



Neo-Bungalow

A talented designer creates a stylish, functional space for a young Nuuanu family.

By Sabra Morris • Photos by Ryan Siphers • Featured Designer: Isla Schmidt of so'mace

Maximizing style was the task given to Isla Schmidt of design firm and showroom so'mace when she set out to revamp the look of this Nuuanu home. The 1917 bungalow is home to a family of three and an energetic dog, all with busy lifestyles. Most of the square footage was devoted to the bedrooms and living areas, while the office and recently remodeled kitchen were the tiniest spots in the home. As a result, the space felt unbalanced.

Schmidt's goal was to use design to give the home a better feel and to make it more functional. At the same time, she wanted to bring out the homeowners' eclectic sense of style. "They're a fun, young couple with sophisticated taste," says Schmidt. "And [the wife] has a flair for unique things. She had a lot of basics and we wanted to spruce it up a little with some more color, pattern and texture."



Entryway

The long, main hall (pictured above) is the wife's favorite space and a great place to stage a main entrance. Pre-makeover, "it was wasted space," says Schmidt. A sofa was positioned awkwardly against a side, rear wall and a console was positioned up front. "There was nothing to tie it together," she says.

The homeowners opted to keep the



original pine floors, which run throughout the home, and the so'mace team replaced mismatched, remnant carpets with two matching, pet-friendly sisal rugs. "The rugs unified the hall space, yet made it two separate areas," says Schmidt. "Now, there's a welcoming/pausing area and a seating area." A large, round table the couple already owned was relocated to the center of the welcoming area. "It's a showpiece," says Schmidt. In the seating area, a sofa, a coffee table and two chairs designate a spot to relax and chat. When the homeowners entertain, the area also provides a perfect landing spot for guests carrying cocktails from the kitchen.

Dining Room

The homeowner loves her oak, Baroque-style dining table and wanted to incorporate it into the space. However, its large size and dark color

made it feel heavy for the room. To lighten things up, the so'mace team repainted the chairs with a navy-blue, semi-gloss paint and reupholstered the chair backs with an outdoor fabric print by Thomas Paul. The seat cushions were recovered in a velour-style outdoor fabric, a perfect spill-catcher for her 3-year-old daughter. "It's easy to clean but looks more fun and updated," Schmidt says. "Everything we did was modern-day, mom-friendly." On the opposite side of the table, the so'mace team added a bench in the same color as the chair frames. "It's a lot more functional for my family," the wife says. "It's easy to clean and can fit more people."

Not only does the dining area fit in better with the adjacent living room, it also flows nicely to the outdoors. "We used colors that would pull in from the outside, capturing the greenery and foliage," says Schmidt.



Isla's Tips

Three easy rules of thumb for creating maximum style in tight spaces:

1. Placement is key.

Re-imagine your furniture in different areas and in different configurations. "Rearranging some of the furniture in this home made a big difference," says Schmidt.

2. Live with less.

"If you have too many things in a small room, or even too many things in a big room, it just feels crowded." Don't be afraid to take pieces away, even if you need storage. Like this homeowner, who opted for open kitchen storage, you can always find new ways to store or display items you want to keep.

3. Have fun!

Wallpaper served as a key design inspiration point for this home. Take a cue from this homeowner and choose looks you really love. "Even if you have an idea and aren't sure about it, just try it," says Schmidt.



Living Room

So'mace helped rearrange the furniture in the living room to create a designated seating area, perfect for relaxing in front of the TV. The team created even more seating by adding an upholstered raffia cushion to the window seat. They also pulled in a raffia ottoman and re-framed several of the homeowner's art pieces. Finally, they added accent pieces, including custom-made pillows for the couch and an extra-large West Elm floor lamp.

Office

"I think wallpaper is so fun, and it gives the home a completely different feel," says the wife. Schmidt helped her pick out a green, toile-inspired pattern with Asian and island flair for the walls. Schmidt chose a high-gloss, jade-green paint for the trim and wood flooring. "It's so funky. You can really have fun in a small space like that," says Schmidt. For added functionality, the team also

added a Cisco Brothers daybed that fits wall-to-wall on one end of the room. "That way, the room could be a guest room if [they] wanted it to be," says Schmidt.

Check out the office photo at hawaiihomeandremodeling.com/blogs/thoughts_of_home.

Master Bedroom

The wife chose a taupe and silver tone-on-tone wallpaper and Schmidt took it from there. "We used a really pretty Cisco Brothers tufted bed," says Schmidt. "Before, she had a very large bed in the room. It just didn't fit right, so we moved it to the daughter's room and repainted it." The so'mace team also added a new accent chair by Cisco Brothers, an area rug by Madeline Weinrib and accent pillows custom-made by so'mace, using Peter Fasano fabric.

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Kitchen

"The kitchen is very small, but we wanted to keep the original size," says the wife. Before the so'mace team arrived to complete the design, the homeowner opted to knock down a wall separating the kitchen and dining area, allowing easier flow between the two rooms.

Though the 99-square-foot kitchen footprint stayed the same, the homeowners changed fixtures, finishes and colors to make it feel more open. They replaced the dark Pergo flooring with white marble tile and replaced all of the cabinets, some with open shelving, and others with newer cabinetry, for storing dishes and other kitchen items. The new kitchen also features a higher, mini-tray ceiling that reveals the original bead board and new molding.

A Nod to the Past:

The homeowners appreciate the long history tied to their space. This home was built in the early 1900s and passed through only two owners before the current owners bought it. An original Hawaiian auwai, which was part of a larger irrigation system used to grow taro, still flows through the backyard. The home was remodeled in 1962, according to design plans by Vladimir Ossipoff, and sits on the National Register of Historic Places. **HHR**



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