

eclectic RETREAT

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Imagine roaming the streets of one of your favourite towns and hand-picking your next home. That's precisely what **Mireille Drover** and her parents did when they knocked on the door of a decrepit 1960s bungalow in the heart of Elora, and asked to purchase it.



LEFT: The home's Craftsman-style exterior facade pays homage to its mid-century roots. **ABOVE:** Bright white subway tiles, an apron sink and an island made of reclaimed wood showcases Mireille Drover's flair for blending old with new.

Oddly enough, the feeble and weathered exterior was what attracted them most to the house. Nestled on a quiet, tree-lined street, Drover, a fourth-year interior design student and owner of **Make Design**, was excited by the challenge. She knew she could transform the former rental home into an enviable weekend retreat for her parents, who primarily reside in Meaford.

Drover worked alongside **John Westrik** of **Westrik General**

Contracting, the main contractor, who helped achieve the design from conception to turnkey. The first order of business was to incorporate trusses along the entire length of the home, making it possible to remove walls and open the 1,200 sq. ft. space. From there, they stripped the home of its former neglected life and created a bright and open-concept floor plan with the help of **Truetek Engineering Inc.**, and **Irvine Creek Contracting**. *Continued on page 41*



As a nod to the home's mid-century roots, Drover chose a stately Craftsman exterior – a style she would repeat throughout the interior, in trim, mouldings and doors. By using a simple and historically-fitting style, the foundation was set for an eclectic design palette.

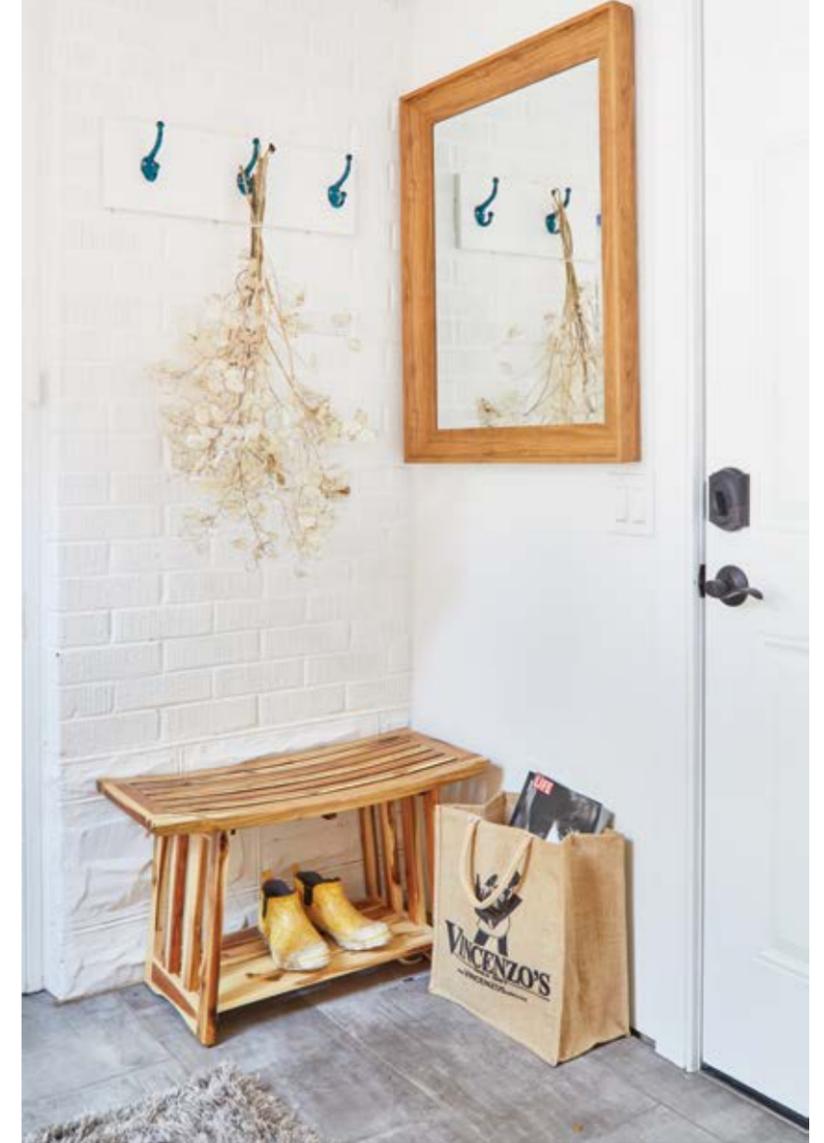
Jaytech Plumbing installed new plumbing from the ground up and relocated a bathroom in the garage, which is now used as a media room. “There’s not one specific design style in the house,” explains Drover. “If from room to room, you’re consistent with changing the style, it works.” Even though each living space has a unique tone and story, balance is masterfully achieved by repeating elements and creating seamless transitional spaces.

What was once several smaller rooms is now the spacious dining and living room. Featuring white walls, hand-scraped oak floors and antique furniture, Drover blended old and new in harmonious fashion.

“Creating continuity between the age of the neighbourhood and what you find inside was important in selecting the pieces,” says Drover, who describes the room as “an artistic space.”

A large antique wardrobe from **Paul Noonan’s Antiques** was selected in lieu of a front hall closet, which would have interfered with the open-concept design. A reclaimed brick fireplace stands as the focal point of the living room, adorned with a handcrafted wood mantel. Warm tones in the furniture contrast the stark white walls that display contemporary artwork in a subtle, yet equally engaging way.

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OPPOSITE: Country charm and refined elegance blend in this inviting dining room. **ABOVE:** Every corner of the house is curated with functional style. **LEFT:** A reclaimed brick fireplace creates a focal point for the cosy living room.



The chic hotel vibe in the master bedroom is achieved by chandelier lighting and milled walls. **OPPOSITE:** The master bedroom exudes feminine and romantic style.

During the building process, Drover discovered that the house had been built and owned by a bricklayer. Together with her parents, they decided it was important to restore and expose any brick that they uncovered. As a result, a subtle brick accent wall in the dining room serves as a gentle tribute to the original owner.

Behind the living room is a quaint master bedroom, where relaxed elegance reigns supreme. Working with a smaller room, Drover chose oversized furniture and delicate pops of glass and linen.

“Large pieces in a small room really work,” explains Drover. “Small pieces in a small room can look like you’re squeezing everything in.” Oversize end tables draped in antique bed linens, display subtle glass lamps, while flanking a grand tufted headboard.

The en suite is darker in nature but just as refined as the master

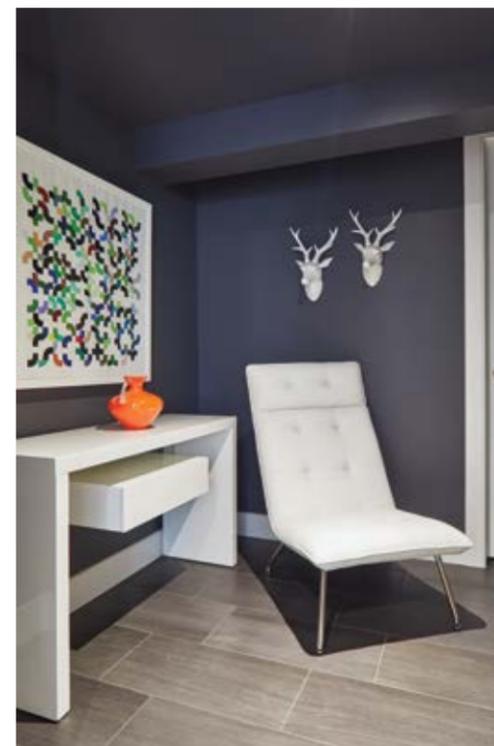
bedroom. Designed with a hotel bathroom in mind, Drover chose a mix of marble and ceramic from **Cover-Ups Carpet and Flooring**, to achieve luxury on a budget. “There are no rules when it comes to mixing real and faux,” says Drover, who also mixed custom mouldings with store-bought mirrors. When painted the same colour, they appear as one installation. Two dainty chandeliers, from **Karger Gallery**, are suspended, like pieces of jewelry, over the Restoration Hardware vanity.

When designing the kitchen, it was important to consider both aesthetic and function. Her parents knew they wanted a white kitchen so Drover chose white shaker cabinets and white quartz countertops from **Elora Home Hardware**. She also widened the galley kitchen to incorporate a rustic island, made of reclaimed lumber from St. Jacobs Antiques Market. *Continued on page 45*



Once a garage is now a bold and colourful media room.

RIGHT: A brick wall grounds the updated guest quarters in the basement. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A stately king-size bed and equestrian prints offer this room a more masculine tone. **BELOW:** Guests have a funky spot to relax by the fire. **BOTTOM LEFT:** This pretty and functional home office space is tucked next to the sauna room in a quiet corner of the basement.



The kitchen is cleverly divided into two zones. One side, which can be seen from the dining room, is left simple and uncluttered. Displaying only a row of lower cabinets, accented by wall art rather than upper cabinetry and two handmade copper pendants from **Karger Gallery**, this space feels anything but utilitarian. On the adjacent side, which is concealed from the living space, is the appliance area – featuring an array of small appliances, the fridge (from **TA Appliances & Barbecues**) along with ample storage. **Speers Electric Limited** installed

an all-new electrical system and audio system in the house. In order to make space for a main floor laundry room, Drover and her parents decided to transform the garage into a cosy media room with a combined bathroom and laundry room. This space, which exudes yet another genre, was fashioned after a folk art print that her parents purchased in Montreal. The moody palette of rich charcoal and deep red, which Drover wrapped from the walls to the trim and ceiling, is accented by iron and wood elements, creating a more primitive vibe.

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RIGHT: Drover designed the gardens with the same eye for detail as the residence.
BELOW: A covered deck off the master bedroom and kitchen can be enjoyed at least three seasons of the year. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A shady spot beside the deck is set for al fresco dining.



In the basement, consisting of a home office, sauna room, and guest quarters Drover expressed a more contemporary vibe. The sauna by **Legge Fitness Superstores** is used almost daily when her mother is in residence. It operates off a regular receptacle and produces infrared dry heat, which is good for your health.

By repeating the deep charcoal and crisp white, she was able to weave the modern space into the home's overall design story. It was through this repetition and attention to detail that Drover successfully created an eclectic and deeply meaningful weekend retreat – one her parents proudly enjoy. **OH**

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