



DESIGN

# OVERDUE OVERHAUL

*Designer gives a condominium a much-needed redesign*

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**DO YOU LIKE TILES ON YOUR FLOOR?** If so, you may have appreciated this condo before it was renovated—or perhaps not.

“It was an absolute disaster,” says Kumar Shahani, who owns the 1,172-square-foot abode with his partner, Dwayne Sanderson. “The living room had three different patterns of tiles on the floor. The bedrooms had different tiles, and the bathrooms had yet another set of tiles. There were red cabinets everywhere. It was pretty abysmal.”

Luckily for Kumar and Dwayne, a friend told them about Derick RodRozen, senior designer at RodRozen Designs, and their new condominium now has tigerwood (Brazilian Koa) floors everywhere except the two bathrooms.

They met with RodRozen Designs before buying the place and, Kumar says, “We hit the floor running. We liked his aesthetic; it was very congruent with our own, which leans toward clean lines and contemporary styling.

We asked Derick to look at the place to be sure he could in fact turn it into what we wanted it to be. At the very first meeting he was able to articulate how to open it up and get the kind of feel we wanted.”

RodRozen was on the homeowners’ wavelength in every way, describing the kitchen as “a disaster in brown,” adding that “there were brown tiles in the bedrooms. It was very, very outdated.”



*“They’re art collectors, so I wanted the place to feel like a gallery in Manhattan.”*

*A statue of the elephant-headed Hindu deity Ganesha sits where the foyer opens into the living area of the renovated apartment – an appropriate spot since he is, among his many attributes, the remover of obstacles and the god of beginnings. RodRozen placed mirrors in the foyer to create the illusion of a larger space. Between the mirrors, a small closet has a backlit glass door*

“The homeowners have a condo in Seattle that’s contemporary. For this unit they wanted something unique. They’re art collectors, so I wanted the place to feel like a gallery in Manhattan, to capture who they are and present the art.”

“We have a lot art, including sculptures,” Kumar says. “We put the whole package of art in front of Derick, and let him pick what he wanted to use. We also have several limited-edition sculptures that we wanted him to incorporate

into the design. In particular, we wanted to use our Italian marble Ganesha in the foyer.”

RodRozen placed much of the artwork behind Plexiglas so that items can be easily changed, and he had small alcoves built for some of the statuary. The artwork is carefully lit.

“We played a lot with the lighting,” RodRozen says. “We took a long time to do the lighting in this apartment. All the art, each work has a spotlight directly on it. And along

the perimeter of the 11-foot ceilings, wherever there are windows, we have cove lighting with strips of LEDs. You can put the blinds down at night for a wall of light around the apartment.”

Light, both exterior and interior, is an important element throughout the apartment. Enormous windows keep the place bright and afford terrific views of downtown Vancouver and the coastal mountains. In lieu of a chandelier that might detract from the view, ☞



RodRozen placed five inset fixtures to beam shafts of light directly onto the dining table. Likewise, there are crystal sconces bracketing the beds in the master suite and the guest room. The one exception is a Moroccan pendant lamp over the sitting area in the master bedroom that gives a cozy glow at night.

The apartment was stripped to the studs and reconfigured everywhere except the galley kitchen, where the almost-irresistible

force of RodRozen met the absolutely irresistible bulk of a concrete wall that divides the kitchen from the living area. "I really wanted to open up the wall and do a bar," says RodRozen. Thwarted by the concrete, he instead ran a Cambrian quartz counter along the wall on the living-area side and extended and widened the counter beyond the end of the wall so that it's accessible from both rooms, effectively creating a bar on the living

room side and an island on the kitchen side.

"It's not a galley kitchen anymore," RodRozen says. "This is important, because Kumar and Dwayne cook a lot. They love to entertain."

The RodRozen ingenuity is also evident in the master suite. Here, the designer removed a large chunk of wall that separated the bathroom from the bedroom and replaced it with glass, so whoever is lucky enough to be showering can still take in the magnificent views

through the floor-to-ceiling bedroom windows. The remaining pony wall is just the right height to obscure anyone sleeping in the bed, so the space appears bigger than it is.

More ingenuity is in evidence in the living area, where the television can be snugged up to the ceiling when not in use, out of the way of the windows. A fireplace would take up space, so RodRozen installed a Safretti ethanol fireplace directly onto the wall behind

the dining table that warms the room both literally and figuratively.

Kumar and Dwayne have lived in the apartment for a year and are completely happy with its transformation. "Sometimes, contemporary style can come across as sterile, but this is not sterile," Kumar says. "It's a unique combination, a very modern aesthetic with a very Zen feel. Derick gave us what we envisioned. He was spot on." ☛

*Master bathroom: 24 x 48-inch tiles from Roberto Cavalli's new collection was used on the shower floor. The solid wood millwork is custom*

