

Bold & Bright



A handy pass-through connects the family room with the adjoining kitchen, while cabinetry serves as storage and separation. Well-placed, colorful furnishings and accessories add excitement to a neutral backdrop. (opposite) Think outside the firebox. The design team used an unexpected choice of material—standing-seam metal roofing—to encase and update the fireplace. The linear construction of the limestone surround adds another contemporary note. Mantel: Nest Architectural Design, (303) 321-1268.

WITH THEIR RANCH HOUSE BURSTING AT THE SEAMS, A GROWING FAMILY FINDS ROOM TO BREATHE WITH SOLUTIONS THAT GO FROM SUBTLE TO EXTREME

Story by Nancy Milligan ■ Photography by Emily Minton-Redfield



SUSAN AND PAUL VALAS BOUGHT THEIR GREENWOOD

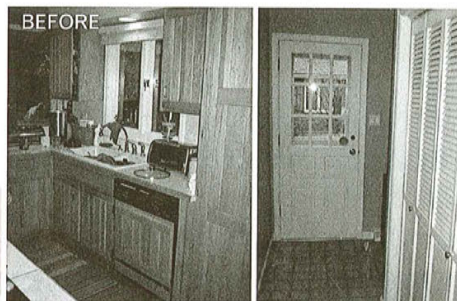
Village ranch house 13 years ago, expecting it to meet their needs for a long time. But just a few years later, the small family of three doubled in size with the arrival of triplets. Needless to say, updating the house was put on the back burner: "We were so overwhelmed with raising kids for several years," says Susan, "but when we finally decided to remodel, we knew exactly what we wanted." The wish list included a distinctly separate space for the four boys and a more functional kitchen.

Susan met interior designer Kristi Dinner of kd design consultants through the Denver Design District's Design Connection Program and asked her to remodel the home in a contemporary, colorful and environmentally friendly style. Dinner suggested including architect Scott Parker of Nest Architectural Design, with whom she had collaborated several times. "Our most successful projects happen when we are all on the same page from the beginning," says Dinner. "We can do our jobs more creatively and efficiently and focus on providing the best design for the client." It also helps to involve the contractors during the design process to take advantage of their expertise.

After debating the merits of "popping the top" of the ranch house, the homeowners and design team decided instead to dig out additional basement space. Parker explains, "In this case, digging out preserved the ranch style, had minimal impact on the existing home, was more energy-efficient and less costly than popping the top." Susan, who loved the idea of containing her boys' clutter, admits that digging out was scary at first: "I kept ▷

DESIGN DETAILS

INTERIOR DESIGN: **KRISTI DINNER**, allied ASID,
kd design consultants, (303) 355-1840, kddesignconsultants.com
ARCHITECT: **SCOTT PARKER**,
Nest Architectural Design, (303) 321-1268
CONTRACTOR: **FULLER CUSTOM HOMES**, (303) 601-9446



This spacious new kitchen is also environmentally friendly. The delicate grain of lace wood cabinets is enhanced with cherry accents. The countertops are made of concrete—a material with minimal off gassing. Hanging from the ceiling, the stove hood makes a clean-lined focal point. Cabinets: Martin Shea Millwork, (303) 573-6037. Countertops: Concrete Revolution, (303) 893-4814. Backsplash: Decorative Materials International, Denver Design District (DDD), (303) 722-1333.

imagining walls falling, but everything flowed beautifully. The contractors installed supports, dug out the space, and laid the new foundation. It made me wonder, 'Why don't more people do this?'"

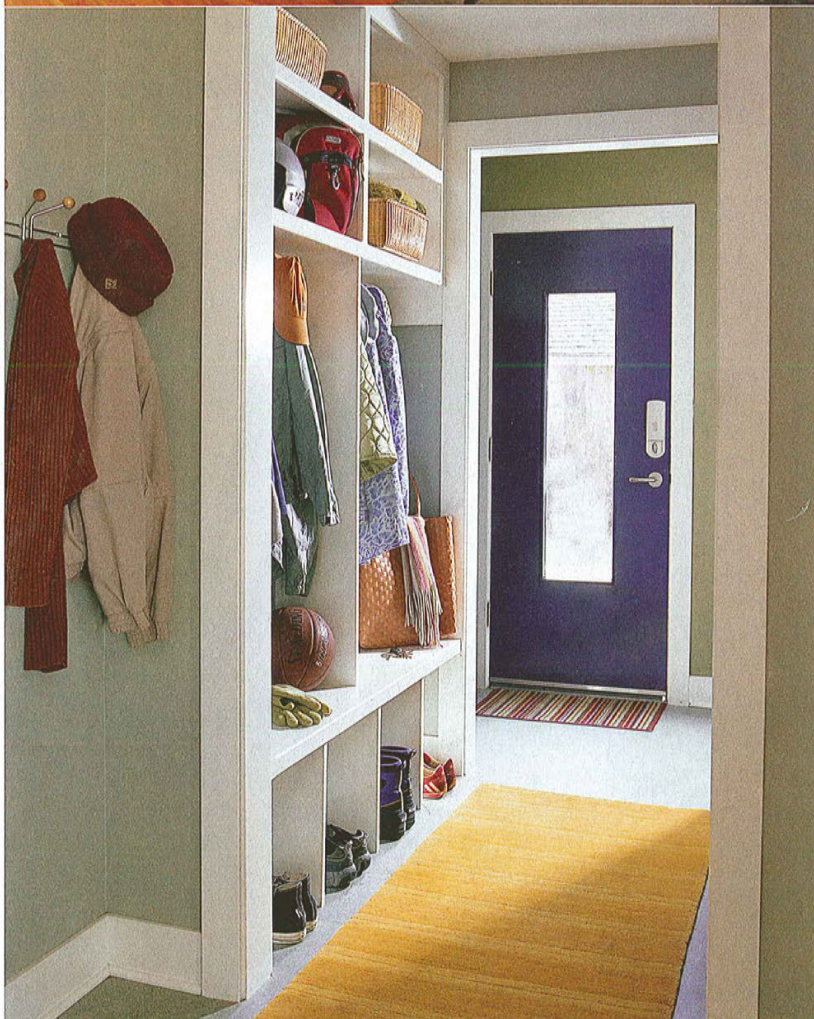
The 1,500-square-foot basement addition is comprised of four bedrooms, a locker-room style bathroom, and a laundry room, while the small original basement is a playroom. With 10-foot-high ceilings and large windows, the new lower level feels light and spacious. "It has a very expansive feeling, not at all like a typical basement," Parker notes. Dinner used tough, durable materials and a color palette that reflects the energy of four lively kids. "The boys respond well to bright colors," says their mother. "We gave them choices and they all wanted something different in their bedrooms—pumpkin, red-orange, blue and green. Kristi chose bright yellow floors for the bedrooms and orange in the hallway, bath and laundry areas."

While Susan enjoys the bold color downstairs, she wanted a more relaxed, quiet ambience upstairs, where the designers reworked the floor plan with subtle yet dramatic changes. A 60-square-foot addition to the kitchen not only improved circulation, says Parker, "It made the space far more useable with outside views of fields and trees." An S-shaped wall of windows adds softness and elegance, enhanced by the materials Dinner chose. "The materials had to have great aesthetics, be practical and speak to the clients' environmental concerns," Dinner says. She used a combination of cherry and lace wood for the custom cabinets topped by a concrete countertop and a mini-brick, glass backsplash. The curves of the wall are repeated in the monorail lighting and large island.

The team also improved the flow and design of the public spaces, updating features and reworking rooms. The intimate family area is open to the kitchen, but with a natural barrier of cabinets that define the separate spaces. Dinner and Parker combined the contemporary look of steel with the warmth of wood in a sculptural staircase railing. A two-way fireplace between the family and dining rooms was updated with standing-seam metal roofing material and a limestone surround. "We tried to find interesting elements and use them in different ways," Dinner notes.

The remodel resulted in a beautifully updated design and a 40 percent increase in living space, enough to serve this family well into the future. "The house was a 1970s-era basic ranch with good bones. It had crown molding, beautiful wood floors, all the right elements to go contemporary," Susan explains. "But most of all, the remodel had to be comfortable for us." ▶

Adding just 60 square feet and a curved wall of windows opened up the kitchen and completely changed its character. "When we are all in the kitchen, we can do our jobs without bumping into each other," says Susan. Monorail lighting: JJ&S Lighting Co., DDD, (303) 777-1007. *(below)* Smart storage means less clutter. Each of the four boys has his own built-in cubby to hold gear. Marmoleum flooring: The Carpet Studio, DDD, (303) 777-1716. Cabinets: Fuller Custom Homes, (303) 601-9446.



Let color reflect personality. Each of the Valas boys chose a different color direction for his bedroom, but all are tied together with bright yellow flooring and white wood trim for continuity.



(below) Poised near the entry, a new stair railing offers a needed jolt of drama and punch. Steel adds a contemporary element while cherry yields warmth and texture. (top right) With four sinks, four medicine cabinets, two showers, a toilet, a urinal, and lots of storage, this is a practical bathroom. Floor-to-ceiling white-glass tile and sealed limestone counters are easy-to-clean surfaces. Open

shelves make for easy-to-maintain storage. Wall tile: Decorative Materials International, DDD, (303) 722-1333. (bottom right) Tough can be beautiful. Marmoleum flooring was the starting point in the new basement addition. This durable, natural product made from linseed oil comes in tiles or sheets in a wide selection of colors.



color cues

Well-known for her spirited use of color, interior designer Kristi Dinner shares some of her top tips for incorporating color into your home:

PAINT IS THE EASIEST AND MOST COST-EFFECTIVE way to express personality.

COLOR HAS A HUGE EMOTIONAL IMPACT

and Dinner recommends selecting hues you react to in a positive way: "Color transforms not only the room, but the people living in it," she says.

KEEP THE VALUE OF PAINTS CONSISTENT

and avoid jarring contrasts from light to dark. Similar values allow you to use a lot of vibrant colors without looking busy.

MAKE A COLOR CHANGE AT AN INSIDE CORNER

Never stop color on an outside corner," advises Dinner. "That makes the space feel two-dimensional."

CONSIDER HOW DIFFERENT TYPES OF LIGHT AFFECT the paint over a 24-hour period.

WHEN YOU FIND A COLOR YOU LIKE, STAY TRUE to the company that offers it. Matching paint is tricky because base colors are not the same among manufacturers. □



Pistachio Lime



Olive



Mango Tango



Devine Cocoa

Dinner used Devine Color paint (pictured left) throughout the home. It comes in several finishes and meets VOC (volatile organic compounds) requirements set by the US Green Building Council. Paint: Colorado Paint Company, (303) 388-9265; Loveland Design Center, (970) 667-3590.

