

# House Beautiful

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# MAKEOVER

## Raising the Roof

A California couple brave a second renovation to create an exuberant space for their daughters that will stand the test of time



AFTER



BEFORE

ANYONE WHO'S HAD SUBSTANTIAL CONTACT with adolescent girls knows they possess alchemical powers of metamorphosis: one moment they're dewy-eyed SpongeBob SquarePants devotees; blink, and they've acquired the kind of insouciant sophistication that intimidates paint off walls. Such was the volatility that Jim and Nancy Kent had to consider when they decided to remodel the third floor of their 1924 Piedmont home for their daughters, Jamie, 13, and Galen, 10.

The dark space was divided into an office and a bedroom that their daughters shared, and it had already been renovated once to remedy a narrow stairwell and consolidate small rooms. Since, according to Jim, there was "no way on God's green earth" they would remodel again later, the results had to accommodate the current tastes of their daughters, yet remain fluid enough to suit them as they grew up.

The overarching brief was to create two bedrooms as well as a work and >

**CAVE DWELLING** Even though the third floor had been remodeled once, it was still a dark and awkward space shared by the Kent daughters.

**HIGHER PLANE** The main room became an airy and bright living room once the ceiling was raised and the western wall removed for extra light and new outdoor space.

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**FIR REAL** Floors were covered in fir, chosen for its hue rather than its resistance to wear and tear: "It's soft and gets banged up," says Jim Kent. "But we loved that warm amber color."

**LIT FROM ABOVE** Blown-glass fixtures were rigged to hang upside down, providing warm ambient light while obscuring the bulbs.

**DESK JOB** The desks were so large when they arrived that Jim Kent sent them back to be recut. "They dominated the room and made it look like a corporate headquarters," he says. Slimmer specs blend in nicely.



media room where the girls could entertain friends and the family could relax. During the planning process, an architect friend suggested they would gain a noteworthy feature if they raised ceilings to reveal a "beautiful long spine of a roof," and extra light and a deck if they removed a west-facing wall.

When it came time to decorate, the Kents hired Kathleen Navarra, a San Francisco-based designer whose color-savvy work they had seen. "We wanted to use warm, saturated tones," says Jim. Navarra selected a deep russet and ocher scheme for the sitting room and worked with the girls to settle on an age-defying shade of cerulean for their quarters.

**PENDANT LAMPS**



Too much lighting in a room can be garish—too little can cause eye strain. Hanging lamps vary in intensity and when combined with ceiling fixtures and desk lamps can complete a nuanced scheme. Great options include: 1. Astropop lamp with amber tinted glass, from Lite Source; 2. Droplets in cream from George Kovacs has nickel fittings; 3. The Spada II in Lemon is made from handblown Murano glass, by Monica Missio for CX Design.

**NEW HUES**

For a Tuscan feel, Navarra picked an earthy combination of mustard and rust, using Benjamin Moore Maple Leaf Red (2084-20) on the walls and Bryant Gold (HC-7) on the ceiling. Blue Hydrangea (2062-60) dominates the bedrooms, while a blue-green shade (749) was applied in the bathroom.



Peppered throughout are durable and versatile goods: two ottomans double as movable seating and conceal storage, and the sofa and armchairs are covered in spill-proof fabrics. In the bedrooms, built-in features round off aspects that could have remained awkward; drawers fill out nooks, and a bed levels off a big cranny.

The result was happy for all concerned: "It's been rewarding to see that all the work that goes into a space like this has paid off," says Jim. "We all love the way it turned out." ●

**BOLD AND BLUE** The robin's egg shade in the bedrooms will still work for Jamie and Galen as they get older; they need simply to update the bedcovers to keep pace with their changing tastes.

**ROOM FOR TWO** The bathroom was reconfigured to make space for two sinks—and allow the sisters to get ready for school at the same time.



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## PEDESTAL SINKS



In the Kent bathroom, built-in cabinets and drawers offer ample storage, so a pedestal sink was a good option. The Mission washstand from Waterworks is another riff on the idea.



Keeping the area below the sink open can make a cramped space seem more expansive. The bamboo console from Ann Sacks is equipped with the Zen lavatory by Robert Kuo.