

FEATURE RENOVATION



the Home Reno that GREW

Homeowners saw wisdom of doing things right

BY MARGARET ANNE FEHR · PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN JOHNSTON

It all started out simply enough with Bill and Erin looking to add some upgraded features to their sixties style home that included adding more space to their kitchen, modernizing the adjoining living room and dining room and giving their fireplace a bit of a facelift. >



Near right: The dining room before and after (above). Far right: the fireplace before and after (below). Left: The once closed-in and dated living room is transformed into a bright, modern space. The room's focal point is the dramatic, newly gas converted fireplace.





Far left: the kitchen space was increased by 60% after the renovations. Near left: the custom built-in bureau and entertainment shelf are further examples of the contemporary touches. Above: bedroom before.



“But as the project took wings,” says Marcel Verrier, sales and project manager with All Canadian Renovations, “besides fulfilling the original plans, we ended up installing new windows and doors, a new stone driveway and building a new fence as well.” Perhaps it’s an indication that once the renovation bug bites, it’s hard to turn back.

“The two major items on the renovation list were to increase the size of the kitchen and to install hardwood flooring in the living, dining room and kitchen.”

The key to the expansion lay in the removal of the hallway leading to the back door that separated dining room from kitchen. “The previous wall between kitchen and living room had the old style ‘rain glass’ window effect at the top which was very dated. So that all came down and really opened things up.”

A staggered header was utilized to create an interesting feature between the spaces and enhance an unobstructed sightline. The installation of terrace doors in place of the previous dining room window provided both access to the backyard as well as a generous source of sunlight.

Once the space was revealed as the dividing walls came down, dining room and kitchen were fluidly united. In fact, adds Verrier, “The hallway allowed for the kitchen to acquire 60% more space than its previous configuration without having to construct additional square footage.”

The new kitchen space is equipped with banks of maple cabinetry, custom stained to match the living room furniture as well as the new fireplace mantle. A kitchen breakfast bar seating four and topped with Cesar stone, a fabricated granite product, and illuminated with a trio of pendant lights offers casual dining with a contemporary spin.

New pot lights were installed everywhere and that’s where the job took on a new direction. Says Verrier, “That’s when we discovered that there was only two inches of insulation in the vaulted ceiling that needed attention. We ripped out all the drywall from the ceilings and walls and re-did the insulation, vapor barriers, and drywall in the entire area.”

The wood-burning fireplace was next on the list as it was converted to a gas model, with a contrasting wooden mantle and hearth upgrade that were the custom touches that breathed a modern style into this living room focal point.

With the main living and kitchen areas taking on a new cachet, the couple was ready to bring the remainder of their house in line with the transformation.

The stairway to the upper level was re-clad with hardwood and accented with metal spindles, the original bedroom hardwood floors were refinished to match the balance of the house and the master bedroom received a custom treatment with the installation of built-in bureau drawers that also housed the television.

Bill and Erin and kids moved out of the house for the four months of the renovation to allow the All Canadian Renovations team to do their jobs without interruption. “When you start a process like this, there are simply no guarantees as to what will come up. Since we plan to be here for the rest of our lives, it just made sense to make the investment,” says Bill.

“We’ve been back in the house now for about a month and are still enjoying the newness of our house. We especially like the open concept that allows us to keep in contact with each other in an easier way. Entertaining in a more open space also lets everyone become involved as opposed to everyone winding up in the kitchen. It was worth the extra effort to know that everything was done properly.” [®]