

Homing INSTINCT

Thanks to an extension that cleverly marries old and new, this historic house became a comfortable, contemporary family home



TEXT: NATALIE BORUVKA PHOTOGRAPHS: KARL ROGERS



WHO LIVES HERE

Paul and Ali McAdam, their three children aged 6, 11 and 13, Titan, the German shepherd, and Mini, a dachshund chihuahua mix.

THE HOUSE

A heritage double-storey house dating back to the 1920s, which was extended and now includes an open-plan kitchen and living area, a dining room, four bedrooms, a study and a TV room.

Paul and Ali McAdam had always admired the beautiful thatched cottage next door to their house in Upper Claremont, Cape Town. In 2014 when it was put up for sale, they took the opportunity to look inside. “When we discovered that it was about 85 years old and that investors were looking to develop a three-unit complex on the stand, we felt compelled to preserve its heritage along with the size of the property,” says Paul, who is

the managing director and co-owner of distinguished local furniture brand, Block & Chisel.

Ali convinced her parents that, once renovated, it would make the perfect home for them. “We wanted to extend the house because it only had three bedrooms and the kitchen was small and dark. The traditional footprint also meant that there was no flow between the living areas. Luckily there was enough space on the property to add >



THIS SPREAD, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

● The outdoor furniture, table and birdcage on the veranda are all from Block & Chisel. ● Lavender Blue Landscaping assisted with the design of the garden. Rock found on the property was used to create the terrace, which is clad in slate tiles from WOMAG.



on a new wing and this allowed us to retain the structure's integrity," recalls Ali, who spent many late nights finalising the layout on tracing paper. For the ground floor, she designed an extension to house a scullery and a large, open kitchen and living area. The wing connected seamlessly with the existing section of the house via the living area.

The original house was reorganised into a dining room, larger entrance hall, study and TV room. The second storey of the new section accommodates a spacious main bedroom and a fourth bedroom, both with en suite bathrooms. The build was already well under way when Ali's parents decided not to move. Despite having no idea what >

THIS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ● The original **entrance** was enlarged by removing a wall between two rooms revealing the marble and wood floors used in each. ● "The open-plan **living area** is my favourite space. The decor is plush and stylish but not stiff. It's an inviting, comfortable room that works well for us as a family and just as well when we entertain," says Ali. The antique mirror, sofas and coffee table are from Block & Chisel. ● Titan, the German shepherd, lies on his favourite chair in the open-plan **living area**. The table and cabinet are from Block & Chisel, and the wood-burning stove was installed by The Fireplace Studio. The travertine tiles are from Natural Stone Warehouse.



they would do with the house when finished, Paul and Ali remained passionately committed. With the help of their architect, Barnaby Steynor, a new roof was designed and a terrace was constructed on the north-facing side, linking the new wing on one end to a veranda on the other. “We chose to replace all the openings on this side with large-scale aluminium doors and windows to flood the interior with light and provide beautiful views across the

garden,” says Paul.

Inside, the traditional character was carefully retained while new finishes were introduced. The entrance hall boasts the original marble floor and, to complement this, Italian travertine tiles were chosen for the open-plan kitchen and living area. In the new bedrooms, engineered wood flooring continues the warmth of the existing wooden floors, which were restored using Block & Chisel’s signature antique stain.

“It was very important to us that the old and new spaces would appear to merge naturally and that there would be continuity throughout the house. Introducing ceiling beams in the rooms of the extension also helped to achieve this,” Paul explains.

When the project ended after two years of passion and hard work, Paul and Ali had already decided that it would make the perfect home for their family. “We loved that in summer >

THIS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: ● “A kitchen with stainless steel surfaces has an easy-to-clean, industrial vibe,” says Ali. The units were installed by Mac Brothers Catering Equipment and the light fitting is from Plumstead Electrical. The kitchen stools are from Block & Chisel. ● Light streams into the dining room furnished with pieces from Block & Chisel. ● Mirrored frames update the traditional style of botanical prints from Block & Chisel.





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Adding drama to the **main bathroom** is a Chinese screen from Block & Chisel. The bath and tap fittings are from Victorian Bathrooms.



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the entire house opens up to the garden and its mountain views, and that if we entertain outside, we're protected from the harsh south-east wind. We installed a fireplace in the open-plan living area to keep things cosy in winter," says Ali. The McAdams had an opening made in the common fence so that they could move their furniture and belongings over and, after a couple of weeks when everything was in place, they recall feeling as though they had always lived in the house. Its beautiful proportions and sense of tradition provided the perfect canvas for the couple's classical and contemporary furniture, much of which are treasured pieces made by Paul's father Sibley, a master cabinetmaker who still designs ranges for Block & Chisel, the company he started with his wife Lynn, 30 years ago. **GH**

ABOVE: The Rococo-style furniture in the **main bedroom** is from Block & Chisel. Beams painted white draw the eye upwards, giving a sense of height.

SOURCES Barnaby Steynor Architects Incorporated barnaby@archinc.co.za Block & Chisel blockandchisel.co.za Lavender Blue Landscaping 072 828 5261 Loft Living loftliving.co.za Lund Rug Gallery lundrugallery.co.za Mac Brothers Catering Equipment macbrothers.co.za Natural Stone Warehouse naturalstonewarehouse.com NetDÉcor netdecor.co.za Plumstead Electrical plumstadelectrical.co.za SHF shf.co.za The Fireplace Studio fireplacestudio.co.za Victorian Bathrooms victorianbathrooms.co.za Weylandts weylandts.co.za WOMAG womag.co.za

Get the look
 Give your living room this mix of luxe and comfort



Venetian mirror, R5 245, NetDÉcor.



Belinda two-and-a-half seater sofa, R22 995, Block & Chisel.



Shanghai coffee table, R13 995, Block & Chisel.



Chaos Theory White Shale rug, from R33 850, Lund Rug Gallery.



Interlace vapour scatter cushion, R895, SHF.

Irregular stripe scatter cushion, R595, Weylandts.



Genji ginger jar, R995, Loft Living.