

TALK, BUILD, LIVE

Communication was the key to achieving this Kerrisdale home

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BY PHILLIPA RISPIN // PHOTOGRAPHY: DARKO SIKMAN // STYLING: VANJA SANTIC



A lot of discussion went into the making of this home: discussion with the city, discussion with the homeowners, discussion with the designers. The home is in an area of traditional-style buildings, and along with its neighbour, it replaced two Tudor-style houses that had a heritage character. The community wasn't

happy about losing the two Tudors to a possibly excessively contemporary building. And the city wasn't happy about that or anything else that might clash with the traditional aesthetics of the neighbourhood.

"The owner is a residential builder, contractor and developer I've known for many years," says David Nicolay, principal of Evoke

International Design and designer of the home. Owners Rob Chetner, of the Trasolini Chetner Construction + Development Corporation, and his wife, Kerri, chose the lot, "but it was zoned as 'conditional approval on aesthetics,'" Nicolay says. "We had pretty long discussions with the city, and a lot of iterations that we had to go through to get

The floors in most of the rooms are polished concrete composite to provide a homogeneous look. Much of the furniture in the house was custom-made in Italy to Room8's specifications. The living room's sectional sofa in viscose/linen/cotton was custom-made by Modulnova's collaborators FlexTeam. The coffee tables were custom-made in solid European white oak. Swivel chair: Baxter.



something that the city would find acceptable.”

Finally, approval was received and, in an effort led by Rob Chetner, the two Tudor-style houses that originally occupied the lot were moved and relocated a few blocks away, bucking Vancouver’s teardown trend. The relocation was part of a heritage restoration project, which produced an eight-unit

townhouse community called the Two Dorothies, which was developed and built by Chetner’s company.

Nicolay says his “client knew the work we did. He wanted a very modern flat-roof, West Coast-style house, but the zoning wouldn’t support it. We ended up coming up with a [design] language that was very modern but

addressed basic architectural standard concepts like gabled roofs and porch elements – things that are standard language but put in a very modern aesthetic.”

Once the exterior design of the 5,000-square-foot home had been settled, Nicolay worked with the homeowners on the interior layout. “There was lots of dialogue,”

The towers left of the cooktop feature hidden internal drawers; all towers are equipped with vertical LED light strips. The pantry pulls out and rotates left and right. Gaggenau appliances complement the quality and minimalism of the design. The table attached to the island is six feet long and rests on a steel leg connected to crossbars on the side of the island. 16-inch-deep stainless steel sink: Steeltime; bar stools: La Palma.



he says. “Mrs. Chetner was very much into the details of it, and she worked with interior designers in my office.”

The Chetners have a casual and social lifestyle, and they entertain often. Their informality is emphasized by the public areas in the home; the kitchen, living and dining areas are open to each other.

The design aesthetic for the home’s interior is “something that would complement the house, with a minimum of details,” says Dario Drinovac, a designer who owns the firm Room8, which specializes in interior furnishings, with an emphasis on full customization. He knew from early days what aesthetic to follow, because he had worked

with the Chetners before. They began this particular collaboration by showing Drinovac the preliminary permit drawings, and much discussion ensued throughout the months it took to obtain the requisite permits and to build the house.

“The great room is the most important element in the house,” says Drinovac. 📷

The dining table is 12 feet of white oak. Evoke designed the base of locally made thin steel. Dining chairs: La Palma.





“Everything else had to work with that. Everything else in the house was selected to complement that area. It started with the kitchen.”

The Chetners knew the limitations of traditional materials and asked for something durable. Drinovac proposed an innovative porcelain product from Italy for the countertops and island drawers, made by Modulnova. The product is resistant to acid, heat and

staining. Modulnova also did all the millwork in the house, in European white oak.

Since all elements were fabricated in Italy, not on site, communication was crucial. There are many aspects of the kitchen that are a departure from the norm. For instance, at eight feet tall, the cabinet doors are unusually high. Modulnova has patented technology that prevents their much-used wooden elements from

warping. The 16-foot-long island features two stacks of five-foot-wide drawers, with the drawer fronts faced in the Modulnova porcelain to prevent warping.

The Chetners wanted the toe-kicks to be uniform throughout the kitchen, but the dining area is a six-inch step up from the rest of the main floor, and about two-thirds of the step is fronted by a run of low cabinetry, so the

toe-kicks here would be higher than elsewhere. Drinovac and Modulnova solved that problem by having the bottoms of the doors extend two inches lower than the interiors of the cabinets.

Decor in the living and dining areas, as in the rest of the home, follows the minimalist aesthetic, with pale or windowed walls. Furniture is clean-lined and neutral-colored. A major feature of the living area is

an Evoke-designed low-slung fireplace with a simple hearth, set into a white-painted wall.

The decor might be minimalist, but the comforts of home are not. All of the bedrooms upstairs have ensuite bathrooms, and the laundry room is on that floor, too. The basement boasts a mudroom, a guest suite, a media room, an exercise room and a powder room. A feature of the main floor is the large

welcoming foyer that connects with a multi-function room, with an office tucked behind a barn-door-style sliding door that was custom-made. Directly off the great room, a partially roofed patio leads to a deck and then the lawn down one side of the back yard and a pool and hot tub down the other.

After much communication and attention to detail, there are happy results all 'round. ➤

(Previous page) The homeowners have a casual lifestyle, and it was important to them to have the kitchen-living room on the same grade as the patio. Large glass sliding doors give easy access to the patio, which stretches across the entire back of the house. (Above) The master bedroom features a white oak wall for contrast with the king-size bed, the base and headboard of which are upholstered in linen.

The oak cabinetry in the master bathroom is by Modulnova. The floor is clad in dolomite tiles that measure one by three feet. The countertop is made of Nikron, a material developed in Japan.