as a "special interest" location.

"Since the basement is set apart from the rest of the house, it's a great place for specific activities," says Weiher. "People who are crafters appreciate having their own space to spread out and work. For those who are into sports, the lower level lets you spectate and cheer as loud as you like. For those who love to garden, it can be a winter greenhouse."

Mike Bauman, sales manager with Joseph Douglas Homes & Remodeling, notes the basement can give adults back the first floor of their home.

"It can grow with your family. Having space for little kids to play and later a place for teens to hang out with their friends can be invaluable," says Bauman. "It serves the kids perfectly and gives the adults some much-needed quiet time."

For those considering a basement bedroom, it's important to know that building codes mandate an egress window. Egress windows must meet specific requirements in terms of size and height from the floor so, in the case of a fire or another emergency situation, anyone in the lower level can escape and emergency personnel have access.

In addition to the safety aspect of an egress window, it also brings in natural light.

"Lighting is such an important element in a basement remodel because it makes the space warm and inviting," says Weiher. "You want to have different layers of light to give depth. That means stair lighting, toe lighting, undercabinet lighting, wall sconces and overhead lights."

Basement Returns

Finishing all or even part of a basement adds usable square footage to a home. It can turn a 2,000-square-foot-home into a 2,500- or 3,000-square-foot-footprint, which is a sizable increase.

"Creating more functional space like adding a bedroom and a bathroom is a solid long-term move. When a homeowner is ready to sell, having four bedrooms and two-full baths on a listing is appealing to many potential buyers," says Bauman.

And, while experts say basement remodels add value to a home, the most important return on investment is what the family gets out of the space and how it adds to their quality of life.

To see professionally remodeled basements, kitchens, bathrooms and more, check out the NARI Milwaukee Tour of Remodeled Homes Sat., May 20, and Sun., May 21, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Visit naritourhomes.com for more information and to purchase tickets online in advance for \$20.



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Ingredients to Create a Light and Bright Space

Bringing warmth and light into a kitchen or bath is a frequent request from homeowners. Two members of NARI Milwaukee share their recommendations for accomplishing this as part of a remodel

Begin with the Basics

White is classic, crisp and always in style, while gray provides a traditional look. Many designers pair white or gray cabinets with a pop of color to add interest without overwhelming the space. To introduce color, consider a bright island or items that are easily switched out like artwork or window treatments.

“White continues to be popular, but we are using warmer tones and bringing in accents with wood and other colors,” says Jenn Earhart, senior designer, Callen Construction, Inc. “Oftentimes, we’ll complement a white space with a dark grey island or accent it with an interesting tile.”

Combining different shades of white, gray and other neutral colors like beige is an effective way to create a warm and inviting space. One important thing to know when mixing hues is that they need to be in the same color family.

When incorporating white and gray, go for colors that have the same base - either yellow or blue. Mixing a yellow-gray with a blue-white can result in discord that may not “feel” right. A qualified remodeler who has experience in design can provide expert advice and guide the decision-making process to help avoid costly mistakes.

Mix In Interest

Another trend in kitchens and bathrooms is using different types of tile and surface stone. Incorporating a variety of tile shapes and materials, such as quartz, marble or granite can energize even the smallest space. For example, using a variety of gray hues can create a relaxing and warm environment.

Many manufacturers now have textured tile with patterns and there’s even a wood grain pattern. Tiles are also available in three-dimensional textures that add movement and interest.

“We’re definitely seeing more tile options that have texture, glazing or a crackled effect. We can make the tile pop by choosing a contrasting grout color or we can match it for a monochromatic look,” says Earhart.

Earhart also notes that the traditional subway 3 x 6 tile is getting a refresh by going bigger with an elongated size like 4 x 12 or 3 x 8. The layout is also veering away from horizontal brick to herringbone or basket weave patterns. One advantage of subway tile is the fact it’s versatile and can be used in both traditional kitchens and bathrooms as well as transitional and contemporary spaces.

Greg Perkins, CR, owner of GMH Construction, Inc., recommends touches of color to create interest.

“There are so many ways to bring character and



Callen Construction, Inc. turned a closed off '80s kitchen into a beautiful and welcoming space. Among other things, soffits and headers were removed to bring the eye up and contrasting cabinetry colors brighten the room.



A new light and bright open concept kitchen by GMH Construction, Inc. includes a spacious dinette and a coffee and beverage station.

personality into a space,” says Perkins. “In addition to a spectrum of colors in tile and cabinetry, you can incorporate vibrancy and texture with lighting and plumbing fixtures that come in interesting finishes and shapes. Creating a feature wall with wallpaper or painted wood are two other ways to add a ‘wow’ element.”

Top with Light

Finally, don’t overlook lighting because it can impact every detail of the room - from the color and look of the cabinetry and countertops to the mood and energy of the space. Proper lighting also makes it easier to perform the tasks that the room was designed for. Nobody wants to cut themselves chopping onions or head out the door with lipstick on their teeth.

According to Perkins, lighting is a critical element in a remodel.

“Installing recessed lighting and updated fixtures can have a big impact when you’re looking to refresh and brighten up a space,” says Perkins. “Accent lighting like undercabinet or swing arms over floating shelves adds a final touch. Also, primary light fixtures should be on dimmers so you can adjust the light to create ambiance whenever you want.”

To see these design principles in action, take the NARI Milwaukee Tour of Remodeled Homes May 20 and 21. The tour features remodels from Callen Construction, GMH Construction and 10 other local companies.

To purchase tour tickets, visit naritourhomes.com.



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Dangers of DIY

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Know the Structure

Remodelers advise extra caution when dealing with walls. Interior walls are either load bearing or simply divide the house into rooms.

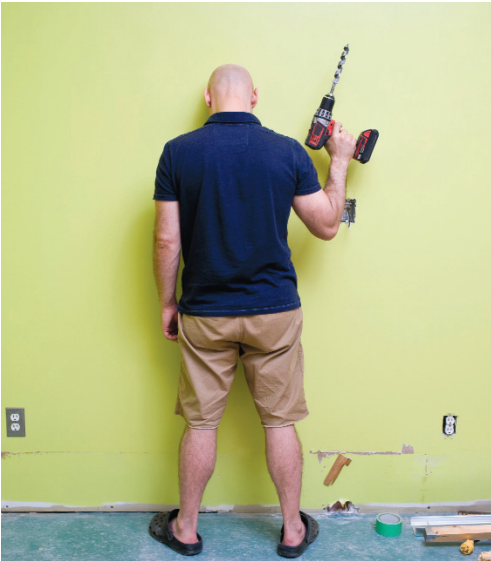
A load-bearing wall helps support the weight of the roof and any upper floors so taking down a wall is a big step for a DIYer. Another consideration is that interior walls can be used for insulation, which helps regulate temperatures and assists in soundproofing.

“We were working with a customer who decided to do his own kitchen demo. He took down a short half wall and the second floor started sagging,” says Bauman. “We got a frantic call and rushed over with jacks to get it back into place.”

Another complexity for DIYers is dealing with what’s inside the walls. Most two-story walls have mechanicals like heat ducts, electrical wiring and plumbing pipes that must be accommodated somewhere else if a wall is taken down.

Know the Code

Building permits and inspections are required by municipalities to ensure remodeling work follows local building codes. Each municipality has their own rules and regulations related to codes and professional remodeling companies know what those are and when it’s necessary to pull a permit.



When contemplating a DIY project, consider the level of difficulty and amount of time it will take.

A permit is usually required whenever structural work is involved or when a living area is being changed. For example, when completing an unfinished basement, a building permit is necessary because the space is being converted from storage to livable space.

“Code issues come up a lot with DIY basements. If the homeowner decides not to get a permit, it may become a problem years later

when they’re selling the house,” says Bauman. “It can cause all sorts of headaches because the city building inspector may get involved and correcting the code violations becomes a condition of the sale.”

It’s important to know that homeowners are ultimately responsible for any penalties for failing to file the necessary permits. This can include fines, removal of illegal work and court appearances.

Know the End Result

“Unfortunately, many DIY homeowners end up living with projects that did not turn out as they expected or projects that cost them more time or money than they anticipated,” says Sannes.

“The advantages of hiring a professional company pay off at the beginning, middle and end because the process is usually smoother, things comes together more quickly and the remodel produces a beautiful, satisfying result.”

In fact, a Remodeling Impact Survey found that after remodeling, 74% of homeowners had a greater desire to be in their home.

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