



Cottage IN THE CITY

STORY NICOLE LAIDLER
PHOTOGRAPHY JASON HARTOG



The owner indulged her fondness for blue in kitchen accessories, adding punch to classic white. **OPPOSITE:** The ceiling in the adjoining breakfast nook, original to the house, was removed to open up the space vertically. Beams and board-and-batten walls were added for a cottage vibe.

They say love strikes when you least expect it. That was the case for one London couple who had no thoughts of moving until they dropped into an open house on a whim.

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With its charming eyebrow window, unique stone exterior and secluded corner lot, the home exuded plenty of curb appeal. Built in the 1940s and still retaining its colourful Formica-tiled bathrooms and a vintage dance room in the basement, the interior could have best been described as a throwback to the era of saddle shoes and poodle skirts.

But the couple could see beyond the maze of rooms and outdated décor.

“The windows were amazing,” the homeowner says, “There was light everywhere. It had enough space, and I could see where walls could come down.”

The private backyard with its screened-in porch and double garage, a rare find in London’s Old North neighbourhood, were equally appealing.

The couple made an offer and brought in **Laurie Battersby** of **Decor Resource** to realize their vision.

The six-month renovation project required more than just cosmetic upgrades. The home’s interior footprint was dramatically altered, with **Bruce Waigh** of **Right Waigh Renovations Inc.** removing walls and bringing others back to their studs on both the main and upper levels.

Right Waigh also organized the replacement of the home’s electrical and plumbing, with **Guildwood Lighting & Fireside** and Decor Resource providing new light fixtures throughout. *Continued on page 26*



A formerly enclosed dining room became a spacious extension of the new kitchen. The harvest table is ideal for sit-down dinners or as a hub during larger gatherings. Neutral white walls provide a backdrop for the owners’ substantial art collection. **ABOVE:** Designer Laurie Battersby of Decor Resource.



TOP: The large kitchen island gets a daily workout as a food prep area, serving surface and gathering space. **ABOVE, LEFT:** A sink and vanity tuck neatly into a whimsical penny-tiled nook with wall-mounted faucet in the upstairs guest bathroom. **MIDDLE:** The owners were determined to keep the home’s original arched front door. **RIGHT:** Careful attention to detail when planning the kitchen resulted in stylish yet practical display spaces for dishes, serving pieces and decorative items.



LEFT & BELOW: The owners were drawn to the beautiful windows of the home. Fortunately, their draperies and furnishings from a previous home fit perfectly, creating a cosy ambience for conversation or reading.

New plumbing fixtures were supplied by **The Ensuite Bath & Kitchen Showroom**, **London Bath Centre** and **Aqualuxe Bath Showroom**. **Builders Choice Air Systems Ltd.** provided the new HVAC system.

“We tried to respect the bones of the house and maintain that 1940s craftsmanship while creating a light, airy and cottagey feel,” Laurie says.

With one exception, all the home’s original windows and the charming front door remain untouched. Once over the threshold, visitors are welcomed into a surprisingly large living space.

A bay window floods the front living room with natural light. Since the owners had already invested in good quality furniture sourced through Decor Resource for their previous home, a few custom-made throw cushions in green and blue were all that was needed to create a cohesive look, Laurie explains.



A former light-filled office just inside the front door has become an art studio and office for one of the owners. **BELOW:** The main floor powder room is classically elegant, with white wainscoting and pale blue walls.



Across the hall, a second sun-filled room provides the perfect location for a home art studio.

Neutral paint colours from **Benjamin Moore** are used throughout the home, allowing the owners’ private art collection to take centre stage, while white wainscoting and white oak engineered hardwood floors from **Karl Moore Flooring** create the relaxed, cottage-like atmosphere the owners envisioned.

At the heart of the home is a fully-equipped kitchen and dining area, designed by Laurie with **Greg Christie** of **GCW Custom Kitchens & Cabinetry Inc.**, and custom built by GCW.

The original kitchen was tiny, Laurie notes, but thanks to the removal of a few walls it now offers plenty of space for daily life and entertaining.

The addition of a centre island with granite countertops from **Bernardo Group**

Ltd. provides ample workspace and a place to gather for a casual meal, while the nearby farmhouse kitchen table and chairs, from the owner’s previous home, are perfect for larger gatherings.

The kitchen also features a small breakfast nook, retained from the original layout. “We thought it was a really cute element,” says Laurie, who had the ceiling opened up to give the tiny alcove a more spacious feel.

The owner’s home office, a walk-in pantry and powder room are found at the rear of the house. This high traffic area features slate floor tile in Montauk Blue (Bernardo Group Ltd.) and opens up to the owner’s beloved screened-in porch, now accessible through french doors.

Upstairs, the transformation is equally dramatic.

The original layout offered three small bedrooms, one bathroom and low ceilings. “The second floor was gutted,” says Laurie, who worked with **BlueLine** to revamp the



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feature



ABOVE: A vintage dressmaker's Judy adds funky fun to the upstairs guest room. **TOP RIGHT:** The luxurious master bathroom is all about marble, and features a heated marble floor laid in herringbone style that's in keeping with the era of the home. **RIGHT:** The master bedroom, with soft blue accessories, is adjoined by a walk-in dressing room, as well as the master bathroom.

Benjamin Moore
Smoky Green
CC-700

floor plan and create vaulted ceilings in the master bedroom by stealing space from the attic. "It was a huge challenge."

Today, the owners can relax in their elegant master bedroom, painted a soft shade of Smokey Green from Benjamin Moore. The vaulted ceiling and windows draped in natural linens give the room a spacious allure, while a glamorous walk-in closet, created by removing one bedroom entirely, features built-in cabinetry from GCW and a centre island with Caesarstone quartz countertop from Bernardo Group.

In the en suite, the home's signature eyebrow window was revealed from behind a layer of formica tile. However, since the original had just one pane of glass in the centre, **Synergy Windows and Doors** was commissioned to craft a new custom window to replace the original. The herringbone pattern in the heated marble floor (Bernardo) pays homage to the house's architectural roots, while clever design work allowed for the inclusion of both a soaker tub and walk-in shower.

Laurie borrowed space from a second bedroom to create a guest bathroom. "A guest room doesn't have to be large," she notes, "But the owners did want a full bathroom for visitors." White subway tile in the bathtub/shower and a ceramic floor from **Centura London** offer function, style, and convenience.

"This home is much bigger on the inside than it looks," the owner notes. "But it's still cosy. We call it our cottage in the city." **OH**



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