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Aging Gracefully

A new build with classic details

by Lee Gutman | *improvisedbylbg.com*

NOT LONG AFTER SPONSES SCOTT CHAPMAN and Troy Richard moved into their third residence together, Scott had a revelation. The two had been drawn to the open floor plan and high ceilings of the house built in 2014, but the white-box simplicity of the interior didn't wile the cozy comfort that

they craved.

"We had always bought old homes and always enjoyed that feel," said Scott, who has worked on a total of seven houses over the years. "We decided to add details to make this house feel older."

Both Scott and Troy work in the healthcare field, so they had the luxury of time to research and plan. "We had a sense of history in that it was designed as a canal house, a familiar breed in New Orleans," said Scott. Inside, the transformation was carried out in stages. The first step called for painting all the doors and windows black for contrast and adding frosted glass to some in privacy. Next, Chapman and Richard removed all ceiling fans and lights and installed a condensation



Held. Scott is Director of Account Management for United Health Care; they manage clinical trials for Glaxo SmithKline. Both are passionate about design and remodeling houses. Scott likes to draw up plans for clients and overall concepts, while Troy likes to show the details and the "brain" behind the DIY projects that the couple takes on. "We love the whole process and we have similar tastes," Scott said. "We disagree on little things like placement of chairs, but one of the rules about our design decisions is we have to be in agreement."

Finally, the upstairs house already had a sense of history in that it was designed as a canal house, a familiar breed in New Orleans. Inside, the transformation was carried out in stages. The first step called for painting all the doors and windows black for contrast and adding frosted glass to some in privacy. Next, Chapman and Richard removed all ceiling fans and lights and installed a condensation



Rising stage: Top left, Troy's brother held onto a hexagonal island he'd built with his own hands; Scott updated the kitchen and helped relocate the stove from the adjoining living-and-dining area. Chapman and Richard use the center portion of the island as a bar when entertaining. Top right: The French arches in the main (and more-used) part of the sprawling "old fashioned house" where neighbors come to play. This page: Troy Chapman and Richard in the sunroom they had created and converted into a guest suite, which they租出. The sunroom has a mural made of reclaimed wood beams. Bottom: Troy Richard (l) and Scott Chapman (r) sit at their back porch.



of maple and new statement lighting throughout; in fact, the lighting in the house is a signature part of its organic-meets-American-meets-industrial look. The floor is home to a group of stardust-crystal chandeliers, which the couple started collecting after inheriting several from family members' homes that were undergoing renovations. Scott and Troy repurposed and built three new circular metal fixture themselves.

The third phase involved adding cabinetry to the living room that matches the nearby cabinetry of the kitchen and



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Rising page: Top left: Statement lighting is a signature element of the house. They used vintage pieces on the exterior and custom lighting along the stairs. This oven is from Dura.

Top right: Leather chairs from the island have the contours of the cabinets added to either side of the armrests. The iron wheel was born in West Africa, and when it arrived, the couple knew it had to be part of their home.

The couple had to search far and wide to find the right chairs, which they found in a shop in New Orleans.

Bottom left: The homeowners added ironwork to the doorway to the master

bedroom to make it look like a traditional French doorway.

Bottom right: Both Sean Chapman and Richard Roman chose his favorite

chocolates—indianola chocolates—

and created the center chocolate

chocolates in their living and dining rooms.

This project Chapman and Richard added

the most to their budget because it

was a space for storing and displaying their

collection of chocolates.

"Buying things saves a ton of money and is

so much fun," Sean said.

Despite their intention to use more of the

furniture they already had, the couple found

that the house called for a number of new

additions, which they found through a variety of

sources including Restoration Hardware and Crop

Antiques. Classic American pieces like the dining room's farm table, Windsor chairs, and benches

are modernized with masculine tufted leather,

accented with black and gold, and personalized

with sentimental family items, antiques collected

in New Orleans, St. Ives, and New Orleans,

and unusual custom art pieces.

The homeowners also added a pool to the

backyard, which they use frequently, though

during the past months of social distancing

the front porch has been the most popular place to

savor a meal or a sense of community. Their

usual weekly schedule of casual entertaining, often

around the pool, has been replaced by "dine

happy hours," where neighbors connect from afar.

"We brought a fire pit to the front porch

and we have a fire pit and benches in the front

yard," Chapman said. "Now, more than ever to

our lives we are using all of the outdoor space."