201 BRIGHT IDEAS FOR FRESH, NEW SPACES 16 (2 Before + After Room Reveals Easy Weekend Wow! Dressers, Chairs, Nighstands and More

## True Blue

A dated home gets a contemporary overhaul with a sea-inspired palette of blue and gray.

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STYLING BY PAOLA McDONALD
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG TINIUS/TINIUS PHOTOGRAPHY



WHEN PRINCIPAL DESIGNER PAOLA McDONALD OF OLAMAR INTERIORS

FIRST MET with her clients to discuss a redesign of their condo, the homeowners feared turning their traditional home into a lighter, brighter space with a more contemporary design might be too difficult a job

But Paola welcomed such a challenge

\*Many people are tired of a traditional design
that feels heavy with a lot of things packed in
a room,\* she says "They're looking for a clean,
open and purposeful design. My job is to
clean up the lines, making sure that everything
in a space serves a purpose or is meaningful to
the homeowner. That's what a contemporary
design needs to have.\*

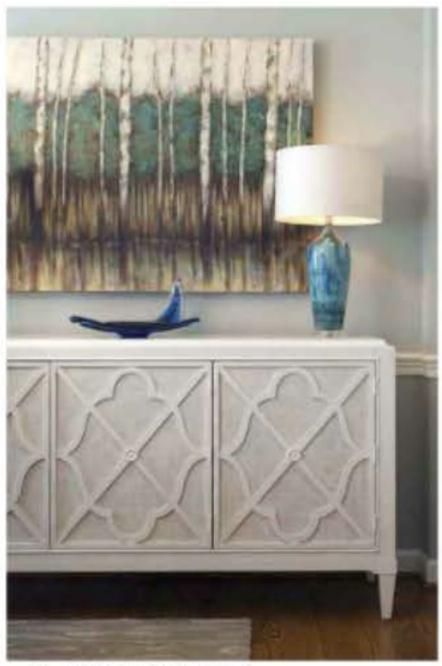


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## "Don't be tempted to go small just because the space is small. You often end up with the opposite effect."

In addition, Paola says that a lot of contemporary designs today incorporate classic lines done in a new way—cleaner and crisper. Throughout this project, she chose colors reminiscent of the beach, using various shades of cream and blue, and incorporating a strategic use of reflective materials like mirrors and paint to make the space appear larger.

Paola achieved a sense of continuity by incorporating a geometric scroll design that is represented throughout the entire home in upholstery fabrics, area rugs, mirrors, the kitchen backsplash and even on wallpaper in various niches









The dining room features a traditionallooking table and chairs, but the rest of the room carries tall, slender contemporary design elements, such as an étagère along the wall The large buffet makes the small space appear larger because of its light color

"Some pieces should be larger in a small space; they are very functional and make the space feel larger," Paola says "Don't be tempted to go small just because the space is small. You often end up with the opposite effect."

When the homeowner wanted to remove the original window coverings (slatted wooden shutters), Paola decided to soften the window appearance with flowing white curtains, complemented by an unexpected touch of dark color in the curtain rods. Because there were a few elements in the space that were dark, like the dining room chairs, accent table and the legs of the chairs, adding the curtain rods tied together every element as part of the design

After

All the materials were chosen to bounce the light and create a bright environment. The large shelving unit provides very specious storage for office supplies and home decor.



The most drastic change to the home comes from an update to the fireplace wall, which Paola transformed from a very heavy stone veneer to a much brighter, quartz-like finish, opening up the family room through to the office in an area that previously felt choppy and closed in Glass shelves in the pass-through niches provide additional light, reflection and a place to display artwork

Before



Tm not a matchy-matchy designer, where everything feels like it was bought at the same time from the same place. I want to develop the feeling of a home that was created over time,\*

Paola says. When renovating, think of long-term solutions that won't go out of style and make the most of your home.

Not only were the homeowners pleased with the design, they discovered upon re-evaluating their real estate that Paola's work netted a much higher appraisal value

See Shopping Guide, page 198.

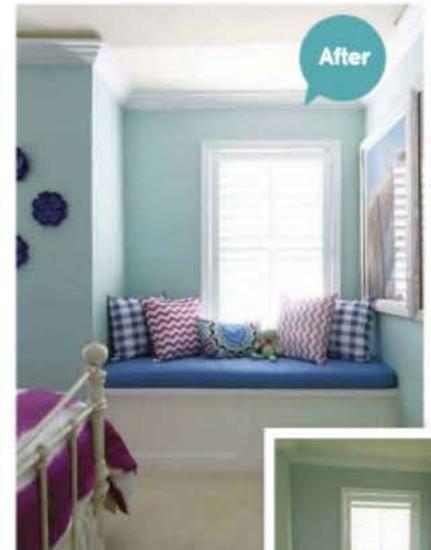


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Despite a lack of matching elements in the bedroom, the design is unified by a custom frame, which mimics the finish on the dresser.







## Contemporary Style on a Budget

Designer Paola McDonald's tips for stylish spaces without breaking the bank.

- Know What to Keep: Contemporary style doesn't mean you have to start with a clean state and buy everything new. Instead, I recommend keeping furniture pieces that work well for my clients. Incorporating existing pieces into a contemporary design is a matter of chaosing fabrics, colors and accessories that allow them to blend into the new design.
- Restore or Revamp: Consider your entire space. If you have wood floors, you can save quite a bit of money by refinishing them rather than installing something new. In the kitchen, carefully consider what needs to be replaced and what might need a mere facelift. In this project, we replaced heavy, dark granite countertops with lighter and brighter quartz. But everything else was still in very good condition, so we merely painted the cabinels and island coordinating colors of gray and installed a new faucet. Everything else was original to the predesigned plan.
- Paint Like a Pro: One of my best tips for staying within a budget is to choose point that really works with your design. In this project, we used a single color from Benjamin Moore Color Stories. This worked very well because each wall had different amounts of natural light hitting it, which made it look as if they were all painted a different but coordinating color. Using a single color paint in this way, we created a very unified look throughout the home.



Before

For more information on designer Paola McDonald of Olamar Interiors, visit plamarinteriors.com.