

Prairie Blossoms

David Heide and Michael Crull spent decades renovating their prairie-style home to thrilling effect

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Throughout the home, Heide and Crull embrace color, pattern, and global design elements—all of which are exemplified in the cozy TV lounge.



This is a story of everything happening at once—a new business, a new relationship, and a new (old) house. “In 1997, I met Michael [Crull], started my studio, and sold my house soon after to fund it,” says David Heide, historical preservationist and owner of David Heide Design Studio, a local firm that specializes in working with historic houses while respecting their integrity. “We rented for a couple years, and then our landlord decided to sell, giving us 60 days to find a new place.”

With little time or budget to spare, Heide and Crull focused their search in St. Paul near the studio, where they were spending most of their time getting the young business off the ground. There, they found a neglected 1922 prairie school home with saplings in the gutters, a torn green awning, and, as Heide puts it, “a backyard treehouse that was basically a squirrel clubhouse.” But it was situated in the charming Summit Hill area and

had a large yard and enough architectural interest, so they went for it.

In those early years, the couple chipped away at a long list of restoration projects. Crull put on his painter’s cap and enameled the home’s 52 painted windows. He and his dad also opened a wall upstairs to convert a small nursery into a second-floor den, which is now one of the couple’s favorite spaces. “We spend time there almost every night,” Crull says.

Around the five-year mark, they bit the bullet and added a small 350-square-foot bump-out on the back to enlarge the kitchen and add a back porch, powder room, and entry—simultaneously solving all the house’s spatial issues in one fell swoop. And in the last two decades, they’ve touched almost everything else in their home, down to the smallest detail. “Even every lamp has been rewired with silk cord cut to the right length,” Heide says, laughing. “We find ourselves frequently saying to each other, ‘I love our house.’”

ABOVE LEFT In the powder room, the charcoal cityscape wallpaper and marble-topped vanity are accented by the warm hues of the orange-tone tile.

ABOVE RIGHT Expanded for space and functionality, the kitchen offers contemporary convenience while paying homage to the home’s history.

BELOW RIGHT The finishes and furnishings in Heide and Crull’s home align with their lifestyle. “We come from a tradition of making what we have work,” Heide says, pointing to a pair of chairs in the living room his parents received as a wedding gift in 1949 and a sofa purchased 30 years ago from H & B Gallery. Crull adds, “We listened to the house and made it our own.”