



A dramatic feature wall is a highlight of the open concept kitchen.



The family room boasts a white slab of granite with dark grey veining on the feature wall.

IS A DESIGN-BUILD COMPANY RIGHT FOR YOU?

Renovation transforms cookie-cutter home to dream home

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For years, Rick Giuliani and his wife, Justine, thought about renovating the cookie-cutter builder's house that's been their home since 1978. They finally decided to create their dream home after attending numerous house tours hosted by Lifestyles by Barons to demonstrate the design-build method.

"The idea of renovating had been on our minds for many years," says Giuliani. "We liked the company's design-build model, which began with a consultation about what we wanted. They came with some ideas and we moved to the next stage, which provided us with (Computer-Aided Design) renderings that allowed us to see how each room would look."

Every design decision — right down to the light fixtures — was finalized before the construction crew even swung a hammer. "That pleased us because during the construction process, the only decisions we had to make were those related to change orders or if a fixture we had originally selected was no longer available," Giuliani says. "The design and build were fully integrated... The buck stops with them."

The couple decided to redesign

The new exterior of Rick and Justine Giuliani's house features grey stone and stucco cladding. **LIFESTYLES BY BARONS**

their 1970s-era home rather than buy new largely because of the one-third of an acre upon which it sits. The house was gutted right down to the footings of the original structure and a luxurious and significantly larger house took shape over the next 11 months.

It features a 1,000-square-foot studio for Justine, an acrylic artist, two outdoor living spaces and a focus on natural materials. A dark granite with white veining feature wall in the open-concept kitchen complements a white slab of granite with dark grey veining on the feature wall in the adjoining family room.

The master bathroom takes advantage of remotes and wireless controls for skylights, a fireplace and a shower that converts to a spa steam shower complete with aromatherapy, light therapy and sound therapy. The home's exterior now features grey stone and stucco cladding.

"We travelled extensively throughout the world and whenever we did, we experienced luxurious accommodations — an upgrade from what we had at home," says Giuliani. "That's no longer the case. As a result, we're not travelling quite as much and are enjoying our home."

The benefits of working with a design-build company when tackling a renovation are worth considering. "Any good design-build company will take you from concept to permit to procurement to build and should be able to offer you some economies of scale because they own it all the way through," says Rick Inacio, executive vice president of sales with Lifestyles by Barons.

Working with one company from start to finish reduces the risk of misunderstandings or conflict as the project moves from design to construction, he adds. In turn, that allows for a more streamlined con-

struction process and a budget short on surprises.

Improving a home's comfort and/or functionality are common reasons to renovate. Some of the hottest trends in renovation include the creation of pantries and serveries that take the pressure off the kitchen by creating additional storage and entertaining space.

"People are becoming less formal, so the formal living room and dining room are basically disappearing," Inacio says at Lifestyles' centre of excellence, a Georgetown house that's undergoing a massive renovation itself. Highlights include outdoor living spaces with roof extensions that offer a Muskoka-like escape without the dreaded commute and the dramatic transformation of an attic into an extra storey of living space featuring office nooks and a guest bedroom with a walk-out skylight.

WHAT IS DESIGN-BUILD?

The Canadian Design-Build Institute describes the design-build industry as the place "where creativity and construction meet."

In the traditional project delivery method, the homeowner manages two separate contracts: one with their designer and the other with their contractor. The homeowner becomes the middleman, setting any disputes that may arise between the two.

Design-build, on the other hand, provides homeowners with a single contact for both the design and construction phases of a project. That contact is responsible for every aspect of the project, from design through construction and post-construction.



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