

Family History A
custom-millwork table
from Martin's Custom
Finishing sets the scene
for more-casual meals
in the open kitchen and
living room. The nearby
sitting room (opposite)
was designed around
a 100-year-old kilim
that's a favourite of the
homeowners.

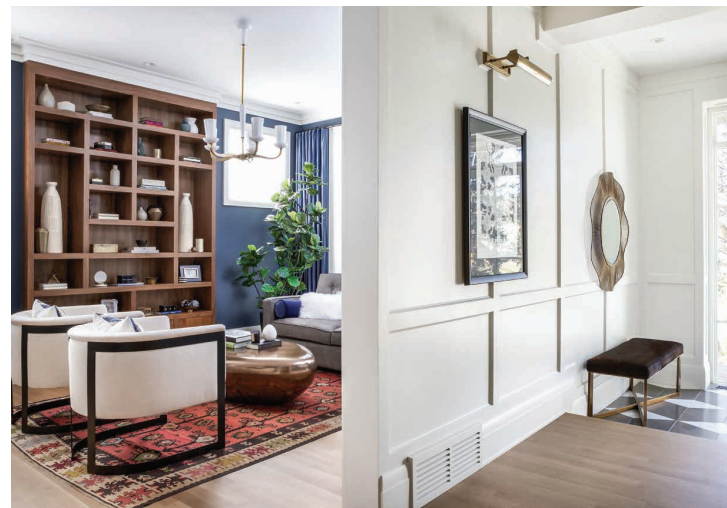


GLOBAL TOUCH

A fateful trip to Paris sets the stage for the multinational design influences in this Calgary home.

by **JACQUIE MOORE**

photographs by **PHIL CROZIER**

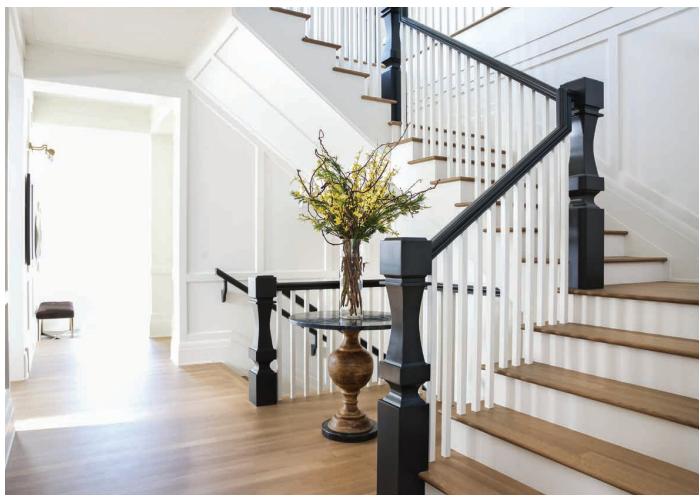




It's in the Mix "Eclectic" is the hardest style for a designer," says designer Stephanie Brown. "For the Sandhus, I had to find careful ways to mix European influences with Upper East Side New York, a touch of their Indian heritage and some mid-century-modern design." In the dining room (far right), a striking chandelier from Arteriors pairs with mid-century-style dining chairs from Rove Concepts and a dining table with a sexy gold base. In the living room (right), a custom sofa cozies up to a Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams ottoman, its warm metal legs both classic and perfectly on trend.

In the spring of 2012, Navi and Manjot Sandhu were having a Paris moment when Calgary crashed the party. The couple, originally from Winnipeg, were out for dinner in the City of Light but on pins and needles over an offer they'd made a week before on a piece of land in Calgary's Hounsfeld Heights. "We were so anxious, we'd connect to wifi before we even got past the hotel doors," says Navi. When at last the acceptable counter-offer arrived, Navi was forced to use her "broken high-school French to print and fax the paperwork at 11 o'clock at night." The Sandhus spent the rest of their holiday with their heads 7,000 kilometres away. "Every piece of architecture and design, every piece of art—it was all up for inspiration."

Little wonder, then, that the Sandhu home, whose occupants now include a baby and a toddler, reflects a subtle Parisian radiance. "The interior was meant to be classic and timeless," says Navi. "It could be Paris a century ago or right now." The first of many pieces of art a





visitor encounters, just inside the foyer, is a framed blueprint of the *Dôme des Invalides*, purchased by Navi at the Louvre gift shop during the aforementioned holiday. “I loved it because it’s historical yet very graphic and modern,” she explains, adjectives she can now use to sum up the aesthetic of her own home. (Paris, it should be noted, is not the only city that beguiles the couple: they worked with their architect, Ron Wildman from Inside Out Architecture, to design an exterior reminiscent of a Manhattan brownstone.)

Designer Stephanie Brown, who relocated from Calgary to Vancouver several years ago, was put in touch with the Sandhus through their builder, Laratta Homes. An instant shorthand of shared tastes ensued, as did a three-year process of designing on a schedule that kept them just ahead of construction. “The plans were beautiful,” says Brown, whose challenge lay largely in the blending of the Sandhus’ broad passions and influences.

“Eclectic’ is the hardest style ever for a designer,” she says. “For the Sandhus, I had to find careful ways to mix European influences with Upper East Side New York, a touch of their Indian heritage and some mid-century-modern design.” Rather than talking her clients out of any idiosyncratic choices, Brown found thoughtful, lasting ways to incorporate their ideas. “I admit that their desire to put mid-century in the mix, especially walnut cabinetry, threw me for a loop,” she says. “But we found a way to make it harmonious, and they love it.” Indeed, two oversized walnut cabinets in the living room at the back of the house not only provide symmetry by echoing the built-in in the front foyer but also anchor the room with an alluring source of warmth and depth.

Together, Brown and her clients likewise landed on unexpected yet elegant ways to turn single beloved elements into focal points in various rooms throughout the house. The sitting room, for instance, was designed around the Sandhus’ favourite 100-year-old kilim,



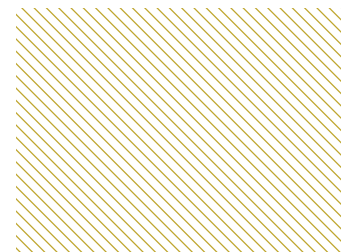
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purchased in Turkey years before. "I wanted the rug to have a place of prominence in the house," says Navi. "I don't usually go for bold colours, but once in a while I go all out." The kilim's riot of oranges, reds and blues pulls vitality into an otherwise tranquil room; as well, refreshingly, in a front room that could easily tend toward formality, built-ins here are filled with colourful travel mementos, casual family photos and books for all ages, which set a welcoming and relaxed tone for the whole house.

The expansiveness of the top floor of the three-storey house is a direct result of Navi's tenacity and imagination. Rather than a typical single hallway leading to bedrooms and bathrooms, the stairwell is surrounded by a wide, open square of corridors that lends an ocean of light and a touch of grandness to the entire floor; the view down from there to

Colour and Calm In the master (left), Brown designed a space both quiet and full of detail. A rug from Restoration Hardware sets the colour palette for a bold blue accent chair from Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams. On the upper level, the stairwell is surrounded by a wide, open square of corridors (right) that lends grandness to the entire floor.





Private Luxury There's a touch of grandness on the upper floor: the master bath features a rug from Jaipur, along with a playful Taj Mahal-inspired cut-out above the bath; the dressing room (below) features a marble-topped centre island.



the first floor feels akin to a great old train station or an opera house. The master bath and a bedroom are decorated with a well-trod rug from Jaipur and a kilim from Turkey, and whimsical illustrated maps of big cities temper any potential ostentation; a Taj Mahal-inspired cut-out above the ensuite bathtub is a likewise lighthearted touch.

So Jaipur and Agra, Paris and Manhattan come together in north-west Calgary. Oh, and that's not all: the startling wallpaper in the tiny front-hall powder room, which reminds Navi of a coral reef ("or, sometimes, of chanterelle mushrooms"), is distinctly modern Japanese. Still, thanks to an exquisitely light hand, the spirit of this home—rather than "eclectic global mash-up"—is simply an enchanting feeling of vitality, warmth and harmony. Just the way a perfect holiday abroad should feel. *///*