

# This Was Grandma's House?

Updating an old house for new generations. **BY ESTELLE BOND GURALNICK**



**REGENERATION** A Chestnut Hill living room went from being the heart of grandma's house to a wide-open children's playroom to its latest incarnation as an adult entertainment space.



**G**rowing up, Peter Davidoff loved spending time at his artistic grandmother's 1950s custom ranch house. So when it came up for sale from her estate several years ago, he and his wife, Kathy, bought the charming hilltop home in Chestnut Hill and moved in with their new addition, an infant daughter. The pair – she is a nurse and he owns a marina – were planning to update the home's living room and play up its indoor-outdoor connections, but the arrival of twins intervened. “We put our plans on hold,” says Kathy. “Having three children ages 2 and under put all design thoughts on the back burner.”

With its large living room adjacent to the kitchen, the layout was ideal for entertaining. But it was also ideal for child supervision, so for several years the Davidoffs didn't really have a living room. “It was great play space for them,” says Kathy, “so we just went with the flow.”

A little more than a year ago, the Davidoffs decided it was time to reclaim the space. Twins Nicholas and Elisha, now 4, and their sister Laurel, 6, had their playroom relocated to a lower level. The family hired Boston-based interior designers Andrew Terrat and Dee Elms to refresh the living room, giving it “some stylish, up-to-date glamour,” says Kathy.

With a few small architectural changes and swanky new furnishings, the designers transformed the space. They added beefy crown moldings and baseboards, long windows, French doors opening to the garden, and a 10-foot window seat that serves as a sofa, but they kept the wooden floors, built-in bookcases, and small pass-through window from the kitchen. New chairs, tables, and area rugs were set up in two comfortable groupings, one oriented to the outdoor views, the other positioned by the fireplace, which has a new surround of travertine. “We waited until the kids got more independent,” Kathy says, “and then we got exactly the adult living room we wanted.”

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