

FRESH START



This vignette in the family room is testament to homeowner Jenifer Glover's personalized approach to decorating: "These are things I've picked up over time because I love them."

DESIGN, J.G. Interiors, jginteriors.com; **ARCHITECTURE**, Spragge + Company Architects; **CONTRACTING**, Diamond Building Developments; Halo OC-46 **WALL PAINT**, Benjamin Moore; *White Room II* **ARTWORK** (right) by Hanna Ruminski, Art Interiors.

OPPOSITE The design of the sun-filled family room had a surprising jumping-off point: the television. "With the TV in place on a custom cabinet, I designed the shelves above it and repeated them and the cabinet on the other side of the fireplace," says Jenifer. "This symmetry allowed me to fill the opposite space with artwork that balances out the television."

DOORS, WINDOWS, Bliss Nor-Am; **SOFA**, Restoration Hardware; leather **BENCH**, Camilla House Imports; *My Brother's Dyslexia* **ARTWORK** by Maca Suazo (above fireplace), Canvas Gallery.



A time-worn Toronto house is transformed into a lively family home with a welcoming design.

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“We

moved so we could have a pool,” says homeowner and decorator Jenifer Glover of J.G. Interiors. It was 2008, and she and her husband, Norm Brownstein, were keen to create a backyard

oasis in the city for their four children: Gabriele, 15, Jackson, 13, Hayden, 10, and Maya, 7. So when a house with pool potential in a prime Toronto neighbourhood came up for sale, they

took the plunge, even though it was far from perfect. "We loved the location and the lot, which had space for a pool, but we didn't love the house," says Jenifer. "It was a rundown 1930s build with faux Tudor features. Our plan was to freshen up the rooms with paint to tide us over until the eventual tear-down and rebuild." While the pool construction went according to plan – digging started seven days after they gained possession of the 4,000-square-foot house – the tear-down didn't. "The longer we lived in the home, the more we realized there were things we loved about it, like the generous front hall and a well-worn wooden banister," says Jenifer. "Though it probably would've been more cost-efficient to knock it down, I'm glad we didn't."

Instead, they hired Toronto-based architect Tom Spragge to help reconfigure and reimagine the space as a family home. "We pretty much went right down to the studs and started all over again," says Jenifer. "We always have people over, so I designed a light and welcoming space with a more-the-merrier feel."



Wooden accents and sophisticated accessories infuse the new-build kitchen with old-world charm. The gold-framed mirrors reflect one of Jenifer's favourite inspirations: restaurant design. "I love sitting in restaurants that have mirrors angled downward – the light and the images that bounce back are wonderful." Secondhand bent-wood stools and an elaborate chandelier from France have

a rich vintage feel that tempers the room's white surfaces. The steel window frames and mullions were painted black to mimic the industrial appearance of the French doors.

WINDOWS, Bliss Nor-Am; **CABINETRY**, KGA Kitchens; **COUNTERTOPS**, Asia Marbles; **ISLAND COUNTERTOP**, Crystal Tile & Marble; Bertazzoni **RANGE**, Caplan's Appliances; **CHANDELIER**, The Door Store; **BOWL** (on island), Elte; **BREAD-BOX**, West Elm.



5 JENIFER'S RENO TAKE-AWAYS

BEST ADVICE FOR SOMEONE ABOUT TO RENOVATE

Do your research and be prepared for bumps in the road.

MOST WORTHWHILE INVESTMENT

Black steel-framed windows and doors define the space.

BEST OUT-OF-THE-BOX IDEA

I nixed upper cabinets in the kitchen, opting for restaurant-style mirrors tilted downward.

FAVOURITE BUDGET FIND

The mirrors: The frames were \$50 each, then I had the mirrors cut to size.

BIGGEST REGRET

Installing radiant floor heating in the kitchen and family room – cast-iron radiators would have worked better.

BEFORE





Crafted from the same walnut as the kitchen island, the family room's custom cabinets and shelves are both stylish and practical. "The wood ties these rooms together while really warming up the space," says Jenifer.

Custom **CABINET & SHELVES**, KGA Kitchens; **May ARTWORK** by David Lee, Art Interiors; **THROW** (in basket), EQ3; orb **SCULPTURE**, West Elm.



RIGHT A rustic-look dining table in the kitchen's eat-in area holds up to a house full of kids because, according to Jenifer, "it only gets better with age." The space features framed artwork created by the couple's children. "It's elements like kids' art that turn a house into a home," she says.

Wimborne White 239 **WALL PAINT**, Farrow & Ball; **DINING TABLE**, IKEA; **DINING CHAIRS**, Pottery Barn; **PENDANT LIGHTS**, Absolutely.

LEFT, TOP Lively patterned toss cushions dress up the family room's classic linen sofa.

Madeline Weinrib **TOSS CUSHIONS**, Y & Co.

LEFT, MIDDLE Jenifer relaxes on a leather bench in the family room.

LEFT, BOTTOM Anything but oppressive, a dramatic black ceiling glams up the formal dining room. "It feels like the night sky," says Jenifer. With leather and chrome dining chairs, a vintage-look brass pendant light and a traditional rug, the room has an edgy eclectic vibe.

Wimborne White 239 **WALL PAINT**, Farrow & Ball; Jet Black 2120-10 **CEILING PAINT**, Benjamin Moore; **WINDOWS**, Ridley Windows & Doors; custom **DINING TABLE**, Cabinet; **DINING CHAIRS**, Palazzetti; **RUG**, Bowl, Elte; **PENDANT LIGHT**, Decorum Decorative Finds.



"WE ALWAYS HAVE PEOPLE OVER, SO I DESIGNED A LIGHT AND WELCOMING SPACE WITH A MORE-THE-MERRIER FEEL."

The "more" part of the equation – an addition to the back of the house and an extended basement – tacked on almost 1,000 square feet to the footprint, including a kitchen that's hosted up to 40 guests. The "merrier" part reflects not only how conducive the new design is to entertaining but also Jenifer's knack for creating interiors that make sense. "Whenever I had to decide on elements like materials and furnishings, I would ask myself: 'Does this hold up to an adult cocktail party as well as the kids' birthday parties?' If it ticked both boxes, I knew it would work." Her winning formula permeates the space, from its bohemian mix of high-and-low items to the sturdy and stylish white oak flooring to versatile pieces like the sophisticated easy-to-clean mohair armchair in the family room. It's fitting that a house originally considered only for its pool possibilities was transformed through a hands-on redesign that went swimmingly.

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