

INSPIRED BY EUROPE

Couple bring Georgian style to their new Edgemont home

○.....XXX

BY JANE AUSTER • PHOTOGRAPHY: EMA PETER

DESIGN

*“We wanted a
‘kickin’ it old-school’ pad.”*







“We were taken with the beauty of the homes and wanted to bring a little bit of Europe to the North Shore.”

A TRIP TO EUROPE changed the lives of a young couple. When Josie and Bryan Monk returned to their hometown of Vancouver, they came back inspired by the magnificent 18th-century architecture they had seen in England and France.

“We were taken with the beauty of the homes and wanted to bring a little bit of Europe to the North Shore,” says Bryan, an engineer who, along with his wife Josie, an oncology nurse, shares a keen interest in antiques and heritage. “We wanted a ‘kickin’ it old-school’ pad.”

Their new neighbourhood, Edgemont Village, is a mixture of old and new architecture, featuring a number of 1960s houses. The village itself has a hint of a mini Greenwich Village: two-storey buildings with “main street” style shops, bakeries, coffee houses, and offices.

The Monks’ challenge was to incorporate Old-World influences into a new-build home.

Their research led them to architect Keith Jakobsen of Jakobsen Associates, whose work in the area captured their vision. “I suggested that we could design a classic English Georgian-style house with a modern twist,” says Jakobsen. “It’s modern in the way the materials are used and the proportions, so the house has a modern feel but with inspiration from the past.”

While the Monks were bent on a classic Georgian structure, they faced some thoroughly non-Georgian problems: an unusual trapezoid-shaped lot and strict zoning bylaws mandating that the upper floor be no larger than 75 per cent of the main floor. “This doesn’t really coincide with a Georgian house form, but we managed to make it work by pushing out the great room at the back and keeping it a classic and symmetrical two-storey Georgian house form,” says Jakobsen. 🏡

Homeowners Bryan and Josie Monk used classic design to capture the Georgian look of their new home. They incorporated furnishings passed down through Bryan’s family, including the Chippendale-style chairs and mahogany dining room table, supplemented by Josie’s discoveries at local antiques shops.



Bryan and Josie designed the kitchen themselves. The layout was important because Josie enjoys cooking and they wanted the space to be both efficient and beautiful. The couple worked with Scott Landon of Scott Landon Modern Antique Store & Interiors to find many of the reclaimed items used throughout the house, including the kitchen pendant lighting, salvaged from a New York warehouse.





The homeowners chose Joe Geluch of Naikoon Contracting to build their new classic. Naikoon specializes in high-performance homes, focusing not only on the finished product but also on what's behind the walls. In this case, the tumbled-brick-clad building is fully spray-foam insulated and constructed to be airtight, with all non-toxic finishes, a heat recovery ventilation system that runs 24 hours a day, radiant-floor heating, a slate roof and top quality windows and finishes.

Geluch enrolled the house in Built Green Canada, a third-party certification program for homes that are environmentally responsible, and it received gold certification. (Earlier this year, the home was nominated for a Georgie Award, the housing equivalent of the Oscars.)

"Modern is so popular and common, so we were really excited to be able to build this Georgian colonial classic," says Geluch. "Sometimes we cringe when people ask us to

tear down homes that are only 30 to 40 years old. We build homes to last 100 years."

Naikoon's respect for history and building properties that will stand the test of time reflected the Monks' own vision. The 3,500-square-foot home with its four bedrooms, three bathrooms and a powder room is a showcase for heritage furnishings as well as reclaimed materials that are used to create unique features throughout. 🏡

Many of the found objects tell their own stories. The fireplace mantelpiece comes from a nursing home built by the Rothschilds. The reclaimed nine-foot wooden doors serving as double pocket entry doors are from a demolished Chicago hotel. And the kitchen pendant lighting fixtures were salvaged from a New York warehouse.

In addition to working with Scott Landon of Scott Landon Modern Antique Store &

Interiors to source many of the reclaimed finds, the Monks indulged their passion for antiques. “We have incorporated a lot of furnishings that have been passed on through the family, like the Chippendale-style chair in the master ensuite, scroll-back chairs in the staircase, and a 250-year-old grandfather clock in the study,” says Bryan. “All were my grandmother’s. Other pieces Josie found at old

antiques shops and had them reupholstered, such as the chair in the office.”

The Monks quickly fell in love with their new home. Bryan’s office is a masculine workspace, a fine spot for a quiet glass of scotch by the fireplace. The great room, featuring Keith Jakobsen’s bold coffered ceiling design, is a breathtaking space often used for entertaining, which opens onto the backyard and covered patio space. ➤





The Monks wanted to import the elegance of the architecture they had experienced during their travels in France and England to their home. Josie hunted for antique fixtures and shabby chic furnishings. Among her favourite touches are the plaster ceiling medallion in the master bedroom and the crystal pendant fixtures in the bedroom and ensuite bathroom.





“Modern is so popular and common, so we were really excited to be able to build this Georgian colonial classic.”





When it came to their daughter Elli's room, Josie had a complete vision of the look she was after from the start. "From paint colour, to the chandelier and ceiling medallion, which Josie had seen in an old house, and shabby chic furniture pieces, she hunted down everything," says Bryan. "She even refinished a vintage French vanity, which now sits in that room."

Creating a home that will stand the test of time takes patience. The Monks' house took close to two years to build. The homeowners, living with a small child in an apartment while they waited, began to wonder if they'd ever be able to move into their dream home. "We were aiming to build a warm, comfortable home with great flow and practical living

spaces. We wanted every detail perfect. We also liked the idea of a house that was timeless and got more beautiful with age," says Bryan.

It was definitely worth the wait for what the Monks have come to call Edgemont Abbey. 

The house opens onto a classically designed deck and back garden.