

# A Gem in the City

This bold transformation infuses a modern European vibe into a Victoria heritage home.

BY DANIELLE POPE | PHOTOS BY JEFFREY BOSDET



When Sonny Sidhu started his house hunting journey, he wasn't looking for traditional Victoria real estate.

As a busy lawyer, Sidhu had to factor his lifestyle into the purchase. He wanted something small, simple and easy to maintain. He also needed a space that would showcase a sharp sense of style and be somewhere he could proudly host guests, colleagues and friends.

"I had a great little condo in Chinatown, but people kept telling me, 'You should buy a house,'" says Sidhu. "There were beautiful houses, but they were all going to be a lot of work. I wanted something small, with no strata and no yard."

Sidhu got lucky when he discovered a small, renovated heritage house nestled amidst apartment buildings in the city. While he could see its potential, he knew he needed an expert to turn the home into something that would fit his personality. In a quest for bold designs, Sidhu sought the expertise of Iván Meade, principal of Meade Design Group.

"I could see improvements were needed, but I knew a designer would know best," says Sidhu. "All the concepts were thanks to Iván. I was able to say: 'Just make it the best you can,' and he really did."

With Sidhu's lifestyle in mind, Meade had two focal points for this project: bring back the character of the house, through restoring crown moulding and heritage features, and use contemporary furnishings and a bold palette to create a sexy, modern European style.

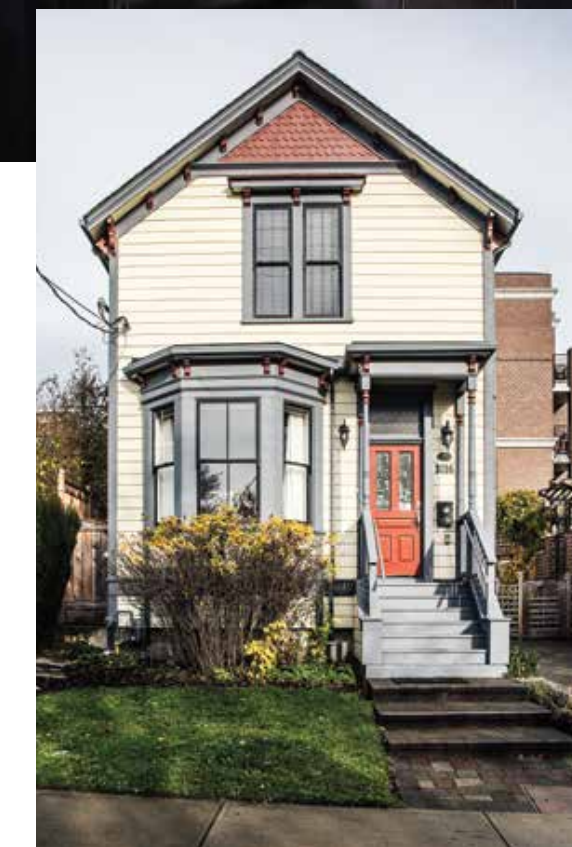
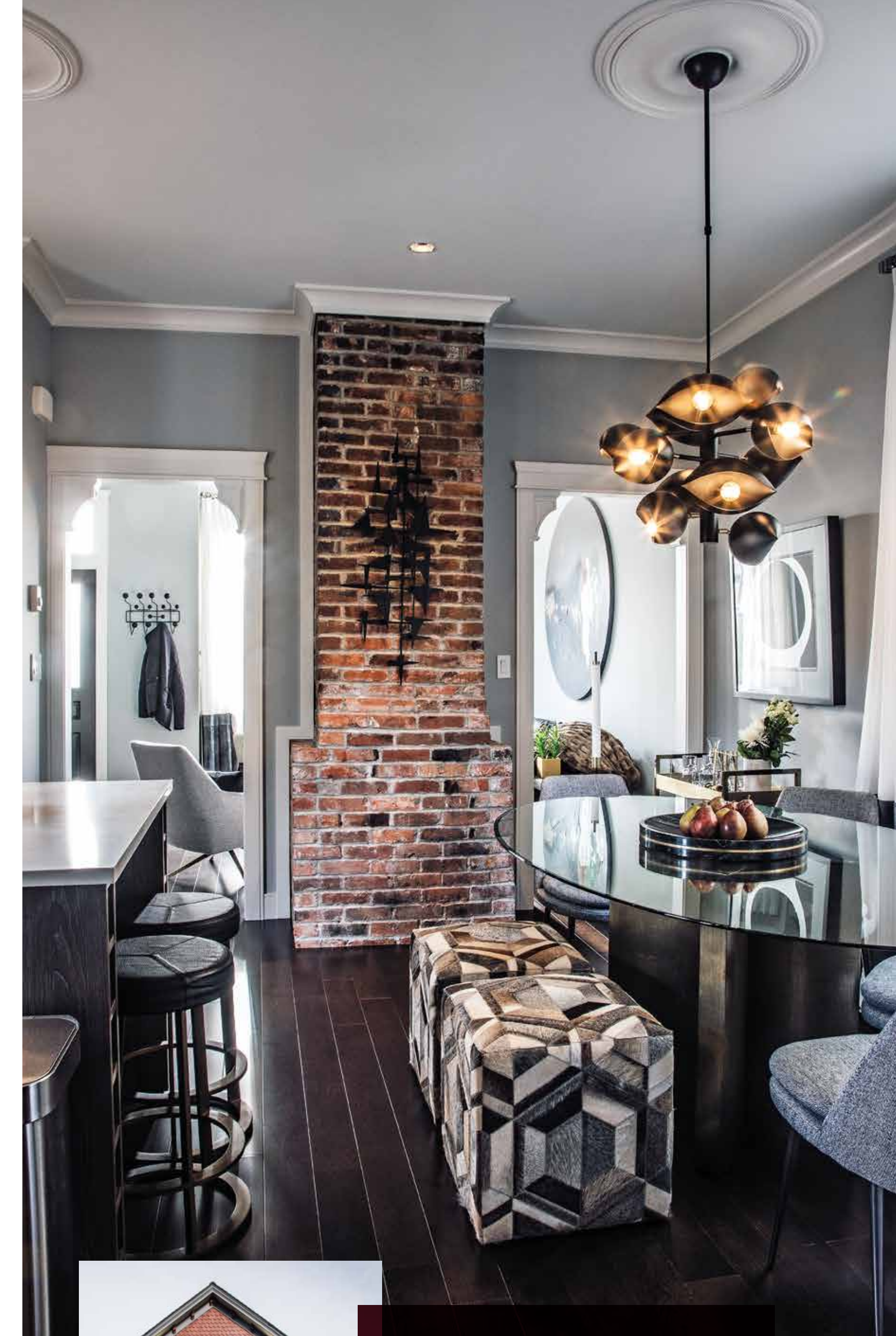
"Sonny needed a space where he could come home and relax, chill and entertain," says Meade. It needed to be sophisticated, with bold, masculine features.

"We wanted a good mix of traditional and contemporary features, so we could highlight the character but make it a space that exudes confidence," says Meade.

One of the ways Meade and Sidhu achieved the elevated style was by investing in art throughout the home. From intriguing sculptural lighting and custom paintings, to hand-forged metalwork, art is the centrepiece in every room. With Sidhu's love of books, Meade also created spaces around the house as natural sitting and reading areas.

Moody, dark wallpapers, geometric shapes and select mid-century modern pieces are featured throughout the home. Meade says the small details are as important as larger ones in creating the ambience of a home.

"Designing a home can be a makeover for how we feel about ourselves, inside, as well as how we feel about our environment outside," says Meade. "When you feel the quality of a specially chosen whisky glass, or look at an original art piece that was created just for your



**Previous page:** The living area is one of the first spaces guests see when entering the home, so designer Iván Meade wanted to ensure this room captured the architectural history of the house, while bringing in a sophisticated European flair. The Three Arm Multi-Light pendant (a Serge Mouille reproduction) adds visual interest, while the custom 60-inch painting by Victoria artist Natalie Brake brings a dramatic touch to the room. **Above:** The dining area's most striking conversation starter is its historic brick chimney column, made new with a Castile metal wall décor piece from CB2. **Left:** The small heritage house is dwarfed amid surrounding apartment buildings. Although the home had been through multiple renovations, restoration was the goal of this project.



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**“A smaller, well-designed and well-curated house can feel more complete and create greater interest for guests as they move from room to room.”**



home, you can feel that sense of confidence and realize this can be your life — you deserve to love your home.”

With 2,400 square feet to play with, three baths, a master bedroom and two spare rooms in the house, Meade says every area is a showcase. The master bedroom offers the most dramatic tones of the home, with a dark, textured feature wall and a black accented bedroom set. Yet the TV room stands out with playful geometric wallpaper, gold accents and structural lighting to enchant visitors.

“In very large houses, it’s possible to lose sight of the design opportunities or run out of budget room before you’re finished,” says Meade. “A smaller, well-designed and well-curated house can feel more complete and create greater interest for guests as they move from room to room.”

As Sidhu faces the realities of working from home, the team recently completed work in the final bedroom of the house to serve as a functional office for Sidhu, when needed, as well as a guest room, when required.

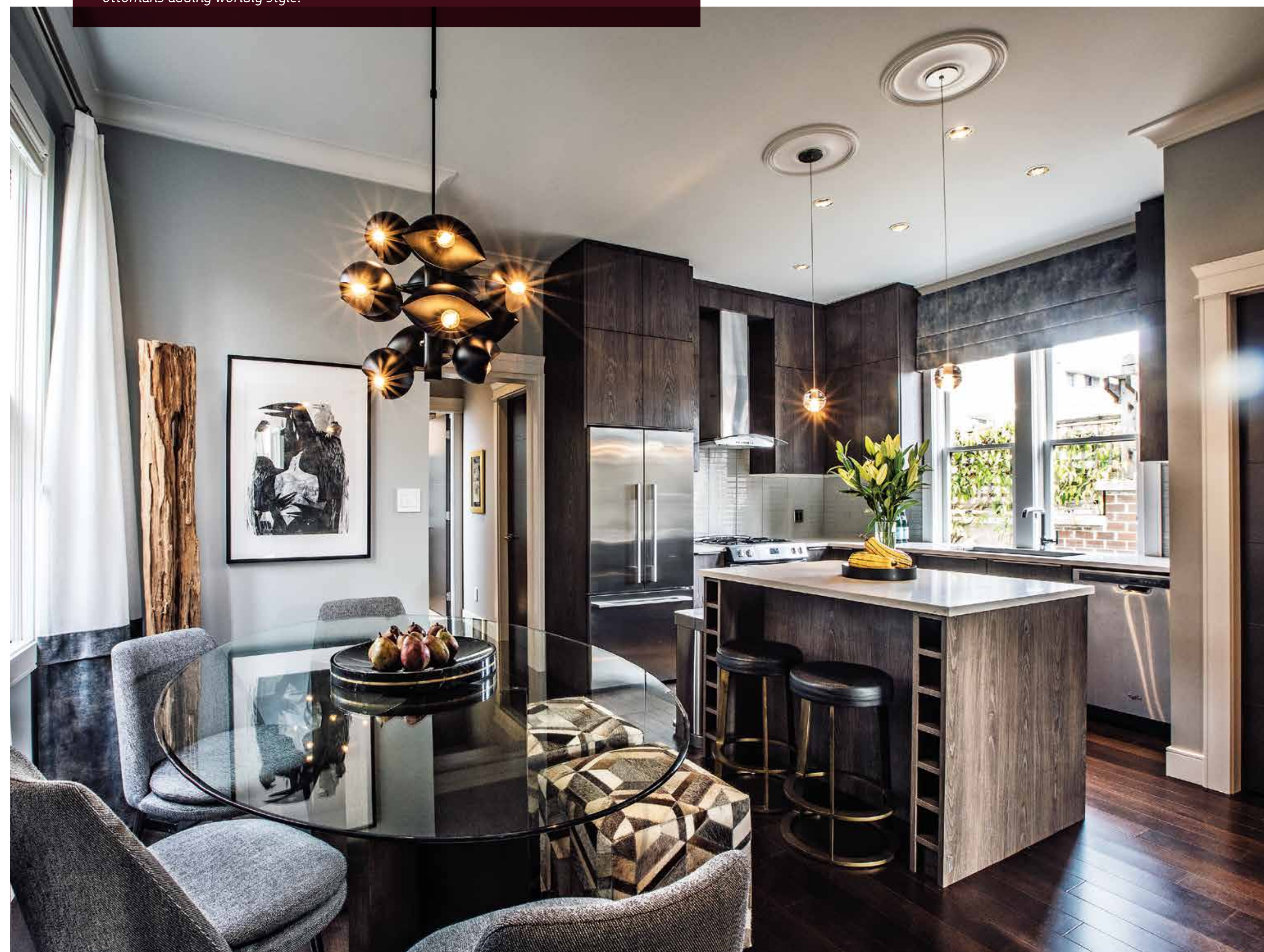
“We’ve transformed the last upstairs room into a chic man cave where I can work from home, but Iván used lighting, so it could be an entirely new space, day and night,” says Sidhu. “Now, it’s easy for me to create different moods, depending on what’s needed.”

Sidhu says he’s still getting used to house living, but he feels proud of the space he now calls home.

“I’m not artistic, but I found someone who could help me create a space that was,” says Sidhu. “When you find an awesome designer who can bring your home to life, the best thing you can do is trust their vision. I’m very happy with how my home turned out.”



***Clockwise from top left:** While the living area (opposite page) shows off the elegance of historic crown moulding, the TV room (top left) emphasizes modernity with its Khrôma Onyx Tali Raven wallpaper, created by the Masureel design team. This space also doubles as a guest room, with a convenient sleeper sofa (not pictured). Having areas for sitting, reading and working were imperative to homeowner Sonny Sidhu, so nooks such as the floating desk and chairs off the staircase were a priority. The dining area and kitchen (below) offers a simple but striking space for cooking and hosting, with the Osborne 11 Light Sputnik Sphere chandelier (by Brayden Studio) bringing sculptural intrigue above the table and the Iraan 18-inch Transitions Chevron Pouf ottomans adding worldly style.*







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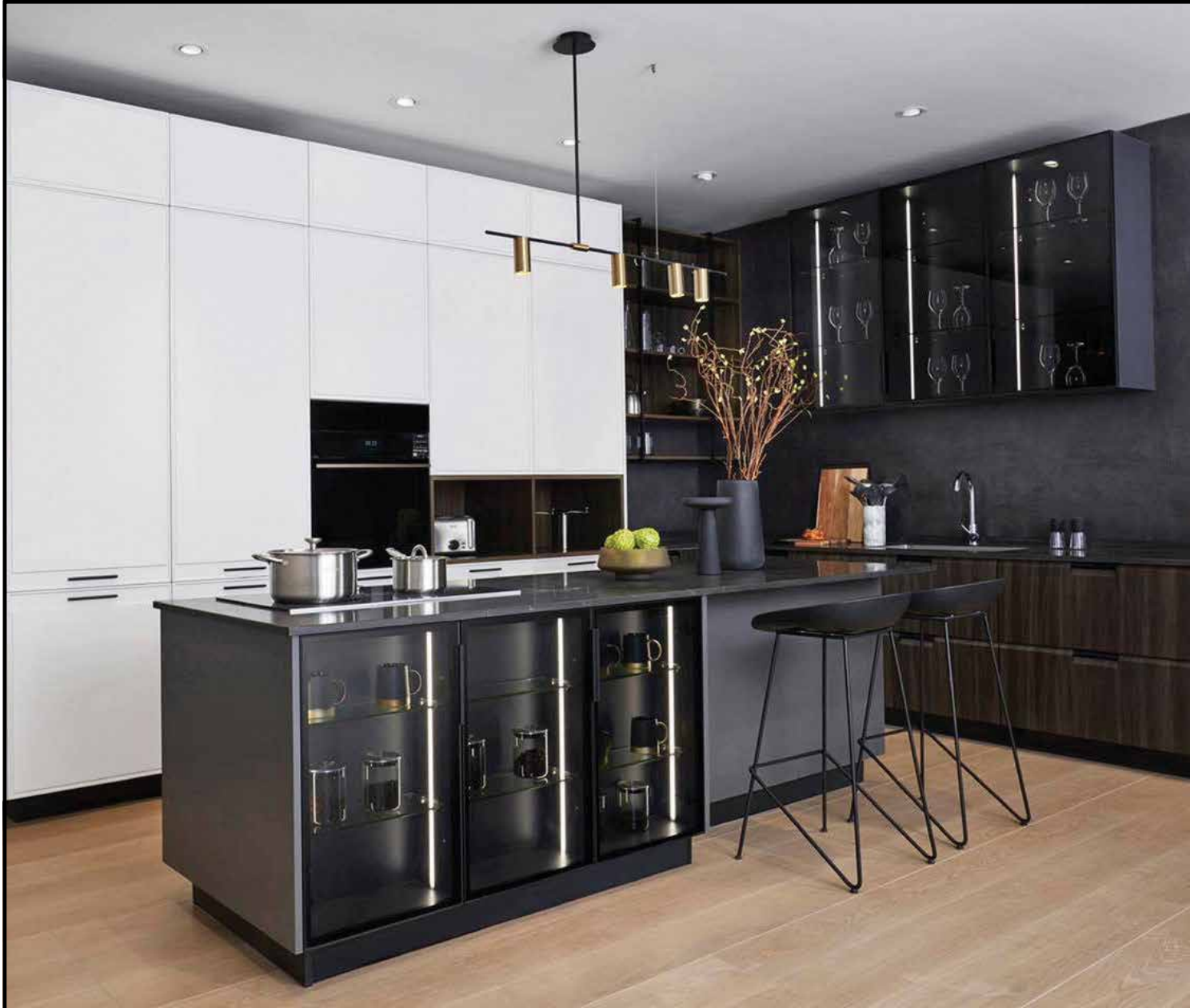
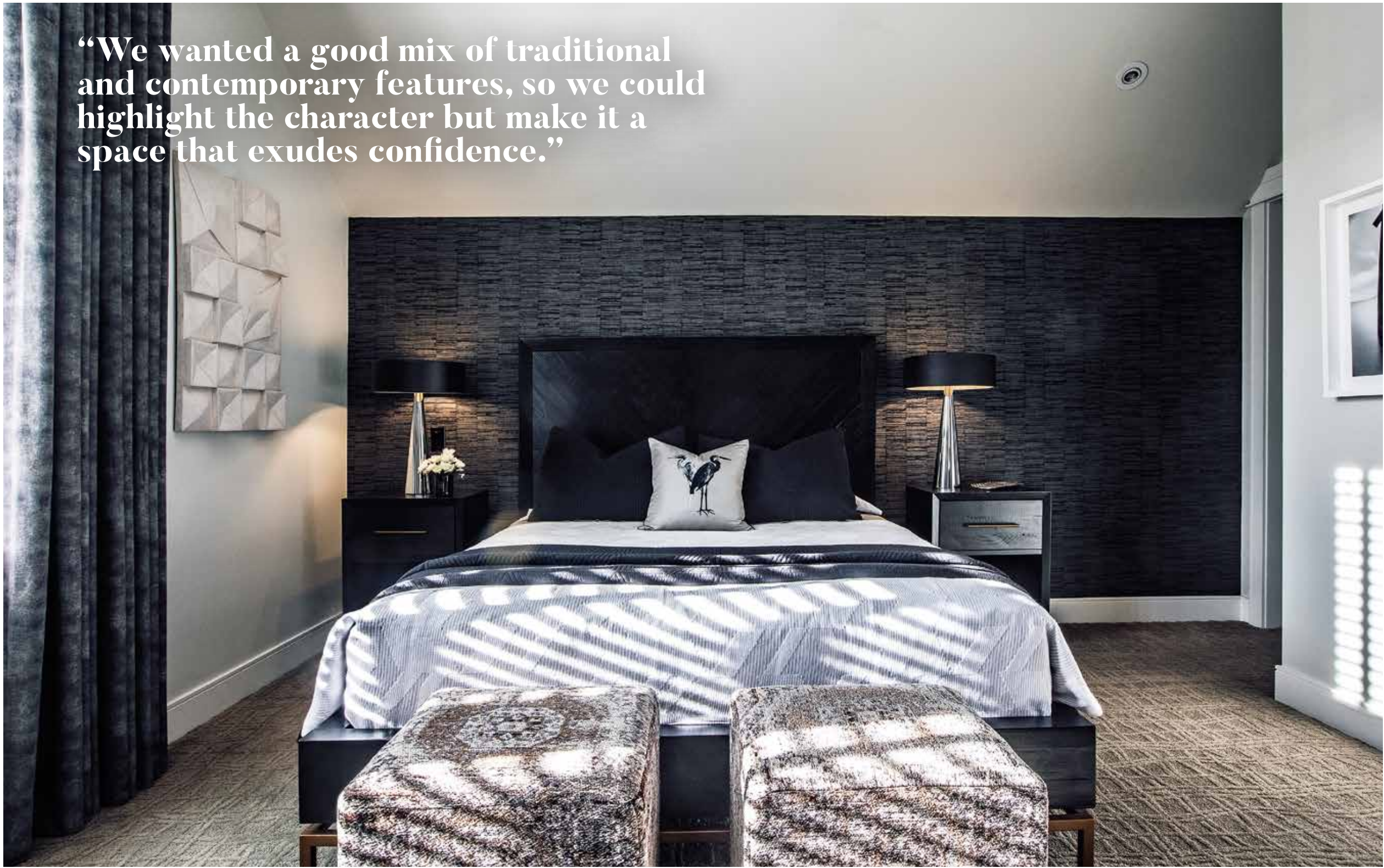
*Left: The master bedroom is one of the most striking rooms of the house, with a feature wall done in Bonaire Char wallpaper by Thom Filicia, and the Alexa Black and Brass bed by West Elm adding masculine luxury. Cheekwood 18-inch Square Pouf ottomans tie in the seating throughout the house. Below: Each room offers its own transitional style, so Sidhu can make the most of his space, and the office is no exception. Sophisticated touches include the Light Rods LED chandelier by West Elm and Stark wallpaper by Mayflower.*



#### RESOURCES

DESIGNER: Meade Design Group  
BUILDER: Mat Lord / Brent Manness  
WINDOW TREATMENTS: Monika Kurk  
PAINTING: Mat Lord and Brent Manness and Nu Edge Painting  
CUSTOM MILLWORK: Mat Lord

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