

CANADIAN HOME trends



2020
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Text Zakiya Kassam | **Photography** Stephani Buchman

Samantha and Greg Murray's 1920s-era property neighbors a beach and quaint boardwalk, in addition to a variety of gardens, restaurants, grocers, and bakeries. In terms of location, the family of six—including two daughters and two cats—couldn't be happier, but the home itself was overdue for an update. To help bring it into the 21st century, the Murrays got in touch with designer, Mirelle Goren.

The property is semi-detached, encompassing 1,500 square feet, two-stories, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms. The couple, both sales professionals, were prompted to renovate the home so that it better reflected their love to cook and entertain. "We were originally looking at moving within the neighborhood to a home with more space; however, the costs of moving and the home prices in the area made it cost-prohibitive. We chose to renovate instead."

According to Mirelle, the original layout of the home was cramped and lacking storage. "In addition to wanting a space that felt casual enough for their young family, the homeowners wanted an open-concept floor plan with an eat-in kitchen



and lots of built-in storage. There was a great opportunity to utilize the space underneath the stairs, so we had a custom coat closet built directly into them."

To brighten up the space and facilitate light flow, Mirelle opted for crisp, all-white walls throughout. Her reasoning was to create a foundation with neutrals, and then add contrast via furniture, accents, and finishes. "Black elements add drama and the warm brass fixtures keep the space from feeling too stark," she says. "For a nod to the nautical locale, we chose to have the kitchen island painted in a classic navy blue and kept the rest of the kitchen cabinetry white. We used different shades of blue in the bathroom, living room, master bedroom, and laundry room. Blue is one of those colors that pleases just about anyone."

Mirelle cites the custom millwork throughout the home as being a splurge. This includes the kitchen cabinetry and island, dining banquette with storage, fireplace shelving and cabinets, the stairwell closets, and mirrored closet doors in the master bedroom. The couple saved by opting for a painted wall behind the fireplace, rather than extending the black stone from floor to ceiling. They also decided to keep the





original shiplap wall in the stairwell—for both its historical character and cost-effectiveness.

“Another priority was finding a closet solution for the master bedroom,” says Mirelle. “We painted the bespoke floor-to-ceiling closet doors an understated smoky green and paired it with decorative brass handles. The color is calming, yet undeniably eye-catching. And, since it acts like a neutral, it pairs easily with bolder hues as well as other neutrals.”

Mirelle notes that the color choices were trend-inspired, “There has been an emerging preference in the industry for shades of blue and green as well as a recent revival for a more retro-era palette that includes deep oranges, mellow yellows and earth tones. In the master bedroom, we employed both trends.”

When asked about working with color, Mirelle stresses the importance of personal style: “Before you begin any major home renovation, take some time to find out what your design aesthetic is, including your color style. Even in small doses, color infuses a room with energy, so try not to shy away from it because you may find that moving out of your comfort zone can lead to surprising results.”