

# Close to Home

By Lisa Martin Photography by Clare Miers

*A family dwelling gets a facelift in keeping with the owners' carefully crafted cultural tone.*



*A charcoal paint was mixed with the glossy white of the fireplace and shelving in the family room.*

Timing was everything for a high-octane couple as they embarked on a whirlwind redo of their 20-year-old Southlake home. Trung and Mimi Tran — a pediatrician and private banker, respectively — gave the team at Sterling Renovations less than a month to complete a facelift that included the kitchen, family room, foyer and three bathrooms.

According to Mimi, “in Asian culture, we believe you cannot have your house in rubble at the Lunar New Year,” which fell on Jan. 31, 2014. At the same time, the parents to Tien, 17, and 15-year-old Thi, sought to update their 4,000-square-foot home in advance of hosting a party for family and friends that would coincide with the holiday. Julie Walsh of Sterling Renovations had worked with



*The Tran family at home*





*Fireglass gives the fireplace its dramatic look.*



*A faux painter redid the island to resemble dark wood, offering visual contrast to the rest of the room. All of the drawers were remade with full-extension, self-closing drawer glides.*

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the couple before and felt confident she could update the interior with a new sophisticated, streamlined vibe while meeting the pressing deadline.

"Mimi and Trung are both extremely busy at work, in the community and with their two teenagers, so rather than shop with me, I would present them color and fabric choices, and they would pick from there," says Julie. "One of the

best decisions was repainting the walls in the kitchen a rich gray. They went with a charcoal [Benjamin Moore's Blackjack] in the adjacent family room, which pops against the glossy white trim."

The kitchen saw the most work, starting with swapping out white appliances for professional-grade stainless steel. Dr. Tran had the idea of reframing the cabinet above the refrigerator.

*A new wooden hood complements the kitchen's softer, more subtle look.*

To that end, Julie and her husband, David, worked with JIL Custom Cabinets to bump out the cupboard, effectively making the new fridge appear as if it were built into the space. A new wooden hood complements the kitchen's softer, more subtle look.

The existing cabinets, which were retrofitted with European, soft-close hinges that don't show from the front, went from a tired pickled finish to pristine white. A faux painter redid the island to resemble dark wood, offering visual contrast to the rest of the room. A tumbled marble backsplash, meanwhile, gave way to glass and mosaic tiles that run horizontally; the colors contrast the Giallo granite countertops that the Trans had installed a couple of years back.

On Walsh's recommendation, simple linen window panels replaced the family room's gold and burgundy swag draperies. The designer also helped Mimi and Trung edit the items on display in the shelving above the TV. "The niche now holds things that mean a great deal to them — a Mardi Gras mask from Louisiana, where Mimi grew up, a music note for





*The staircase was converted from golden oak and white wood to iron and stained wood. Flowers are from Out of the Garden, inspired by before-and-after photos of the home.*

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their kids, both of whom play in the Carroll High School band," says Walsh. "But people don't realize how much clutter they accumulate over the years. For Mimi and Trung, we got rid of a lot of knickknacks but at the same time kept personality in their home."

The foyer also received a significant upgrade thanks to new paint along with a reimagining of the staircase. Walsh had the golden oak banister darkened while also



*The baths now feature neutral palettes and chrome fixtures, including this glass mosaic tile shower with a frameless glass enclosure.*

exchanging the white-painted balusters for iron. "The new stair rails match the metal front doors we put in last year," Mimi explains. "I have always wanted iron and love the way it now looks."

In fact, every change seemed to spur the couple to grow their to-do list for the project. "The stars all aligned when we asked about redoing the bathrooms," says Mimi, who in addition to her fulltime position as a community leader at Frost Bank also devotes hours as a volunteer leader of the Carroll Education Foundation. "David's subcontractors were all free and they promised we could have it finished in a week so we went for it."

Indeed, three of the home's four bathrooms received significant upgrades, including the one that sported a pink commode and sink, along with orange walls. The bathrooms now boast chrome fixtures (rather than faux brass), low-flow Toto toilets and neutral palettes. A photo Trung took of the Eiffel Tower while on a family vacation to Paris serves as the new focal point of the powder room. Perhaps best of all, the Trans wowed their friends and family at their Lunar New Year party. Says Mimi, "I love how elegant and simplified my house now feels." [View](#)

