

THE JUST RIGHT HOUSE™
[2,300 SQUARE FEET OR LESS]

A DESIGNER
VISUALLY
ENLARGES
HIS DIMINUTIVE
WEST COAST HOME
WITH INSPIRED,
SPACE-MAXIMIZING
CHOICES

INTERIOR DESIGNER
Jeff Andrews stands
outside his 1924 Spanish
style home. He had to
rebuild the front stairs
after the chimney fell
through them in 1994's
Northridge earthquake.

TO COUNTER
the living room's
elongated proportions,
Andrews floated a
seating group in the
center and placed
the dining table at
the end. Mahogany-
colored walls and a
sheepskin rug strike
a manly note. The
homespun coffee table
sports antler legs; the
midcentury chairs are
covered with vintage
Gucci luggage fabric.

small changes



big impact

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With just 1,400 square feet of living space, Jeff Andrews' L. A. home pales beside projects the interior designer has done for the likes of Ryan Seacrest, Eleanor Mondale, America Ferrera, and Michael C. Hall. But size wasn't top on Andrews' wish list when he was house hunting 17 years ago. "I wanted something with character and history," he says. His 1924 home, with cove ceilings, wrought-iron railings, and other hallmarks of the city's Spanish architecture, had charm to spare—but called for clever use of every inch.



A MIDCENTURY Danish dining table, above, doubles as a desk or a catering station at parties; the capiz shell pendant is new. French doors open onto an arbor-covered terrace. The writing table at rear is from a Paris flea market.

SALVAGED WINDOWS brighten the guest room, above right, which can also be a dressing area. Olive-green paint yields to a lighter shade just short of the ceiling, making the room appear larger. The chaise is paired with a petrified-stump side table and a vintage chair.

ORIGINAL WROUGHT-IRON railings grace a landing outside the two bedrooms, right. The wall between them felt like a dead end, so Andrews enlivened it with a door-size mirror.





THE MASTER BEDROOM was dark, so Andrews installed a new window scaled to the width of the bed and salvaged another from the kitchen remodel. Heavy Belgian linen curtains are a few shades darker than the wall; an area rug rests atop wall-to-wall sea grass.



TO MAKE the bathroom feel less constricted, Andrews replaced built-ins with a freestanding sink and cabinets, right, and limited the tile to the floor—a cost-saving measure, as well.

The house needed other help, too. “It was in a bit of disrepair,” Andrews says. “The roof was leaking and there was a hole in the kitchen floor. The bathroom was remodeled in the ’50s, and it just wasn’t my style.”

After patching the aforementioned hole, Andrews flipped the 13½×11½-foot kitchen’s layout to create a sunny breakfast area where the sink once stood. A vintage Wedgewood range sets a nostalgic tone, abetted by contemporary cabinets topped with butcher block and open shelves brimming with Bauer bowls. “I get a lot of my design muscles flexed with other people’s homes,” Andrews says, “so when it comes to my own home, I like to keep things simple.”

When Andrews bought the house, the walls were painted white and covered with textured plaster. “It was a little too rustic for me, especially for such a small space,” he says. He smoothed out the walls with a skim coat of plaster, then painted the living room a rich, deep mahogany. “I’ve found that a really dark color in a low-sheen finish has no boundaries to it; it’s less space-defining, which makes a room appear larger,” Andrews says. Newly installed wall sconces reflect light off the paint’s

SAYS ANDREWS,

"I like a simple, classic kitchen." So he paired a vintage Wedgwood range, right, with basic cabinets and open shelves, the topmost of which holds a collection of Bauer pottery. A commercial tile floor echoes the color of the ceramics, as do the breakfast chairs. The pendant and the glass-topped table, below, reflect light.



satiny surface, adding to the sense of spaciousness.

The long and narrow (27×15-foot) room proved challenging to furnish. Andrews floated a seating group in the center of the space in front of the fireplace, and set the dining table at the far end. The vintage Danish piece doubles as a desk. "I spend a lot of time here," he says. "I can sit and see the whole house, and I have a great view out the side window."

The home's two bedrooms share a common landing a few steps above the living room. "The space is not exactly symmetrical," observes Andrews, who offset the imbalance by placing a 6-foot mirror in front of the blank wall between the rooms. "It opens up the space completely because it reflects the natural light, creating the illusion of a window," he says.

design SOLUTIONS

- I chose a very dark wall color in the living room, but used a paint with a slight sheen to bounce the light around the room, making the room feel more spacious.
- I switched the wall paint color from olive green to light gray two-thirds of the way up the guest room wall, because the gradation from dark to light makes the ceiling appear taller.
- I decided to put a large mirror between the bedroom doors, to make the landing feel like an entrance to another space rather than a dead end.

—Designer-Homeowner Jeff Andrews

Casement windows salvaged from the kitchen remodel replace smaller units in the bedrooms. Andrews painted the 11×13-foot master a taupey gray and covered the floor with wall-to-wall sea grass. "It's the perfect floor covering," he says. "It's comfortable on the feet, it's easy to care for, and you can layer other rugs on top of it." Andrews topped his with a graphic cream-and-olive-brown area rug. "I like bold pattern, but only if it's in a muted tone," he says.

In the 121-square-foot guest room/dressing area, Andrews decided to paint the gray walls an olive green, but stopped a few feet shy of the ceiling. "This effect makes this small room appear larger," he said.

Brilliant use of color, clever furniture placement, and inspired juxtaposition of decorative styles make Andrews' layout uniquely his own. "Everything in this home is a direct reflection of who I am as a person and a designer, which I think every home should be." ■