

HOME & GARDEN

Three-story addition breathes new life into 100-year-old St. Paul home on Remodelers Showcase tour

A three-story addition breathes new life into a century-old St. Paul home that will be open during the Remodelers Showcase.

By [Kim Palmer](#) Star Tribune

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DREW GRAY PHOTOGRAPHY

When Sarah Seyfer and Adam Davis moved from Rochester to St. Paul and started house-hunting, they zeroed in on the Mac-Groveland neighborhood.

"We really liked the area," said Davis.

The couple ultimately found a four-square Craftsman-style house, built in 1917, that they bought with the intention of remodeling.

"We knew it was an older house and wouldn't have everything we wanted," said Davis. There was only one shower that the whole family would have to share, for example.

"We moved in and made it work," said Seyfer.

But they didn't rush into a remodeling project. "We wanted to live in it and learn it before remodeling," said Davis.

After two years of living in the home and now with three young children, they decided the time was right to move ahead. There were several must-haves on the couple's list. They wanted their own bathroom and an exercise room. (Davis and Seyfer are runners and the basement ceiling was too low for the treadmill.) And the family could really use a mudroom and a newer, roomier kitchen.

To redesign their home, the couple hired [Quartersawn Design Build](#).

"It was a unique old home," said Quartersawn owner Jeff Nicholson. The couple liked their home's story-and-a-half scale, but its systems and surfaces were antiquated, Nicholson said.

Quartersawn designed a three-story addition on the back of the house that maintained the original scale in front while creating space for the modern amenities the couple craved.

The addition added 150 square feet on both the first and second floors, allowing for a bathroom and walk-in closet on the second floor, and a mudroom, pantry and powder room on the floor below. Removing the wall between the kitchen and dining room helped create a more generous kitchen.

The basement was dug deeper and expanded to create space for an exercise room, guest suite and playroom.

"It was such an intense remodel," said Nicholson. "We knew it would be structurally difficult because of the basement." In addition, "Adam is from Texas and wanted a Houston-sized air conditioner. That was a challenge, retrofitting that. It took ingenious engineering."

Balancing light and warmth

Seyfer wanted the new kitchen to be "light and airy," said Quartersawn designer Kayla Vig. "She also wanted it to be family-oriented — comfortable, inviting and warm."

To balance those goals, the kitchen combines white cabinets above, some with glass doors, and warmer, darker base cabinets that take their tone from the red oak flooring.

There's an apron-front sink, white Cambria quartz countertops, white subway tile backsplash and white metal pendant lights with black trim above the island.

"It has the farmhouse feel everybody's loving but also keeps some classic touches," said Vig.

For the small pantry behind a pocket door, Vig selected "an unexpected pop of color," painting the floor-to-ceiling cabinets a muted grass green.

The new powder room features marble hex tile flooring and "fun, playful wallpaper" — a pattern in navy blue that ties in with the color palette in the adjacent sunroom, said Vig.

Upstairs, the new bathroom in the owners' suite combines a marble tile floor and vanity top, classic white subway tile and rift-sawn oak vanity cabinets, stained the same hue as the lower kitchen cabinets.

"Everybody loves white right now," said Vig. "I wanted to add some warmth. It's nice to add a touch of wood to a bathroom."

The family rented a home nearby while theirs was under construction. Now that it's completed, the new spaces have dramatically changed the day-to-day experience of living in their home, said Davis. "It's huge. Before, the basement was not nice. You'd go in and hit your head. It feels very nice now."

Seyfer appreciates having a dedicated guest suite for visitors. "Neither of us have families in town," she said.

The remodeling project managed to add modern amenities while maintaining the home's vintage charm, said Davis. "Before, it felt cramped. It's now a house where we can raise a family."

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Parade of Homes Remodelers Showcase

What: Self-guided tour of 34 recently remodeled homes throughout the Twin Cities metro area, showcasing updated kitchens and bathrooms, mudrooms, owners' suites and whole-house makeovers.

When: Noon to 6 p.m. March 26-28.

Where: Home addresses and project details are available at paradeofhomes.org. Featured home is #R26.

Cost: Free; \$5 to tour a Remodeled Dream Home in St. Paul.

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