

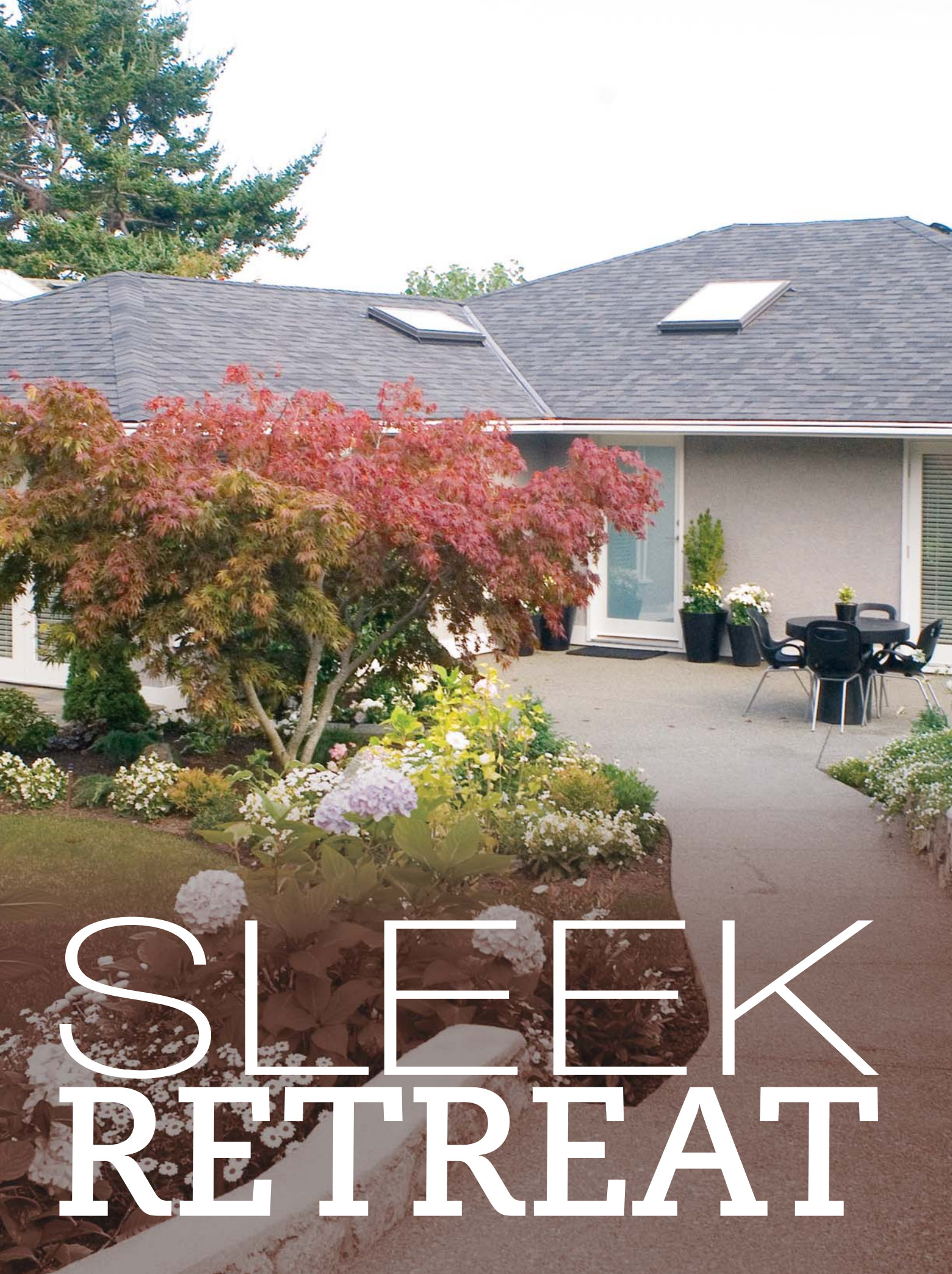
This cramped, 60's-era bungalow is renovated and updated to create a sleek, modern retreat.

By **Betty Campbell**

Photos by **Jo-Anne Richards**

Take a 60's-era bungalow for sale in 2006 on the outskirts of Victoria B.C., and add Richard Wadsworth and his partner. "We were looking for a smaller place, potentially on the water," Wadsworth says. "Then we found this one and were completely taken with the incredible seaside outlook it had to Haro Strait and the San Juan and Gulf Islands." But the bungalow's dated interior





SLEEK RETREAT



Before

In the living room, an open gas fireplace is framed by rough-hewn slate, while built-in walnut shelves are hidden on either side behind walnut doors.

was not as exciting with its layout of small, cramped rooms. Wadsworth had renovated their previous homes and his partner thought this would be a perfect project to take on. “But,” Wadsworth says, “I was much less convinced and quite overwhelmed by the prospect!”

Even so, the couple bought the place and started coming up with ideas to transform their new home. “I took liquid paper and a pencil to the existing floor plans to see what possibilities there were,”



Before

says Wadsworth. “Our idea was to maintain the look and feel of the 60’s era that so suited the property – but to make it a sleek, modern retreat.” So, even before taking possession, Wadsworth contacted Ivan Meade of Meade Design Group for his expertise, and the two worked closely together to fully renovate and update this 2,300-square-foot home.

“During my career as a designer in Victoria, I have seen several projects where the transformation is really dramatic – and this was one of them,” Meade says. “It had tons of potential. Taking into consideration the footprint and the need to maximize the ocean views, we created a space that would feel current yet still have a mid-century vibe to accommodate the owners’ art and furniture collection. The use of innovative materials and the

A former galley-style kitchen was redesigned and now includes an extra-deep square sink, walnut cabinets and an unusual open cube wall. New hardwood flooring was installed throughout the house. The backsplash is a glass mosaic in cream and brown half-inch tiles.

The master bedroom has a gas fireplace, walk-in closet and French doors opening to a slate patio facing the front garden.



Outdated glass wall blocks in the master en suite were removed, and polished stone floor tiles, walnut cabinetry and Silestone countertops were installed to update both bathrooms.



owners' taste were our main priorities. Enhancing the architectural details and bringing in new ones were also necessary to bring in as much natural light as possible. As a designer I have always believed that you have to listen to the space and let it dictate what it wants to be."

At the cramped main entrance, the hall was opened up by eliminating the 45 degree angled wall to replace it with a right angled wall. An oversized door with frosted glass was installed to bring in the light and a new coat closet added. Wide-plank walnut flooring, replacing old tiles and carpeting, makes the new entry and hall appear larger.

"One of the first things we did was to open up the space visually between the kitchen, the dining room, the hallways and the living room," Meade says. "We removed some walls for an open flow while reinforcing the structure of the house. An open grid was created as an architectural detail. For the main focal point in the living room we followed the existing layout then brought in warmth with the built-ins and the new material in the fireplace." The open gas fireplace is framed by rough-hewn



slate while built-in walnut shelves are hidden on each side behind walnut doors. The valance above the window was removed and a new French door added in the centre of the room. This door, flanked by two oversized windows, leads outside to the slate patio with its glass deck fence overlooking the garden and ocean beyond.

“Simple, but clean, mouldings were added in order to be consistent with the style we intended to project in the house,” Meade says.

The former galley-style kitchen was completely redesigned and now opens to both the dining and living areas. Instead of the usual two sinks, this features one extra-deep square sink, walnut cabinets and an unusual open cube wall.

“The design for the wall partition between the

living room and kitchen evolved from one I had seen in Palm Springs and also from Meade’s similar design in his home,” Wadsworth says. “The



Before

The sitting room gas fireplace almost matches the one in the living room, and doors lead out to a sheltered patio.



Before



After



A French door, flanked by two oversized windows, was added in the centre of the room and leads outside to a slate patio with its glass deck fence overlooking the garden and ocean.

concept of the square and its shape started from there in the house design.” It is evident in the partition walls, squares in the skylights, the three square windows in the guest room and in the office windows. To imprint his personal style, Wadsworth elected a stunning glass mosaic in cream and brown half-inch glass tile for the backsplash. He also chose stainless steel appliances. “Because appliances tend to intrude on a kitchen I usually hide them behind doors,” he says. “But here, by incorporating them in the layout, they help break up what could be overwhelming cabinetry in a small kitchen.”

The spacious master suite has a gas fireplace, a walk-in closet, and French doors opening to a slate patio facing the front garden. In the master bath the outdated glass wall blocks were removed then both bathrooms in the house were completely reconfigured and updated. Each features a 24-inch by 12-inch rectangular polished stone floor tile, walnut cabinetry and Silestone countertops. Tile tops the surround of the elegant soaker tubs and the back of the stand-alone showers. Frameless glass shower doors and soothing wall colours complete the scene.

A custom-made metal handrail (for safety’s sake) leads downstairs to the sitting room. The steps came in for a face-lift by being treated to walnut wood and carpet for the treads. The sitting room gas fireplace almost matches the one in the living room, while doors lead outside to a sheltered patio.

The gardens were in for a treat too. Sam Headge

of Integral Design created the landscape plan. At the front a grassy area is bordered by perennial beds and trees and a path leads to the rear of the quarter-acre property with smaller patios for entertaining and relaxing.

During the renovation the house received new hardwood floors throughout as well as new plumbing and wiring along with energy-efficient windows and skylights. Recessed pot lighting avoids visual clutter, and soundproof insulation on the interior walls improved comfort. Selected materials and colours were repeated throughout the space to improve the flow.

As well as being hands-on with the design of the home and garden, Wadsworth also delved in with hard labour and credits Project Manager Dave Haakonson and his gardener Robert Kutzner for their work. Wadsworth says that the whole project has been one of collaboration and professional expertise, particularly with Meade. He says that one day, when he was frustrated and overwhelmed by details, he called Meade. “He came over and together we quickly decided on the paint colours, the tile, fireplace bricks, and other details. It was great, and then it was back to work for me!”

So, after a year-long hard slog, the renovation dream came true, and Wadsworth and his partner now enjoy their contemporary retreat by the sea. More information, see page 74. H&C

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