

Feature Home

By Wanda Kurchaba

Photos by Kara Matthews - Sterling Images



Sentimental Value

Houses often hold more value than what you see on an assessment.

The sentimental value that they hold, especially for a family home that you grew up in, can be truly invaluable. It could be a home where you celebrated childhood birthday's, it's possibly where you got your first pet or it could be the place where you introduced your parents to your future husband or wife.

Many of us have fond memories of our family home. As a child, it's hard to imagine that you'll ever leave. As an adult, you may wonder what it would be like to live there again and if you could create special memories with your own family.

One local homeowner doesn't have to wonder anymore. As her and her husband started to think about downsizing, an opportunity presented itself that would allow her to move in to the family home where she grew up in the 1970s.

She indeed has fond memories of sharing a bedroom with her older sister and watching her mother quilt and sew in the front veranda. With 1300 square feet, it was a warm

and pleasant home where her mother and father welcomed family, friends and neighbours.

Kate moved out when she was in her early 20s, but visited often as her parents remained in the family home until a few years ago. It was then, that her father basically handed her and her husband the keys.



"My sister wasn't interested in it, as she lives in Toronto. My parents and my sister and I always felt, and I'm not sure when it started, but it always seemed like I would live here. My husband and I talked about it and we knew when the kids were older and when we were ready to downsize we would move here, but of course everything had to align," said Kate.



The red brick cottage craftsman-style home on 14th Street is a two-bedroom bungalow with all the character and charm that you'd expect from a house that was built in 1916. As it becomes a century home, the care and maintenance that the new homeowners have invested ensures that it will remain part of the Brandon landscape for many years to come.

"My parents had maintained and kept the house as it is, without any additions. While it was new to us when they bought it, it was already a 50-year-old home and had two or three families living here before us," said Kate. "We've certainly modernized it. We tried to take advantage of the character that it has."

While renovations took longer than expected (nearly two years), the homeowners said it was well worth it and they are now thoroughly enjoying the comforts of their new, minimalistic space after downsizing from a home that had double the living area.

The open concept living area is bright and inviting with many natural light sources and nine-foot ceilings which bestows a feeling of abundant space.

"What I find so different, and it doesn't have to do with any structural changes, is the windows. They haven't been moved; my father did replace them, but when it comes down to it there were so many things in front of the windows that I always thought that the house was a little dark. We really like light and openness, it was a complete transformation when we removed the shelving units and drapery."

The homeowners chose a neutral, pure white for the wall colour (Benjamin Moore-Cotton Balls) and contemporary European style cabinets for the eat-in kitchen, which are offset by granite countertops and Quebec maple hardwood flooring throughout.

They reclaimed what they could that was original to the house. The exterior, the front door, as well as the functional cast-iron wood fireplace are all features that were part of the original build. Some of the new aspects of the home, such as the bedroom and bathroom doors, were custom built to embrace the history of the home, while at the same time modernizing it.



The authentic elements and select pieces of furniture are a reminder that the home was built ten decades ago, however the decor and extensive collection of eclectic art and furniture bring a modern perspective that adds a stunning finishing touch to a fabulous renovation.

"We've always loved art and I likely got my love for it from my sister. We have travelled a bit and like to explore art collections. Once you're exposed to it and learn who some of the artists are you can't help but love it."





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