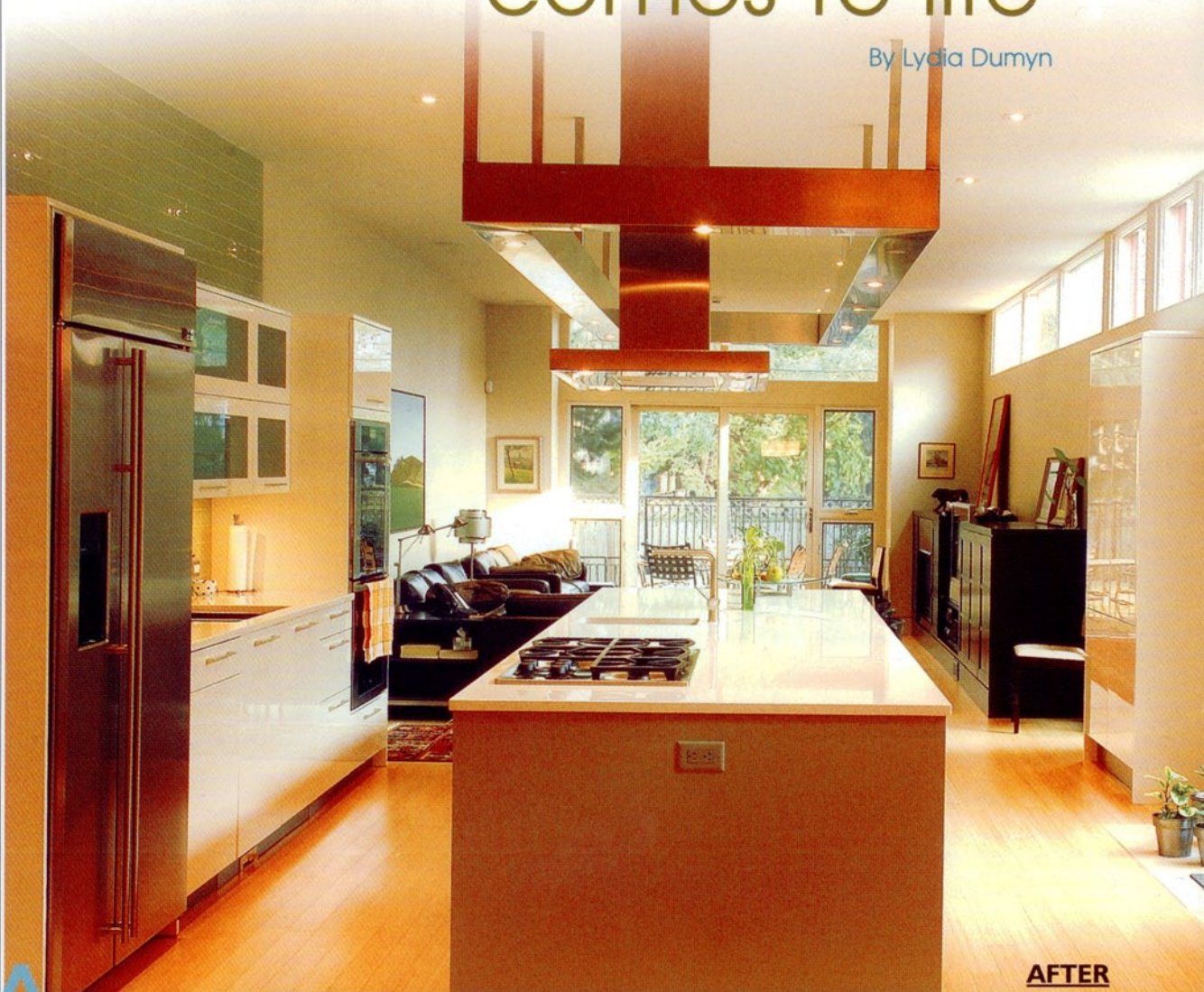


a lofty idea comes to life

By Lydia Dumyn



AFTER

After moving into their new house in Toronto's trendy Annex area, the owners of this four-storey, 7,000-sq.-ft. building wanted it to remain modern but toned down to blend into the neighbourhood.

"The location of the home was perfect," says Xandra Kendall, president of The Gracious Living Centre, which undertook the task of remodeling and redecorating alongside architect Charlie Bunker. "The challenge was to transform the original house into the family's ideal living space." And they were up to the challenge.

The main problem behind the walls of this space was that it was

broken up into a series of small sections. The long, dark hallways and several small, disjointed rooms were the target.

The result: a breathtaking space reminiscent of a lofty space.

"Loft-style living inspired the design of the house," says Bunker. "The clients had been searching for a loft space, but could not find one that met the requirements of a four-member family."

The transformation involved opening up the space, executed by contractor David Males of Northern Edge Construction Services Ltd.

Makeover

As this family entertains regularly, a centrally located, open-concept kitchen was a must. The pièce de résistance of the main floor is the large, fresh kitchen, featuring high-gloss white, silver-grey and stainless steel on a warm backdrop of bamboo flooring and plenty of natural light pouring in through the Clerestory windows installed along the entire side of the house. The built-in cabinetry by German company Rational facilitated the delineation of space while maintaining the open-concept layout of the house. The custom-made stainless steel frame with a decorator hood by Sirius is suspended over the generous island and conceals unsightly wiring and halogen lights. The Miele appliances top any chef's wish list.



BEFORE



BEFORE



AFTER

The hallways and walls were demolished and expanded to create an open and unified living area while offering a natural flow from one part of the home to another. The staircase was moved to create more open space.



AFTER

The owners requested a "light, airy, informal and elegant home" that would act as the perfect palette to display their exquisite collection of artwork, Oriental rugs and books. The second-floor library evolved from the demolition of the interior walls. The top of the first flight of stairs seemed like a logical place for this quiet retreat.

Makeover



The original façade of the home was austere and commercial-looking. The homeowners wanted the house to be clad in limestone to create a more home-like, inviting aesthetic, however the Heritage Committee would not allow for a home in this neighbourhood to be outfitted with a stone exterior. The architect came up with a pseudo solution by installing stucco in a colour and method that emulated limestone.



Resources

The Gracious Living Centre, Kitchen and Bath has been in business since 1988. Enthusiastic and educated staff provide complete architectural and design service, from concept to installation, renovation to new construction. Interior design services include space planning, wall coverings, floors, colour selection and artwork accessories. www.thegraciouslivingcentre.com, 416-929-2111

Charlie Bunker provided interior design for the owner's previous home in Mississauga, which included designing a new custom kitchen, selecting furniture, finishes and colours. Bunker, who holds a Masters of Architecture degree, began his own architecture and interior design practice, Charles G. Bunker Architect Inc., in 1985, and has since been designing new houses, additions and renovations,

kitchens and bathrooms, as well as providing interior design services. 416-488-2998

Northern Edge Construction Services Ltd. Call 416-269-1900 or visit the website at www.noredge.com for more on the company and projects.