Refined Simplicity: A Contemporary Home Reimagined

In 2024, a chance encounter at The Art of Living Home and Design Event set the stage for a striking residential transformation. Interior designer Melissa van Dal presented one of her signature design pavilions at the event, immediately capturing the attention of the future homeowners. Drawn to her refined yet approachable aesthetic, they reached out soon after to explore the possibilities for their own home. From the first conversation, there was an effortless connection and a shared vision, which quickly led to Melissa being commissioned to redesign the entire ground floor and basement.

While the homeowners had briefly considered relocating, it became clear that their existing house held far more potential than they initially realized. Renovating proved to be the smarter—and more inspiring—choice. A key ambition was to create a generous living kitchen, something the original floor plan simply could not accommodate. The solution was bold: relocating the primary bedroom and bathroom to the basement. This strategic move freed up space on the ground floor, making room for a spacious, inviting kitchen designed for both daily life and entertaining.

The new living kitchen is the heart of the home, defined by rich dark wood, a cozy fireplace, and a dedicated bar area that encourages long evenings with friends and family. Practicality was seamlessly integrated into the design. A hidden door, subtly incorporated into the kitchen wall, provides discreet access to the front hall and the staircase leading upstairs, keeping visual calm intact.

In the dining area, small clerestory windows were replaced with a dramatic floor-to-ceiling glass wall that floods the space with light. A custom-built bench placed against the window creates an ideal spot for slow mornings and casual coffee breaks. Meanwhile, the former kitchen was reimagined as a relaxed chill room. Originally intended as an extra TV space, it naturally evolved into a warm, atmospheric lounge that has since become a favorite retreat for everyone in the house.

The basement underwent an equally thorough transformation. Thanks to abundant daylight and an open staircase connecting directly to the outdoors, the space feels anything but subterranean. The primary suite was designed with the ambiance of a boutique hotel, featuring travertine stone, bronze detailing, and a glass partition that visually links the bedroom and bathroom. A bespoke bench doubles as a luggage rack, a subtle nod to the homeowners' love of travel and a welcoming detail that reinforces the feeling of returning to a luxury retreat.

Throughout the home, a soft microcement floor with a cloud-like texture provides a serene foundation. Earthy hues, paired with solid oak, introduce warmth and balance. Organic forms serve as a unifying thread, visible in custom cabinetry, rounded edges, and fluid sightlines that guide movement through the space. These gentle curves soften the architecture, enhancing both elegance and comfort.

The overall design is rooted in harmony, calm, and understated luxury. The result is a home that feels completely renewed—thoughtfully modernized, yet deeply personal. Above all, it is a place that radiates warmth and belonging: a house transformed into a true home.

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Photography: Tom Bremer & Jaro van Meerten















