

Dining in

Sue Lloyd-Roberts of Mint House Designer Renovations, a turnkey renovation design consultancy in Cape Town, took up the challenge of renovating the dining room of a Newlands' home. It's an older home, one of many in the area that were built to face north-east, and therefore it doesn't get much natural light. The brief given to Sue and her team prioritised the creation of more light. Sue explains, 'The orientation of the original home totally ignored the magnificent north-west views of the mountain and the inclusion of light penetration. We had to change this as well as maximise height and space and create an integrated approach

to living, cooking, dining and entertaining - and above all, to include views of the mountain, if possible.' Sue and her team began by gutting the small and dark dining room, where the doors led off onto a guest bathroom as well as a closet and a scullery that led onto the backyard. They then created a large hall leading onto the opened-up dining area, by incorporating and enclosing the covered patio. 'By doing so we were able to include the theme of columns in this space, which not only accentuates the height and, on a practical level, allows for added support, but also achieves a far more dramatic and elegant finish,' she says.

To add to the dramatic effect, the team bashed through all of the smaller rooms to create one long, large, open-plan room, and dropped the level of the entire floor area. From a fittings perspective, all the poky aluminium windows and doors were replaced with new large wooden sliding doors and windows, a strategy that also solved the problem of how to admit more natural light and mountain views. 'In addition to this, by opening up the entire kitchen linking to the dining area, and by incorporating a glass roof, maximum light and mountain views are not only accessible, but have also become a design feature,' says Sue.



Wallpaper

The House of Wallpaper supplied the eye-catching wallpaper used on this renovation. Company Director, Jackie Kilcullen, says, 'Wallpaper has become a huge trend for a number of reasons: it is a simple, practical and beautiful way to transform a room, instantly adding depth, texture and character not easily achieved by alternative wallcovering. In a dining room, wallpaper offers elegance and warmth. The magnificent wallpapers now available on the market make wallpaper a good option when transforming a room.'



Reupholstering

Hertex Fabrics supplied the fabric for the reupholstered dining room chairs on this project. Katrin Herrmann-Van Dyk, sales director at Hertex Fabrics, says, 'Where you already have a chair or sofa that you love, get a quote for re-covering it rather than throwing it out. The cost is not always less than that of new furniture, but the frame of a good piece will last a long time. When selecting fabric for dining room chairs, keep in mind the type of fabric and the scale of the pattern. Dining room chairs are generally used often, so choose a fabric with high durability. Small patterns work better for the seat and back, but for a fully upholstered chair, the back of the chair could be done in a bold pattern or accent piece.'

AFTER

Flooring

Craig Maas, general manager of Carpet Connections, who installed the floors on this project, says, 'Choose a floor covering that is suitable for the intended application. Careful consideration should be given to the grade of the flooring because of the intensity of use. Ensure that the chosen product has a technical certification of an international standard. Irrespective of the flooring chosen, the subfloor needs to be carefully inspected and, if necessary, levelled. The more level the surface, the better the end result. The flooring should also be installed after all other contractors have finished on site, or it should at least be covered with a suitably strong material, to prevent damage after installation. Finally, choose a reputable flooring contractor with contactable references. Quality and service are not expensive - they are priceless!'



'After' photographs Romilly de Buck