

HOUSTON house & home

THE COMPLETE RESOURCE MAGAZINE FOR YOUR HOME

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Royal Treatment

RESTORING A 1915 QUEEN ANNE TO INCORPORATE ECLECTIC STYLE



Prior to the house renovation, Ruth had a small pool installed that is surrounded with time-worn Chicago brick for aged look. Bungalow Revival tackled this project as well, which also included raising the floor of the detached garage to alleviate flooding issues and then adding on a dining veranda with room for guests to enjoy meals outdoors.

resources

DESIGN AND FINISHINGS:
Bungalow Revival & Bespoke,
Gilbert Perez, 713.861.7494

TILES AND COUNTER TOPS:
Walker Zanger, 713.880.9292

ANTIQUE LIGHTING & STAIN GLASS:
August Antiques, 713.880.3353
Antiques on 19th, 713.869.5030
Adkins Architectural Antiques,
713.522.6547

ANTIQUE VANITY:
Heights Antiques on Yale,
713.861.3335

ANTIQUE FURNITURE: Carl Moore
Antiques, 713.524.2502

PLUMBING FIXTURES:
Ferguson Plumbing,
www.ferguson.com
U-Plumb-It, 713.942.2277

ALL WALL COLORS: Benjamin Moore

KITCHEN APPLIANCES:
The Great Indoors

FURNITURE PIECES: Louis Shanks,
Baker Furniture, Berings
Hardware

Houston Heights Holiday Home Tour: December 2-4

Tour six festively decorated homes in the Historic Houston Heights, a neighborhood with a rich architectural tradition, and well-preserved, early 20th Century charm, located just four miles from downtown Houston. The homes reflect Victorian, Queen Anne, Craftsman and Colonial architecture, with three of the homes built before 1915. Locations are open Friday from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. Free shuttles available both days. Information: www.houstonheights.org or 713.861.4002, x7.



1629 Cortlandt,
built 1915.
This Queen Anne gem was renovated in 2009 by Bungalow Revival and features the homeowner's dynamic eclectic décor.

1445 Harvard,
built 1903.
A Dutch Colonial beauty listed on the National Register of Historic Places and owned by the same family since 1933.

729 Rutland,
built 1897.
This historic Queen Anne farmhouse was expanded during the 1920s and features extensive collections of art and antiques.

1432 Tulane,
built 1999.
This Colonial-style bungalow was remodeled in 2003 to evoke the Garden District of New Orleans.

1439 Harvard,
built 2003.
Designed by Murphy/Mears Architects and built by John Galvin to reflect the spirit of the Heights neighborhood.

1222 Allston,
built 2008.
A newly constructed Craftsman-style home built by Allegro Builders and 2Scale Architects.

Restoring the Queen

A 1915 Queen Anne bungalow in the Heights is returned to its royal glory

By Sandra Cook • Photography by Miro Dvorscak

Nine years ago, Ruth Davis was ready to leave Houston's far west suburbs and move into the core of the city. She explored the Heights, midtown and downtown areas, looking for a neighborhood that suited her. She wanted a central location that made sense for her work as an independent land consultant.

"I saw the wonderful walking path along Heights Boulevard, and that intrigued me," says Ruth. "Each home was different, but not so different. It was very comfortable to drive down the streets. And, I have to say, with doing freelance consulting for so many different clients, the central location was a big draw for me."

Ruth felt an instant connection when she first entered a charming 1915 Queen Anne style bungalow, just two blocks from the alluring Heights Boulevard. With bay windows and a precious porch dressing up the front of the house, and 12-foot ceilings and the original pine flooring inside, the historic character was irresistible. Ruth purchased the historic home without hesitation in 2001.



ABOVE: Ruth Davis salvaged the front door from a house that was being torn down across the street to replace the 1900s leaded glass door that had been previously installed. Ruth is proud to have "kept it on the block" and feels the door really solidifies the Queen Anne character of the house.

RIGHT: The contemporary sofa from Baker anchors the formal sitting area and features a lively yellow and blue leaf patterned fabric. Designer Gilbert Peter selected the grouping four floral paintings from his shop, Bespoke, while the two antique rotary tables are among Ruth's most unique antique finds. The antique light fixtures are from August Antiques in the Heights. The wingback chair from Carl Moore Antiques dates from 1890s and features its original finish.



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ABOVE: A wooden, diamond-shaped lattice was placed on the upper half of the front windows to camouflage the aluminum windows and give a nice period detail to help dress up the front of house. A similar diamond pattern, found in a period architecture book, was incorporated into the porch railing. The trimwork along with the bay window are icons of Queen Anne style.

RIGHT: The casual sitting area features a mix of contemporary and traditional pieces. The oval table is from Berings Hardware, the secretary is from Star Furniture, and the plush settee from Louis Shanks is upholstered in a herringbone pattern with nailhead and suede trim. The old photos to the left of the column are Ruth's parents' graduation portraits. Ruth had them framed to compliment the old photographs. The antique light fixtures are from August Antiques.

RESPECTFUL RENOVATION

The previous owner had remodeled most of the rooms during the 1990s, so everything was functional and livable, but Ruth began to realize that some of those changes had minimized the home's character. After multiple repairs became necessary – A/C had to be replaced, appliances quit working – she decided it was time to renovate. It started small.

"I was working from home a lot and I wanted to free up some space for a home office," says Ruth.

In 2009, Ruth contacted Gilbert Perez of Bungalow Revival, a remodeling and renovation firm, specializing in historic structures. Ruth confesses she's a shopaholic when it comes to home furnishings, and Perez's design expertise showed her that she could let go of items that were too large or just didn't work for her, even if she thought they were lovely. Perez approaches interior design with the philosophy that antiques, art and furnishings can't be bought all at once, rather they are collected, much like curating an art exhibit. It takes careful, thoughtful selection.

Paring down her treasures and placing the furniture was just the beginning. Ruth consulted with Perez to carve out an office space in one of the front rooms, which led to painting the living room and adding to the existing crown moldings to accentuate the high ceilings. This led to a few similar touch-ups throughout the house, and shortly thereafter, a full-blown renovation was under way.

Ruth's goal was to bring back the historic majesty of the home, while modernizing and customizing the home to work for her along with her two lively labs and two cats. Perez and his firm went to work on the design. Per Ruth, they sought to stay within the walls, maintaining the original footprint.

"We made it more functional, but also authenticated the historical elements," says Gilbert Perez. "We added onto the existing trims to play them up and converted the transoms from the 1990s-installed leaded glass to simple, clear glass panes." Perez sought to reinstate "that special soul of an old house."

"I think I was most amazed by the significance of the old materials," says Ruth. "Like the shiplap construction within the walls and just how solid the whole structure was after all this time." ▶





ABOVE: The dining room chandelier was located by Bespoke in the Heights. It dates from the 1930/40s and originally hung in River Oaks Grill. The dining table is a new piece from Baker at Uptown Park. Chairs are from Carl Moore Antiques reproduction from 1940s/50s found in a hotel in France. The mustard-hued corner cabinet is from The Barking Frog at the Houston Design Center.

"Houses of this era were built entirely of things that were all once alive," says Perez. "Look at this floor. Think about the hardwood trees — they must have been planted in the 1850s or 1860s. So many of the materials were all very old before they became materials for this house."

"It's just amazing that it all still stands," says Ruth.

DESIGN FOR LIVING

Ruth appreciates Perez's attention to the details for comfortable living. They both shared the vision to design the home for living, not just to be pretty. The new laundry room doubles as a quiet space for Ruth's two cats. The litter box is sequestered here, and the cats have their own kitty door so they can choose to mingle with people and dogs when they are up to it, yet have a space to retreat from doggie chaos.

As the new kitchen was coming together, they realized the plan that had worked on paper just didn't feel right in the space. The plan had originally placed the oven and cooktop on an interior wall, but this seemed awkward after the

RIGHT: The kitchen features black slate countertops complimented by a black and white Carrara marble backsplash and apron. Black ceramic knobs and pulls dot the all-white, custom cabinets. The ceiling of each room was painted to compliment the room color—black being an unexpected but dramatic color chosen for the kitchen ceiling. The antique pine floors and the butcher block help break up the vivid color scheme with softer, natural textures. The appliances were all found at The Great Indoors. Faucet is from Ferguson Plumbing.

kitchen took shape. The design team saw the light when they realized the cooktop could be placed on the outer wall beneath a small window.

"Things evolve during a renovation and you need to pay attention to those things, because that's what makes a home unique," says Perez. "Be open to change. Look at the big picture. This is your kitchen for life."

Another enhancement to the kitchen that developed during the build-out was the addition of a butler's pantry in the hallway leading from the living room to the kitchen. It was initially designed as a simple hallway, but Perez saw the opportunity to work in a multifunctional element as a surprise for Ruth. The additional cabinets, bonus counter surface and wine rack provide great storage and a handy service area for entertaining.

The new layout for the kitchen is a delight for Ruth in many ways. With small windows now over both the sink and the cooktop, the two principle workstations offer pleasing views of the outdoors. ▶





ABOVE: In the master bath, the antique apron tub is accented with a colorful stained glass window. After finding the pair of antique mirrors, Perez designed the double vanity to compliment them. The custom-built piece features a counter surface covered with hexagonal tiles, which are repeated in the floor of the walk-in shower. Fixtures and faucets found at U-Plumb-It.



ABOVE: The master bedroom features linens in a dramatic black floral pattern with pink and black bedside tables and coordinated genie lamps all found at Bespoke. The collage piece above the bed is by local artist John Painter. Houston artist Dalzenia Sams painted the portrait of Ruth's dogs Banjo and Abigail, which hangs over home's original mantel. And life does imitate art, as seen through the window.

LEFT: The small guest room offers a double bed with built-in storage extending the look of the headboard, which is actually a mantle that is a reproduction of the one over the master bedroom fireplace. Niches were located facing the bed to provide a handy surface for books, beverages and such.



An old deck on the back of the house was removed to make way for a slight addition. Tacking on about 240 square feet allowed for a more comfortable master bedroom, and little more space in the kitchen and Ruth's much-treasured screened-in porch, which often serves as her breakfast room.

Ruth enjoyed the process of paring down her furnishings, because

Perez wasn't an inflexible dictator. He worked to use the items she really loved and create rooms that were beautiful and complimentary.

"What Ruth has done is what a lot of people should think about," says Perez. "This home is designed for Ruth, not anyone else. She didn't focus on resale value, she focused on what she want in her house for the way she lives now. Not enough people do that these days." ▶