



Theresa Casey enjoys the sunlight streaming into the home she renovated on Parkhurst Boulevard in Leaside. Top, a view of the open concept eat-in kitchen and family room.

ROOM TO GROW

DESIGNER THERESA CASEY GRANTS FAMILY'S WISH TO ADD SPACE AND LIGHT TO THEIR LEASIDE HOME

BY DANIELA PITEO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY IRVIN MINTZ

The house on Parkhurst Boulevard in Leaside wasn't atypical – a small, Tudor-style home dating back to the 1930s with a sizeable lot on a mature, tree-lined street.

The family home was valued for its location, but the homeowners and their two young children needed more livable space.

That is where Theresa Casey of Theresa Casey Design Planning Group Inc. came in and helped the family see the great potential of their home.

"My role is to evaluate the function of a space," says Casey.

"Renovations are a big investment and you want it to be right for you and >>

>> your family.”

It isn't unusual, says Casey, for homeowners to struggle with reimagining and repurposing the layout and design of their home. Even with the advent of the Internet and the array of television decorating and renovation shows, people often have a sense of what they like, but can't visualize executing a plan to get them what they want.

"I provide the vision and the process, how to get from A to Z," Casey says. "Designers are a big part of the successful transformation of a home."

The primary steps in a design for Casey are to start with a plan and a function for the space undergoing work. Then Casey evaluates who will be using the space and how long the homeowners intend to stay in their home.

"The homeowners knew the house was too small for their growing family and the kitchen wasn't functional," says Casey. "A client's space is about them and their lives."

While Casey has 20 years of experience and an educational background in art history, fine art and design, her interest is largely focused on space, environment and feeling connected to them.

"I enjoy getting to know my clients and figuring out what is going to work for them and their lifestyle," she says.

Casey knew updating the space and making it more functional wouldn't be enough; the young and growing family needed more space and the two-phase design project started with an expansive renovation of the first and second floors.

The importance of maintaining a connection in a home is obvious for Casey as the original house, with its warmly lit, cozy rooms, trimmed with rich gumwood mouldings, blends seamlessly into the new extension of the house. Its flow, so natural and inherent in the home, makes it difficult to determine where the old house ends and the new rooms begin.

The open-concept eat-in kitchen and family room enjoy deep colours and dramatic windows. The kitchen cupboards are a slate blue and are paired with a stained, rich wood island. A wall of cream-coloured bookshelves and cabinets complement the space and its comfortable style, but there are pops of colour and modernity that bring the house up-to-date.

"We chose functional fabrics for a family with small children," says Casey. "They're stylish, but durable."

The kitchen is outfitted with high-end appliances, not just for aesthetics, but also for added value.

"Appliances should always be married to the

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– Theresa Casey

value of the house," says Casey.

While constructing the new kitchen and family room Casey was less interested in trends and strived to create a space that would have longevity and meaning.

But the combined room is not without flair, as Casey veered toward her go-to colour incorporating bold red chairs into the relaxed blue and

cream room – a beautiful and surprisingly pleasing union.

As the first phase of the renovation project moved to the second floor of the house, the feel also moved from warm and cozy downstairs to light and airy upstairs.

The original house had three bedrooms and a full bath on the second floor, but with Casey's re-design, a master bedroom with ensuite and walk-in closet was added.

"We created a calm and relaxing space for the homeowners," Casey says. "A master bedroom and bath are a sanctuary for people. It's a place to recharge your batteries after a long day."

Creating a spa-like bathroom, with a white basin tub and separate glass shower and private toilet room were as important to the home as incor- >>



Two views of the eat-in kitchen enjoyed by a family with young children.



• AT HOME •

>> porating a large, organized closet.

“A lot of houses in Toronto don’t have great closet space,” Casey says.

Inadequate storage can create chaos in a small space.

“You’re in the closet at least two times a day and if stuff is all over the place, it’s a (headache). If you are looking at that mess every day, it can’t be good for your psyche,” Casey says. “Adequate storage gives a sense of order.”

The impressive first phase renovation, an eight-month project, was followed by a second phase - the basement.

“The basement was a raw, empty and unusable space,” says Casey. “We’ve now transformed it into a great playroom for the children and added another bedroom and large laundry room.” **GL**



Casey created a spa-like bathroom with a basin tub and plenty of closet space.

Theresa Casey is an award-winning designer with an educational background in art history, fine art and design. Read more at www.caseydesignplan.com

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