

The Remodeling & Design Resource

# Home

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# a perfect



## SMART SETUP

Owners Patrick Moran and Jordan Budde created a stylish backdrop for their midcentury modern furnishings. An old department-store fixture lights a vintage conference table in the dining room; French chairs from the 1950s sport the velvet upholstery they came with.



LOS ANGELES | CALIFORNIA

# showcase

STRIPPING  
AWAY ORNATE  
DETAILS HELPS  
CREATE A  
HIGH-CONTRAST  
SETTING FOR  
COLORFUL  
COLLECTIBLES

PRODUCED BY  
**LAURA DYE LANG**  
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**MARK LOHMAN**  
WRITTEN BY  
**FRED ALBERT**



### SPANNING DECADES

Updating the living room's lighting and adding a new fireplace screen helped instill a modern sensibility.



## make it unique

### SMART, BUDGET-FRIENDLY TIPS FROM INTERIOR DESIGNER SASHA EMERSON

- ◆ **D-I-Y** Visit flea markets and junk stores—then restore your finds yourself. “You’ll pay a premium at a design store that buys and redoes its own vintage goods,” Emerson says.
- ◆ **GET HELP** To refurbish her pieces, Emerson keeps a list of refinishers, upholsterers, and lamp makers. Follow suit: Research online and ask friends about reliable pros in your area.
- ◆ **REPURPOSE** Turn an interesting vase or piece of pottery into a lamp. Can’t afford a custom shade? Grab one at a discount retailer like Target or Kmart. Likewise, a damaged quilt can be made into pillows, and a vintage fabric can be stitched into a tablecloth.
- ◆ **KEEP LOOKING** “Go to flea markets regularly,” Emerson advises (she goes every week). “You’re always going to find something lovely and cheap that will make you happy.”





# T

elelevision exec Patrick Moran is used to finding properties and developing them. He helped turn *Prison Break* and *Bones* into hits and ushered *Women's Murder Club*



onto home screens earlier this season. But in his free time, the L.A. resident seeks properties of a different sort—the kind that come with a house and a mortgage.

A habitual remodeler, Moran had barely settled into his last home when he started searching for a replacement. He and his partner, television writer and playwright Jordan Budde, had

accumulated a small but carefully chosen collection of midcentury modern furniture and wanted a setting that would show it off. Instead of looking for a property of similar vintage, however, Moran envisioned something older. “I liked the idea of juxtaposing a lot of really modern furniture and a very traditional setting,” he says.

With its ornate lighting fixtures and shuttered windows, the ivy-covered Prohibition-era cottage he found in the city’s Brookside neighborhood might

have seemed an unlikely repository for atomic-age furnishings. But Moran saw potential in the 2,350-square-foot home: “I thought if you took a lot of the gilded stuff out, painted everything white, and darkened the floors, it would show off contemporary furniture beautifully,” he says.

As soon as the closing papers were signed he went to work, stripping away extraneous built-ins and baroque lighting to reveal a succession of bright, high-ceilinged rooms—about 12 feet tall on average. He painted the walls white and hid battered oak floors beneath a rich chocolate-black stain, creating a high-contrast backdrop that accentuates the contours of his modern-age collectibles.

Although the kitchen felt cramped, Moran resisted the urge to expand it. Instead, he raised the ceiling about 2 feet, replaced the cupboards, and removed the wall that separated the cooking area from the breakfast room. With its dusky cabinets, sleek brushed-nickel hardware, creamy engineered-stone counters, and smattering of stainless steel appliances,



## GREEN SCENE

Veiled in ivy, the vintage 1925 house of whitewashed brick, left, features 2,350 square feet of living space on a single floor. Working with local landscape designer Brent Green, owners Moran (above left, in blue shirt) and Budde chose drought-tolerant plants and a gravel patio to conserve water.



the kitchen feels current  
but not out of sync with  
the home's 1920s roots







**UNIFYING TOUCHES** The owners removed a wall between the kitchen and the breakfast area, left, and, working with L.A.-based color consultant Philippa Radon, painted both pale blue. They raised the ceiling 2 feet and installed new cabinets and countertops. A stainless steel fridge-freezer combo and a built-in espresso machine, top, are sleek and useful. Cabinets matching the kitchen's partner with space-saving appliances in the laundry room, above.

the new kitchen feels contemporary but not out of sync with the home's 1920s roots. "We wanted all the modern conveniences, but not at the expense of the architecture," Moran says.

The laundry room, down the hall from the kitchen, was so crowded you had to squeeze past the washer and dryer to get to the back door. The owners installed undercounter appliances to conserve space and paired them with cabinets matching the ones in the kitchen to unify the rooms' style.

**F**or decorating guidance, Moran and Budde turned to an old friend, Sasha Emerson of Sasha Emerson Design Studio in Los Angeles. A former television executive (she was Moran's first boss when he moved to L.A.), Emerson assisted the pair with furniture arrangements and finishes, inserting splashes of color and textured fabrics to warm up the rooms and compensate for the paucity of pattern. "Patrick and Jordan like things very simple," she says.

Hewing to the owners' masculine, midcentury aesthetic, Emerson browsed stores for vintage furnishings and put items on hold until her clients could see them. "We have very different tastes, which is good," Moran says, "because she would find things that I would not have found on my own." The rosewood dining table is actually an old conference table Emerson discovered at the Rose Bowl flea market. It's paired with '1950s French velvet dining chairs and a chrome starburst light fixture salvaged from a Palm Springs department store. The living room sofa is a vintage piece—"from the '60s or '70s," Moran says—that was reupholstered, as were the opposing armless chairs and nearby wing chairs. Lamps were found at flea markets and junk stores, rewired, and fitted with new shades.

"We approached the design with a sense of discovery and the thrill of the hunt," Emerson says. "Except for some of the artwork, there's nothing in the house that's expensive or significant. What makes it work so perfectly is just how we put it all together." ■