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# COLORADO HOMES & LIFESTYLES™

THE  
Furniture  
ISSUE

\$4.95US



ColoradoHomesMag.com  
JANUARY, FEBRUARY 2009

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Thanks to a thoughtful renovation and carefully selected antiques, this 1920s Mediterranean Revival finds new life.

**ON THE COVER:**  
In this Mediterranean Revival home, designer W. Eric Davidson mixed the homeowners' antiques with contemporary furniture for a smart, comfortable style.  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
EMILY MINTON REDFIELD

# Home Again

BY CHERYL MEYERS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMILY MINTON REDFIELD

Thanks to a thoughtful renovation and carefully selected antiques, this 1920s Mediterranean Revival finds new life. We sat down with designer W. Eric Davidson to get his take on the project.

**CH&L:** Here, you renovated a 1928 Mediterranean Revival home in Denver's Country Club neighborhood, taking it down to the bones and starting fresh. What made you a good match for this project?

**W. Eric Davidson:** My expertise is historic architecture, which is a direct extension of my years working in the antique business—I used to restore antique furniture for Black Tulip Antiques, among others. That's why I feel an emotional attachment to the history of a home. You have to imagine that it was built with a great deal of care and a great deal of love, so even if you have all these wonderful ideas for how to completely change it, you need to be careful about imposing your ideas on someone else's work. It's almost like working on another person's painting: it's okay to restore it, but don't redo it. That's how I feel about historic homes; there's a responsibility in renovating.



The formal-yet-comfortable living room features sofas by Mitchell Gold and occasional chairs by Hickory Chair. The antique oyster-top table was found at Watson & Co., while the hand-painted trunk, which is used as a coffee table, is a family heirloom.



How did your design choices honor the history of the house?

We selected tiles and cabinetry that could have started in that house when it was built—staying away from highly polished stone like marbles and granites and leaning more towards limestone. Also, for the wooden case furniture, we went primarily with period antiques. Yet nothing is too formal or garishly carved because it wouldn't be true to the style. I'd describe the antiques as organic, almost quirky.

Like the painted trunk that is used as a coffee table?

That piece is one of the homeowner's family heirlooms. We knew we wanted to use it somewhere, but weren't sure how. Of course, we didn't plan on using it as a coffee table, but as the room evolved, that's just where it ended up working best.

Tell me about how this design evolved.

We found all the large-scale, contemporary upholstered pieces first, and then filled in the holes with antiques we just happened to like or that had character—not ones that fit a need—which left us with a little more freedom. We didn't go antiquing with a tape measure, hunting for a specific 36-inch table. Rather, we just happened upon pieces, like the standing grandfather clock or the funky French commode. If you set out to find the things we bought, you never would have found them. It was almost like collecting art.



(opposite) The occasional chairs in the family room create a serene sitting space beside the white, architectural built-in shelves. (above) In the dining room, Davidson used a mix of heirlooms and retail-store furniture. The dining room table is by Crate & Barrel, while the buffet and rug are family antiques. The chandelier was found at Trog de Lights in Denver.



Designer W. Eric Davidson prefers to keep the large pieces of furniture—like the Cisco Brothers sofas and Mitchell Gold chairs—upholstered in neutral fabrics, while using the throw pillows—like the orange ones from Dransfield & Ross—for pops of color. The coffee table is from Provenance, while the end tables come from Scandinavian Designs.



**DESIGN DETAILS**

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*For information about the products in this home, visit [ColoradoHomesMag.com](http://ColoradoHomesMag.com)*

*(above)* In the kitchen, the designer effectively combined a traditional table from Restoration Hardware with contemporary chairs from Starck (notice the rocking chair at the head of the table). *(right)* The master bedroom features a bed by Crate & Barrel with pillows from Bliss Studio and Room and Board. The dark-stained wood nightstand is from Mitchell Gold.

Speaking of art, how did your overall design coalesce with the homeowners' incredible art collection?

When we chose the newer, contemporary furniture, we looked for pieces with simple lines and upholstered them in a simple palette. It is my belief that your new furniture should provide a backdrop for the art and antiques. It's almost as if you're creating a stage for the art and antiques. And, clearly, you don't have to go overboard with price to get the effect.

Sure. We have a table from Restoration Hardware. And the beautiful chairs in the living room were discounted floor samples from HW Home. People think they have to spend tons of money on each piece of furniture, but that's just not the case.

What is your favorite piece of furniture?

My favorite piece in the whole house is the funky French commode. If you look closely, it's really several pieces of furniture hammered together as if someone repaired it with whatever they had lying around. The right leg doesn't match the left, the doors are attached backwards...it's probably been that way for 200 years. It's almost like a mix of French period furniture and folk art, and that's what I love about it. It's like the puppy with one ear that doesn't quite stand up.

Structurally, what changed in this house?

When the homeowners bought the house, it was very overgrown; there had been a lot of deferred maintenance. And the few existing changes—such as the “tiki room” with indoor barbecue—were very 1960s. The house almost felt like a little slice of Sunset Boulevard. To their credit, the homeowners put up with a lot to get this house fixed up: leveling floors; discovering that they had no beams holding up the roof; rebuilding the roof; putting new texture on the walls. Now it really is the gem on the block. □

**AT A GLANCE**

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:** Mediterranean Revival  
**TOTAL SQUARE FEET:** 4,600  
**LENGTH OF THE PROJECT:** Nine months start to finish  
**DESIGN CHALLENGE:** “Assembling a collection of contemporary furniture and art, plus antiques, in a way that was also kid-friendly.”  
**DESIGN SOLUTION:** “None of the furniture pieces are too ‘precious’—particularly the antiques, which have had a long and interesting life, and they wear it. Nothing is pristine, and nothing is formal. If a piece gets a scratch or dent, no worries, it's just one more thing that happened in its 200-year history.”

