

HOME

& Garden

1.25.2006

Section G

APPLEGATE AND TRAN | *Thinking small*



A townhouse just off Fillmore Street became a haven for its owners, who work hard and need a relaxing environment at home.

Remodeling photos by DAVID DENMAN LIVINGSTON. "Before" photos courtesy the owners.



The old living room, left, was off-putting. The new floor plan opened up the space, at right, with the built-in banquette and overhead cabinets, along with wood flooring throughout, tying kitchen, dining and living rooms together.



A townhouse goes from ugly to elegant with fine fabrics, creative storage and subtle colors



A small pedestal lav was replaced by a stone-topped vanity with Dombracht faucet.

Small-scale LUXURY

By Mary Jo Bowling
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The husband-and-wife owners of this small two-bedroom townhouse just off Fillmore Street loved the neighborhood but were less than thrilled with their place. The two-level unit was small, with little storage and, frankly, was a boring white box. They had considered selling it, but they couldn't find anything they liked (and could afford) in the neighborhood. They decided to hire Vernon Applegate and Gioi Tran of Applegate/Tran Interiors to make the best of what they had.

"The place was nondescript," Tran says. "It had white, heavy-textured walls and outdated bleached floors. The kitchen and dining room were closed off from the living room, and that made the whole place seem smaller."

The designers set out to transform the builder's special into something like a fine jewel box: compact, efficient and full of lovely things. They also wanted to make the clients' dream of a serene retreat come true.

"They both have very intense jobs," Applegate says. "While traveling, they had visited some beautiful resorts and spas. They wanted a home that had a similar feeling." The duo started by analyzing the space. There wasn't much existing architecture, save for large windows with heavy metal mullions. Because this is a multiunit building, those windows would be difficult, if not impossible, to change. Outside the windows were some lovely tree branches. The patterns of squares and nature images and colors became recurring motifs throughout the space.

The first order of business was tearing down the walls separating rooms on the lower level to create

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