



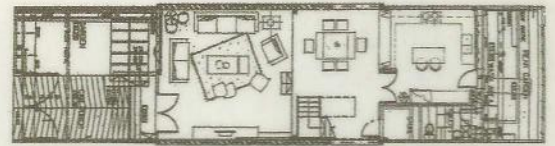
A CUSTOM-MADE SANDSTONE FEATURE WALL
CREATES VISUAL INTEREST,
REQUIRES LITTLE MAINTENANCE
AND IS ALSO A GOOD CONVERSATION PIECE



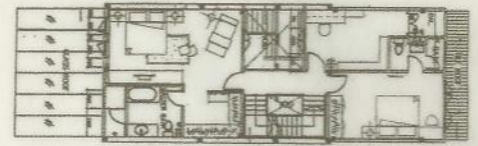
Taking pride of place in the dining area is a large feature wall that reaches up three storeys to the skylight above. The owners were against leaving the wall empty as they felt that the effect would be too stark and incongruent with the rest of the house. Upon recommendations from the designer, they finally settled on having a custom-made sandstone feature wall as it creates visual interest and requires little maintenance. Ellen reveals that it also has a very practical function of concealing the joinings in the wall, which is not completely flat as the house is old. Says Mrs. Lee, "We are happy with the final result and it is a good conversation piece."

From the dining area, take a peep into the kitchen with its Blum system, ample storage spaces (some cleverly tucked beneath the window opening) and island worktop. "The most useful and practical area of the kitchen is probably the island," Mrs. Lee notes. "It does make a difference when preparing meals, rolling out dough and entertaining." But apart from the practicalities of space planning, the kitchen is also personalised by subtle touches such as the customised mosaic back panel at the cooking area.

The study, guestroom and master bedroom all sit on the second level. Like the more public areas downstairs, natural materials are used liberally, continuing the Tropical / Asian theme. According to Ellen, the bed had to be repainted and re-stained to fit the dark wood furniture scheme. The rest of the furnishings and fittings, however, were kept simple



First Storey



Second Storey



and tasteful as Mr. and Mrs. Lee had specified that they did not want elaborate or fanciful designs.

The emphasis on a natural tropical-inspired simplicity is very clearly brought to life on the third storey. One half of the attic space is now converted into a small darkroom that Mr. Lee, an avid photographer, uses to process his photographs, and a sitting area where the couple listens to music and unwinds. The other half looks out onto the open terrace and houses a workspace where Mrs. Lee does her folk-art painting.

Bathed in sunlight that stream in from the glass doors running down the entire side of the room, and boasting high ceilings, it is also the perfect space to showcase Mr. Lee's work. Accordingly, the design team added solid dark wood shelving on one wall, customised specifically to hold Mr. Lee's framed photographs, transforming the room in one brilliant stroke into a mini-gallery. The effect is very striking and offers an interesting variation on the tropical theme downstairs.

The entire project (construction and interior fitting) was completed in seven months at a cost of \$380,000. Construction was undertaken by YJ International, while YJ Interior took charge of the interior fittings. ❦


(Opposite Top) The dining area looks into the kitchen via a large 'window' that also helps to facilitate ventilation.

(Opposite Bottom) The second floor study is similarly characterised by the liberal use of natural materials like teak.

(Top) The bedroom is kept simple and spacious with custom-made storage and minimal clutter.

(Above left) Mrs. Lee's collection of bric-a-brac.

(Above right) An island worktop is a marvellous thing, Mrs Lee tells us.



ELLEN WANG of YJ Interior shares her design direction.

What inspires your designs?
Nature and function. When I design something, I always consider its functionality. That is very important.

Which type of design do you personally favour? I like the tropical Balinese style as I find it very exotic and charming.

What would be your dream project? I would like to work on a spa or hospitality project, preferably with a Balinese or any other tropical theme.

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