



Enchanting Restoration

This historic cottage in Arlington, Virginia, underwent a renovation designed to recover and restore its former enchanting style.





Adele Mouzon and Mark Perry's home in Arlington, Virginia, is no stranger to history. Built in 1933 by the American singer Kate Smith, the home has the bones of a traditional colonial, and despite a renovation in the '80s that left it bogged down with heavy oak trim and terra-cotta tile, the couple was able to see through to the charm beneath. "We changed everything, basically," Adele says. After purchasing the property in 2008, she and Mark launched into a renovation that added a second story to the back of the house, gutted the kitchen, increased the size of the dining room, moved stairways, and more. "Everything was changed to try to make it more like a traditional colonial, the way it should have been."



In the great room, which leads out to the screened porch, a painting by artist BongKyun Noh hangs over a Daniel Donnelly sofa that was custom-made to fit the space.

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One of Adele's favorite spaces in the home, the kitchen got an update that resulted in crisp white surfaces and an overall cheerful vibe that carries into the great room. "It's the whole family," Adele says.

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Antique sheet music that rests on the red oak piano is a nod to the history of the house. "One of my husband's law partners had heard the story of the house, and he found some of Kate Smith's music and sent it to us," Adele says. "So, we keep that up on the piano."



The home now features elements that are better fitted to its history, including the hand-paneled walls in the living room. "You can tell it's hand-paneled because nothing is square," Adele says. "There's no symmetry, which is kind of cool."


In every room, classic lines and wooden tones like those of the family's Stickley and Thos. Moser furniture are mingled with more contemporary pieces. Various antique pieces, like the stained glass lamp and red oak piano in the living room, are scattered throughout the design, contributing to the home's timeless charm. "It's very eclectic," Adele says.



And the home's renovation wasn't confined by its walls. In fact, Adele and Mark went to landscape architects Leslie and Scott Fritz to create an outdoor space that would truly stand out. "When we bought the house, the yard basically looked like a pit," Adele says. "And Leslie and Scott said, 'We want the yard to be like the house and have rooms.'"

When they were done, the home's outdoor space had been separated into distinct areas delineated by retaining walls and a holly hedge. "The back is the more recreational, serene part; the front is the very formal entry; and the side is where the kids play," Adele says. "So, we have a whole set of rooms in the exterior of the house."

They also installed a lap pool that doubles as a water feature. "It has fountains, and it's just gorgeous," Adele says. She notes that because the pool is all straight lines and sharp angles, the Fritzes designed the paths leading to it to curve around and create a more welcoming atmosphere.

The yard isn't huge, Adele notes, but the skill of the landscape design maximizes every inch of the space. It's something that applies to the interior of the house as well, where Adele and Mark opted for smaller, cozy rooms rather than open spaces they would never use. "It's not one of those houses that has the giant ceilings and huge rooms," Adele says. "It's a living house." 

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