

Beautifully BOLD

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Home should make us happy. If it doesn't, it's time for a change. When two design-savvy homeowners, a talented decorator and innovative custom builder, found each other, this home went from fusty to fab in less than three months.

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A symphony of colours and textures delight the senses in the newly designed family room. **OPPOSITE:** Details in the home office, from the spectacular trim work to a vibrant rug and whimsical artwork create an inspired work space.

Michelle made these crinkle-paper book covers herself.

This Buddha statue was brought from Las Vegas by Virginia's grandfather.





“We bought the home for its great bones,” says Virginia. “It was beautifully maintained but it lacked wow.” She and her husband, Kirk, hired **Karl Bach** of **Prestige Custom Homes** to add the wow. They also hired decorator **Michelle Berwick**, owner of **The Mirror and the Drape Design**. As a personal stylist for Stella & Dot, Virginia is steeped in the world of design, and the synergy between her and Michelle was immediate. Kirk is a bit of a design hound, too, so they made a great team. “How many husbands ask if drapery will puddle?” laughs Michelle.

“I gravitate to colour and with two young boys, bright spaces are important,” says Virginia. When it came to the interior, brightness was missing. “Updating doesn’t mean blank-slate replacement,” says Michelle. “I find out what’s working for the family and what’s not. There’s a language to fabric, so it’s my starting point. The fabrics that appeal to my clients speak to me about their style.”

Both Virginia and Michelle champion the high/low approach. As they point out, paying more doesn’t guarantee more style. Often it’s the well-chosen inexpensive pieces that have guests asking, “Wow! Where did you find that?”

Virginia’s home office is light-filled, courtesy of tall windows, french doors, glass cabinetry and liberal use of white. “I’m surrounded by males, so I wanted it to be girly,” she laughs. The teal rug was the starting point. Floral drapes are splashed with cerise, gold, green and teal for the vibrancy Virginia loves. The elegant cherry wood desk anchors the room and a glitzy, mirrored chest adds glam. Quirky prints are centred in millwork panels and the kids’ artwork is everywhere. It’s a fun space.

Across the hall, walls formerly divided kitchen, dining and living rooms. “Formal doesn’t work for us,” says Virginia. “I removed two walls on the main level to open up the space,” says Karl. “The dining room is where the living room used to be, a more practical layout.” Creamy nail-studded dining chairs with a floral print on the back and simple weave on the front are chic companions for the harvest table. The bubble-glass chandelier is from Union Lighting.

The kitchen is a large transitional space. A light backdrop, with subtle use of colour allows the clever mix of styles, finishes and detailing to be the attention getters. The ceramic Arabesque backsplash couldn’t be trowelled because of its bevel, so it was meticulously hand-grouted by one of Karl’s tradesmen. Why choose between dark and light cabinetry? Here, off-white and dark maple combine to great effect and the oil-rubbed bronze hardware flatters both finishes. The titanium black granite on the island was chosen for its leathered matte finish. Stainless elements add an industrial touch. *Continued on page 27*



TOP: Decorator Michelle Berwick of The Mirror and the Drape Design and homeowner Virginia worked together to create a space the family loves to come home to. **ABOVE:** A lovely leather matte finish on the island countertop adds to the myriad of textures in the spacious kitchen. **OPPOSITE:** A charming table between the kitchen and family room is the perfect size for a casual family meal.

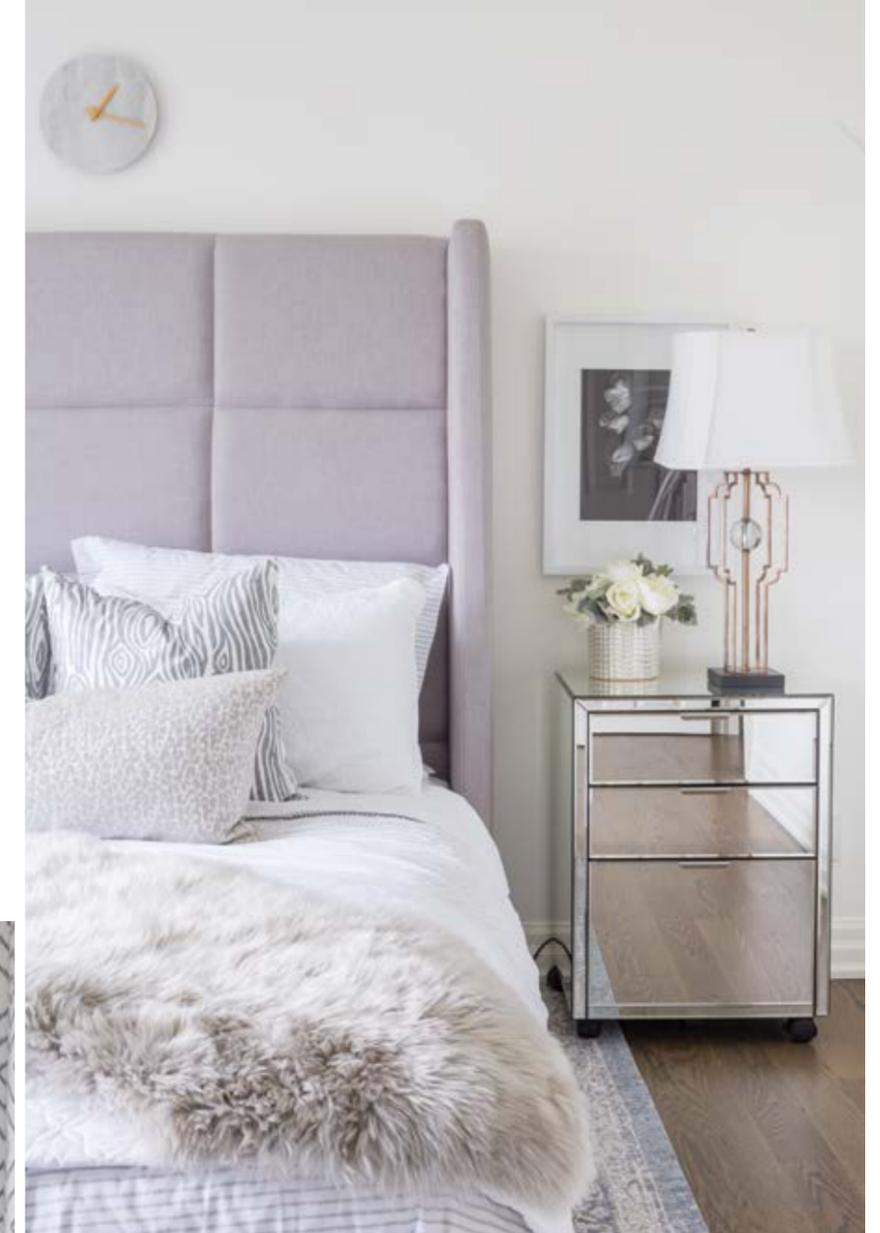


Glass terrariums on the dining table add a lovely organic element

French doors open to the dining room where layers of trim add simple elegance.

“We spent hours in Virginia’s basement, pulling out treasures, like the tiny table Buddha brought from Las Vegas by Virginia’s grandfather,” says Michelle. Sentimental items are showcased in built-ins over the gas fireplace. There’s nothing contrived about the space. It’s a lovely, livable mix of wool, cotton, silk, wood and mixed metals. Scoop-arm chairs are from **Norwalk Furniture**. Michelle made the crinkle-paper book covers on the sofa’s console table. Cushions are from **Tonic Living** with colours culled from the wall canvas and patterns chosen to add movement. Tone-on-tone drapery in a birch shade is from Dwell Studio. The pièce de résistance is Prestige’s vaulted ceiling, created from the once unused attic space.

Upstairs, the master was “brown on brown on brown,” Virginia recalls. Michelle knew she and Virginia were sympatico when she suggested an African feather headdress for



over the bed. Without hesitation, Virginia said, “I love it.” A beautiful dove-grey wash was used on the hardwood. Against the dark walls, white trim and moulding maintain crispness. Navy pops as the accent colour. The bed is topped with a luxury bedding ensemble.

Prestige renovated the master en suite, framing in a water closet. Sweeping use of white ensures spaciousness. The floor’s Italian Statuario Marble was hand-picked by Karl and Kirk for consistency. In the rain shower, a vertical honeycomb strip of marble delivers drama. Dainty scrollwork rims the Maax freestanding tub paired with Axor chrome fixtures. *Continued on page 28*

TOP: The guest room is pretty perfection with soft purples and hints of glamour. **LEFT:** A mix of colours and textures add dimension.

feature

African feather headdress is an unexpected dramatic focal point in the master bedroom.



LEFT: Family fur baby Ben lounges on the luxurious master bed. **BELOW:** Tranquil tones and a reading nook create a cosy place to play. **BOTTOM:** Navy stripes add a bold touch and blends well with the earth tones in a little boy's room.



What about curb appeal? "Virginia and Kirk had less than three months before moving in, so this is probably the fastest reno Prestige has ever done, but everything came together well. My favourite aspects are the exterior changes we worked together on," says Karl. For a more current look, they raised the garage door by a foot and unattractive arched precast stones above the entrance and garage doors were replaced with custom panelling. Shutters and the deep-stained mahogany entrance doors were the finishing touches.

What do the homeowners love best? "There's a touch of nostalgia," says Virginia. "When we moved in after the reno it reminded Kirk and me of our family homes growing up. Now, our boys are growing up in a home not unlike those homes, but with modern touches," says Virginia. That's a good feeling, because at the end of the day, home must make us happy. **OH**

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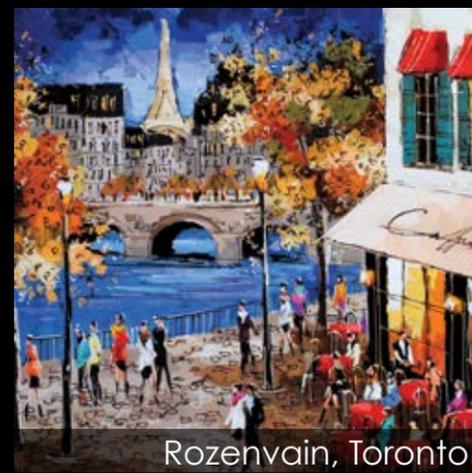
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