

HAVEN

Glorious Gardens

A celebrated landscape architect breathes life into a sanctuary of lush solitude

Complimentary
with THE EDGE
NOT FOR SALE

PP 13134/04/2013(031808)
ISSN 1675-6266
9 771675 626000

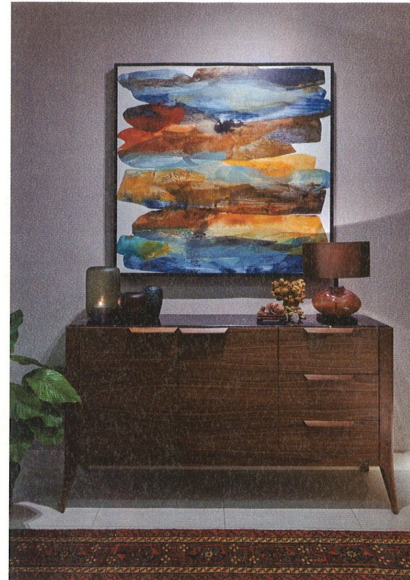
• ENTERTAINING IDEAS • BLACK + WHITE CHARM • FESTIVE COCKTAILS

Family Matters

Changing needs and the comfort of familiar surroundings dovetail in a home rebuilt for contemporary living

Text Tan Gim Ean
Photography Chris Leong





Although well-built and compact, the corner lot had to be redesigned to include practical space on both floors, Lee explains. "We were able to retain the large garden and add 30% of square footage. Because so much of the old structure had been demolished, it was almost new-build."

Construction took a year from start to handover, with input from the occupants: walk-in wardrobes wherever possible; a self-contained den-cum-study for the owner; larger bathrooms and ample storage (for his wife and parents); and a family/TV room. The last had to have ample space for cosy movie sessions, a library, and shelves to showcase Star Wars memorabilia. Lee says his client is a big fan of the series.

Unlike Lee, who spent time with the family to get a better idea of what each member wanted before drafting his design plans, the contractors had to deal with certain things already in place, such as overhead beams and inconsistent ceiling heights. They also replaced the plumbing and wiring, a job long overdue.



A family home that expands to accommodate everyone gives old and young room to stretch and grow. Taking the first step towards that, an owner demolished 80% of his double-storey semi-detached home in a mature neighbourhood in Petaling Jaya.

The owner's parents had moved into the house in the 1970s. Now octogenarians, they found certain features, like the small bathrooms, no longer suitable. Besides, with two growing grandchildren, the available space had become inadequate.

But, comfortable with his surroundings, the owner was not keen to move. He decided to rebuild, envisioning a multi-generation nest that is contemporary at heart, for his parents, wife and children aged 13 and nine.

Interior designer Raymond Lee came into this project three years ago and started some basic work before architect Melvyn Kanny was engaged.

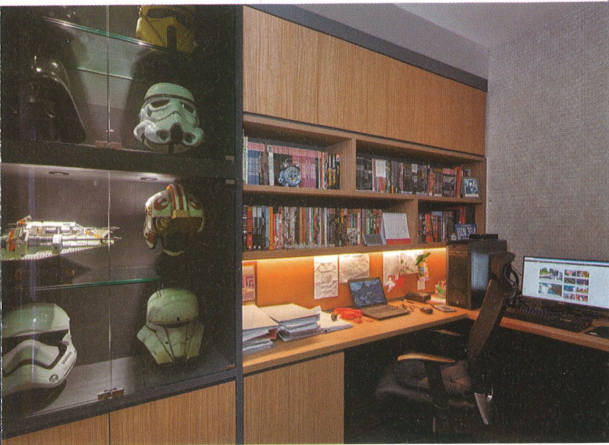
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

The house is in a mature PJ neighbourhood; Vintage Persian rugs and bespoke furniture, like this Credenza set, take pride of place in the living room and dining area;

A contemporary artwork and carved jade in the foyer;

Mosaics help protect the wet kitchen wall from stove splatters





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Star Wars collectibles, favourite movies and books fill the owner's den and family-study-cum-TV room;

Harlequin, Nina Campbell, Scion and Clarke & Clarke fabrics and wallpapers adorn the bedroom walls;

The master bathroom is bright and green;

Lime green and biscuit brown cushions on orange all-weather upholstery add colour to the patio

The plan was to open up the ground floor so the foyer, living and dining areas and dry and wet kitchens would flow into one another.

Foldaway and pocket doors helped extend the living room into the wraparound terrace hugging the front and side elevations of the building. The wet kitchen — with a backsplash of mosaic tiles to protect the wall from stove splatters — has a wooden frame glass pocket door separating it from the dry kitchen. Tucked at the back of the property are the laundry area, pantry and helper's room.

A dark chocolate faux wicker set on the terrace tempts one to curl up with the lime green and biscuit brown cushions propped on a sofa with orange all-weather upholstery — cheerful contrasts with the dark grey feature wall and engineered floorboards. Hanging above some bicycles in a corner is a metal sculpture bought during a family trip to the US some years ago.

Good taste sits sedately in the main living area where the colour palette is predominantly warm grey, with accents of frosted lime. Two paintings by the client's late uncle, a prominent artist in the Sixties — heirlooms restored and reframed for a fresh look — take pride of place. Artworks acquired more recently hang in the dining area and foyer.

Touches of yellow and mustard punctuate the grey and go well with early 20th century vases filled with pandanus leaves. More treasured items — antique blue-and-white plates and urns, colourful jars with dragon motifs, little teapots and horse figurines carved



from jade — are displayed around the living room.

"The client's mother has a large collection of pottery which I helped curate and present for this space," Lee says. Grandfather collects too: His Yixing clay teapots hark back to the 1970s.

Flos pendant lamps lead to the dry kitchen and from there, the wet one, where meals are prepared daily. Tidy is the word for these well-used areas. The owner puts it to the storage places tucked away from view, but one gets the impression this is a home where everything has its place.

Upstairs, muted grey wallpaper with subtle textures and small patterns cover the walls of the four bedrooms. A guest room on the ground floor is also where the children have their tuition and piano lessons. Here, framed vintage Laotian textiles and chequered print drapes add to the welcome of this double-duty space.

The client's den is a study in neatness too, with video game collections stacked in a row and Star Wars helmets peeping from glass cabinets. The family study-cum-TV room has more collectibles from the franchise, favourite movies on Blu-ray and books arranged on wooden cabinets that almost reach the ceiling. Portraits in pewter frames and cushions on an L-shaped sofa complete the cosy home. ■

