



UPDATING VINTAGE HOMES

with a Contemporary Touch

It's no secret Bay Area homes come with unique character. Early construction in the area began in the 1930s with the vast majority of Walnut Creek and Lamorinda homes built between the 1940s and 1960s. With an influx of homeowners relocating to the Bay Area, local interior designers have discovered crafty methods for updating vintage homes. To simplify remodeling efforts, Sandeep Sood, principal of San Francisco-based Renovation and Design, Inc. offers up five helpful tips for modernizing local properties.

"We try not to rip the soul out of the home. A lot of times we see other people do renovations and break the home down into small rooms and its torn away from its original roots," says Sood. "I advise my clients to always keep the soul of the home."

Sood uses a multitude of tools to contemporize the home, the first being color. Something as simple as new hues can make all the difference in a space with vintage bones.

"We introduce modernity with paint colors. New colors like grays and beiges make the home look modern without taking the soul out of it," he says.

Yet, Sood notes certain tones that work in San Francisco's Sunset District won't align with the warmer scene of the mid-peninsula. While blues and grays may nicely accent a Palo Alto home, those same tones would create a colder ambiance in a foggy climate.

Beyond color, high-end homes are weaving in geometric carpets in place of hardwood floors. Like everything else, hardwood comes in trends and according to Sood creative carpets are coming back in a big way.

"Carpets with geometric colors and designs are on-trend in higher end homes. These carpets have beautiful designs and feel like the floor has its own character," says Sood. "In my assessment we'll see this trend come back over the next four to five years."

Those looking to go beyond a quick fix should consider proper space planning. This method anticipates how homeowners wish to live five to ten years down the road, ensuring the house functions as needed for the long-term.

Space planning in a mid-century home often results in opening up the kitchen by breaking down separating walls and adding an island to form spacious, communal quarters in conjunction with the living and dining rooms. Sood upholds the kitchen's authentic character by keeping the trim and original cabinet color, while adding new multi-functional islands and on-trend countertops. While marble is a typical favorite, Sood recommends less porous material like Macauba or Taj Majal Natural Quartz for both beauty and practicality.

Moving out of the entertaining quarters and into the living space, Sood utilizes space planning by adding en-suite master bath lined with a mixture of glass and stone or marble inlay work.

"Adding an en-suite bath creates an ease of life and increases the homes value immediately," says Sood. "Whatever we do to the house if you spend 25 cents you should 50 cents back when you sell it."

While architectural designs may vary from San Francisco and the East Bay one thing remains: the importance of natural light. Homes in the city often rework the front of the property with large picture windows. Sood similarly reworks a multitude of homes by adding windows to illuminate the space and create cross-ventilation.

Lamorinda residents have many options during remodeling. Yet, if you're looking to update a space while retaining its soul be sure to consider color, flooring, open kitchens, en-suite baths, and ample natural light. For further insight on how to modernize a mid-century home contact your local interior designer or Sandeep Sood at renovationanddesign.com.

