

DECOR DO OVER

A couple gives their former house a second chance with no regrets thanks to major help from their designer daughter.

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In this close-to-colour-free home Karla Dreyer (pictured) designed for her parents, greenery positively pops – and that includes a subtle palm leaf-print mural in the dining room.

DESIGN, Karla Dreyer Design, karladreyerdesign.com; **CONTRACTING**, Carerra Projects; **Simply White OC-117 WALL PAINT** (throughout), Benjamin Moore; **MURAL**, Anewall; **FLOORING** (throughout), Frontier Flooring; **DINING TABLE**, Crate and Barrel; **DINING CHAIRS**, Style In Form; custom **CONSOLE**, Union Wood Co.; **CHANDELIER**, CF Interiors; faux sheepskin **RUGS** (throughout), The Cross Decor & Design; **PRINT**, Minted.



ABOVE “Great design is about feeling good when you sit on a chair or sofa,” says homeowner Janice Dreyer, who insisted on having a pair of swivel chairs in the highly textured living room.

SOFA, CF Interiors; **SWIVEL CHAIRS**, EQ3; **COFFEE TABLES**, Brent Comber; **SIDE TABLE**, Style In Form; **POUFFE**, chevron-patterned; **TOSS CUSHION**, The Cross Decor & Design; **SCONCE**, CB2; custom **BLINDS** (throughout), Concord Interiors; **TOSS CUSHIONS** (except chevron-patterned), Provide.

“SOME PEOPLE LAUGHED AT US.

I laughed, too, actually!” says Janice Dreyer of purchasing the Surrey, B.C., house she and husband Colin had sold two and a half years prior. Nothing about the 2,600-square-foot ranch-style abode, built in the late ’90s and backing onto a golf course, which the couple called home for eight years, had changed. Defined by beige walls, blond wood and taupe granite, the interior was as dated as they left it when they moved to a more modern two-storey (also overlooking a golf course) in Whistler in 2016.

“I go through life in 10-year cycles. Every decade, my needs drastically change,” says Janice, whose husband recently retired and whose four grandchildren are growing up. The couple was embarking on

a new chapter, and the familiar abode had “happy ending” written all over it – but first, it needed a major revision, and the couple had the ideal editor to call on.

“When my parents lived here last, my brothers and I had young kids, so this place took quite a beating!” says designer daughter Karla Dreyer. “The house wasn’t stylish – it was practical.” But, she says, Janice and Colin have great taste, and the remodel granted her an opportunity to showcase it. “The idea was to open it up, brighten it up and lighten it up,” says Karla, who had the kitchen’s pass-through wall removed to maximize views of the 17th hole. To suit their new needs, Janice also repurposed some rooms, turning what used to be Colin’s office into a bedroom for visiting grandkids and converting the once-playroom →



A little went a long way in the save-and-splurge kitchen reno: With one wall and some uppers removed, the cabinetry was spray-painted white and the dated granite counters replaced with marble. "It's totally transformed," says Karla. A simple subway tile backsplash and affordable range hood, both in white, let the black and brass accents shine.

Simply White OC-117 **CABINERY PAINT**, Benjamin Moore; **BACK-SPLASH TILES**, Creekside Tile; **RANGE HOOD**, The Home Depot; **PENDANT LIGHTS**, Ocean Pacific Lighting; **RUG**, Marramarket; **hand PRINT**, Nineteen Ten.

A rough-around-the-edges complement to the crisp white kitchen, the eat-in area features a weighty wooden table, intricate woven chairs, a distressed-look metal-chain chandelier and a graphic pineapple print.

DINING TABLE, West Elm; **DINING CHAIRS**, CF Interiors; **CHANDELIER**, Pottery Barn; **PRINT**, Style In Form.



RIGHT Featuring a print of Elvis Presley and a blue suede-topped ottoman, the den is Karla's über-chic version of a man cave, which she designed for her father, Colin Dreyer. "My dad is an Elvis fanatic!" she says. The stylish space is a far cry from its days as a playroom for visiting grandchildren.

SWIVEL CHAIRS, Style In Form; **OTTOMAN**, Side Table, Rug, CB2; **TOSS CUSHIONS**, West Elm.



den into a modern man cave. As for the palette, Karla envisioned a pale scheme of white-painted walls and light oak plank floors. Janice was hesitant: "I said, 'Oh my goodness, I don't want it to feel like a hospital!'" The designer knew that whitening out the open-concept space could make it seem cold, especially since the ceilings soar to 15 feet in the main living area. But the pro was prepared with the ultimate antidote: texture.

"Texture on texture on texture – it makes this house feel warm and inviting," says Karla, who included silken faux fur, sumptuous leather, nubby tweed, plush velvet, rough-hewn wood, tactile wicker and more. Yet all these rich textiles are expressed succinctly in clean-lined minimal furnishings and accessories, creating a comfortable aesthetic that's always chic, never schleppey.

For all its texture, this home features nearly no colour (a notable exception is the blue suede-topped ottoman in the Elvis Presley-inspired den). "Colour adds pop, punch and interest," says Karla, "but it can be restricting in an open plan because you have to repeat it." In place of hues, the designer punctuated rooms with black accents and lush greenery. In the casual dining room, that means an inky multi-purposed chandelier and a watery palm

Colour makes a cameo in the grandkids' quarters, which Karla's daughters helped decorate. Imported textiles, such as the rug and toss cushions, lend a playful worldly feel.

BED FRAME, NIGHTSTANDS, Style In Form; **POUFFE**, The Cross Decor & Design; **RUG**, Marra-market; **BEDDING**, Anthropologie; **TABLE LAMPS**, woven **PLATTERS** (on wall), **BASKET**, HomeSense.



“THE HOUSE IS ONE LEVEL, SO I CARRIED THE RESTRAINED AESTHETIC INTO THE BEDROOMS.”

RIGHT “I love to read,” says Janice. Flooded with morning light, the master bedroom’s bay window was a natural spot for a reading nook. Karla added a sleek velvet-upholstered armchair for her mother and then layered in all the cozy and convenience.

ARMCHAIR, Style In Form; **SIDE TABLE, TABLE LAMP**, West Elm; **TOSS CUSHION, THROW**, The Cross Decor & Design; **BASKET**, HomeSense.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK



leaf-print mural. “The treatment is a play on plants. We made it more interesting by layering in a framed cactus print,” she says.

The kitchen, too, obeys the pale plus black and verdant decree. It suits the new scheme so well, in fact, that it’s hard to believe it was revised, not rewritten. “This is the same kitchen. We just sprayed it,” says Karla of painting the existing Shaker-style wooden cabinetry white, noting that she would have chosen a similar profile were she starting from scratch. This move, along with keeping the nearly new high-end appliances, allowed her to splurge on dramatic black lighting, glam brass pulls and gold-veined marble countertops, which luxuriously extend down to the floor on one side of the island. “It’s like a completely new kitchen for a fraction of the price,” says the designer. She also replaced the uppers on the stove wall with shelving, creating room for displays that are both practical and sentimental.

“Every choice was very intentional,” says Karla. “It needed to be comfortable and meaningful to my parents.” Janice agrees: “You have to love it. When the designer is done, you live in the space, not them.” She and Colin love every carefully chosen bit of their home, and surely will for the next decade and beyond.