

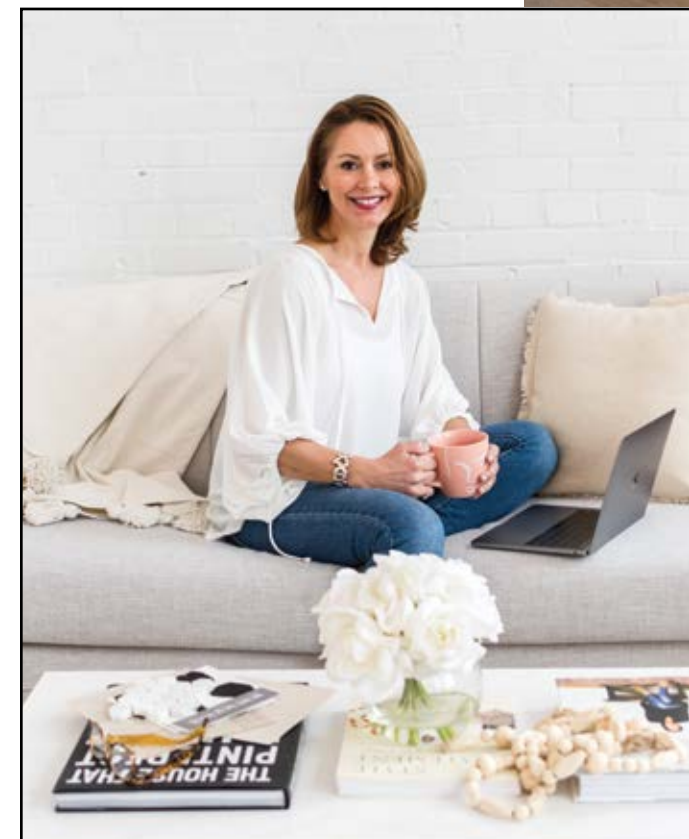


STORY **DONNA LUANGMANY**
PHOTOGRAPHY **KERRI TORREY**
STYLING **KARIN KOLB**

CONTEMPORARY Coastal IN LAWRENCE PARK

SOME MAKEOVERS CALL FOR A MAJOR RENOVATION WHILE OTHERS ARE ABOUT WORKING WITH WHAT YOU'VE GOT.

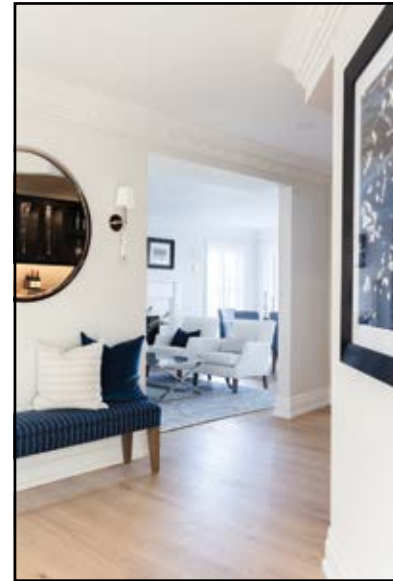
When Dena and Keith Mulcahy moved into their Lawrence Park home, they inherited a wonky addition and drab 90s tiles. After 15 years, it was time for a change. The layout wasn't conducive to their lifestyle and some parts of the house sat unused. But they weren't convinced a complete gut job was in order.



“The house is large enough for our family. We just wanted to maximize the space and enjoy what we have,” Dena says. They decided to rework the main floor and called in **Karin Kolb of Karin Kolb Interiors** to revive their home. On the agenda: a brand-new kitchen, updated powder room, lounge space and new flooring.

Karin was determined to give her clients a better layout without making structural changes. She had her work cut out for her. The 1920s-era house had low ceilings and a poorly laid out kitchen. Awkward angles, bulkheads and obtrusive posts made the job seem impossible. *Continued on page 70*

LEFT: Designer Karin Kolb brought the couple's vision of beachy, Cape Cod style to life by blending textures and soothing hues. **TOP:** A patterned runner on the staircase showcases the design and makes the stairs seem wider. **OPPOSITE:** Stylish and practical, the foyer features a marble basketweave mosaic tile. The arched front door and stained-glass window preserve the original charm of the home.



LEFT: The dining table is an antique from Ireland. Made of iron with a wood top, Karin repainted it and added new upholstered dining chairs. **ABOVE:** In older homes where layouts are more compartmentalized, light is often an issue. Not in this space! Light colours make for bright sightlines. **BELOW:** Karin used a lot of indoor/outdoor fabrics. The white furniture is high performance and holds up well to stains.



The designer wasn't deterred. "I felt that there was enough room without doing any structural work," Karin explains. Her contractor, **F&G Renovation**, demolished the outdated kitchen and tore out a prominent arched wall that held support posts. They opted to keep the posts, instead of installing a costly support beam that would have required structural engineering and a more involved renovation.

The Mulcahys love to entertain and craved an inviting space where they could host friends and family. "I want people to come in and feel like the weight of the world is off their shoulders," Dena describes. "A place that's pretty but not pretentious, where they feel at home and can settle in for coffee or a glass of wine."

Karin brought this vision to life with a bright palette of blues, neutrals and whites. Taking her cue from Dena's love of Cape Cod style, she smartly adapted the look to their Toronto location. The result? Crisp whites and blues you'd find in any coastal home, paired with polished nickel accents for a contemporary flair.

Continued on page 73

The fireplace, original to the home, received new stone and fresh paint. Nickel accents throughout add a hint of modern to the design.

"I WANT PEOPLE TO COME IN AND FEEL LIKE THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD IS OFF THEIR SHOULDERS." –Dena Mulcahy



“KARIN WAS UNBELIEVABLY PROFESSIONAL TO WORK WITH. THE END RESULT IS HER EXPERTISE WITH SOME WHIMSICAL DESIRES OF MY OWN.”
—Dena Mulcahy



Part of the historical collection, Benjamin Moore's Newburyport Blue on the island is a timeless choice. The herringbone backsplash is a modern upgrade that honours the age of the home. The low ceilings made it challenging to source lights above the island, but these glass pendants are a perfect fit. The artwork in the kitchen, powder room, and family room was created by Dena's sister – Florida artist Kate Cummins.



This project is one of the most dramatic makeovers Karin's firm has completed. The bright white kitchen cabinets from **Wolstencroft Custom Cabinetry & Renovations** and marble herringbone backsplash from Ciot are a far cry from the former kitchen. The pièce de résistance is a spectacular 12-foot island wrapped in **Benjamin Moore Newburyport Blue**.

"I was really designing with their lifestyle in mind," Karin says. "This island is an entertainer's dream. We've got six counter stools around it and it serves them perfectly." High performance indoor-outdoor fabric on the stools allows guests to make themselves at home without worrying about spills or mess.

There's no better place to gather than around the expansive

island. But the kitchen isn't the only space Dena and Keith can use for entertaining. Behind it, a former dining room has been repurposed. Karin turned half of it into a walk-in pantry that's accessible from the kitchen. Outfitted with a second dishwasher and a full-size fridge, it is a well-utilized area for storage and behind-the-scenes cleaning.

Since the remaining space was located off the hall, Karin thought a mudroom would be practical for the busy family, but Dena and Keith wanted to do something fun. Inspired by a friend who has a "speakeasy" in her home, Dena suggested a cocktail lounge. "This is what Dena came up with," Karin says, "And it's awesome." Equipped with bar seating, a wine fridge and storage for glassware, it's a fun retreat from the bustle of everyday life. *Continued on page 74*

feature

While most of the house is light and breezy, the lounge features rich, moody colours. Taupe weave wallpaper from **Kravet Inc.** sets the stage for taupe cabinets and faux-leather cognac bar stools. Warm and cosy, the room pulls colours from the rest of the home's palette. "I call it the 'dark and stormy'," says Dena. "It anchors the rest of the house. Now we have two very usable spaces that we enjoy thoroughly."

Skirting the ceiling in the cocktail bar is moulding that was original to the house. By not completely gutting the home, the Mulcahys were able to keep details that give the home charm and character. These also include an arched front door and the fireplace in the living room, which Karin outfitted with new stone and fresh paint. She even repurposed an antique dining table that Keith had brought when he moved to Canada from Ireland. *Continued on page 76*



The wallpaper in the cocktail lounge is Winfield Thibony from Kravet and incorporates all the colours that are used in the rest of the main floor. Cognac faux leather stools in the cocktail lounge are from West Elm. **ABOVE LEFT:** The intricate original mouldings add depth and create height. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Vinyl wallpaper in the powder room is scratch and tear resistant, easily wipeable and looks beautiful.

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