

As seen in
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OPENING UP FROM THE INSIDE

Like the Goldsteins, Geri and David Laufer bought their Atlanta, Ga., home primarily for its good location and the quality of the neighborhood. Also attractive to Geri, a horticulturist, was the home's flat, sunny backyard—perfect for the plants she wanted to put in.

"We bought this home knowing we'd want to change some things to make it more functional and livable," says Geri. Except for a wood deck built off the kitchen, the Laufers' changes were all made on the inside.

One of the problem areas was a dark, cramped kitchen, with a breakfast nook and laundry equipment sharing space with the adjacent family room. To open things up, the Laufers gutted the kitchen and removed the ceiling. They moved the doorway from the carport to eliminate traffic through the redesigned kitchen work area, installed sliding-glass doors to the new deck and added a vaulted ceiling with three skylights above the kitchen's work area. The skylights have removable solar screens that let the Laufers control heat buildup in summer but take advantage of solar-heat gain during the winter months. They also added a partition wall to create a separate laundry room; laundry equipment wasn't moved, so new plumbing lines weren't needed (see floor plan).

The total cost of the Laufers' remodeling, including money spent for the new deck, new storm windows and exterior repainting, ran to about \$35,000.

"I never thought I'd live in a 1950s ranch home, but I've grown to love one-level living," says Geri. The handsome new great room gives the Laufers the space they wanted for family activities and informal entertaining. And that sunny backyard that had appealed so much to Geri has met all her expectations. ►

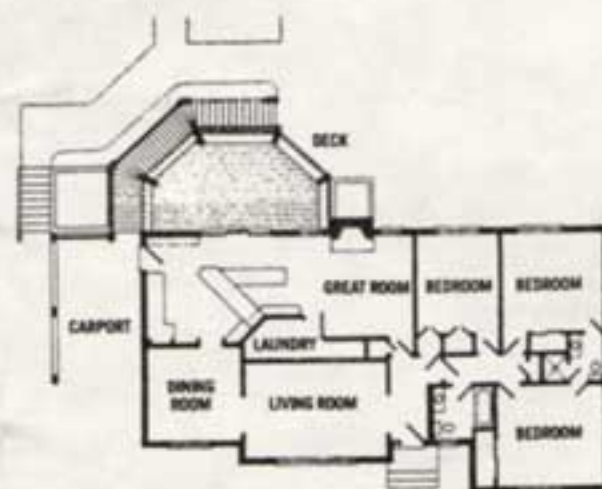
A new deck, adjacent to the kitchen, expands the informal entertaining area of this remodeled ranch.



The kitchen's red oak cabinets match the existing bookshelves in the adjacent family room. Flooring treatments and ceiling angles define activity areas.



The exterior of the Laufers' 1950s ranch remained unchanged. But the interior now has an up-to-date kitchen that's open to the family room and a separate laundry room, seen through the doorway at left in photo.



Field Editor: Lucretia Arpad
 Photographer: Ted Rodgers
 Architect: William Johnson,
 Wm. Johnson Associates,
 Atlanta, Ga.
 Contractors: Danny Feig &
 Wayne McEachern,
 Small Carpenters At Large,
 Atlanta, Ga.