

There's a new kid on the block in Alta Vista. Take a slow drive-by and do a double take. Nestled among the ubiquitous Campeau bungalows stands a startling slate-grey-and-red house on stilts. But the 2,800-square-foot home designed by local architect Paul Kariouk has more in common with its neighbours than it first appears. "It doesn't look like them, but it preserves the traits," explains Kariouk.

A traditional bungalow took up too much of the lot: stilts were an innovative solution. The slate-grey portion, which incorporates a two-car garage, study, and bedrooms, is egg-shaped because a rectangle wouldn't meet the setback requirements

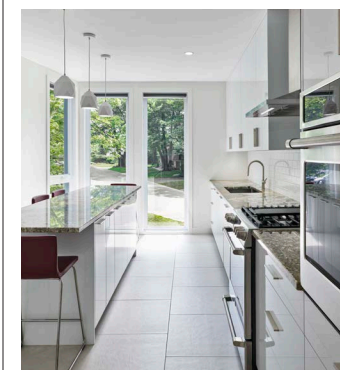
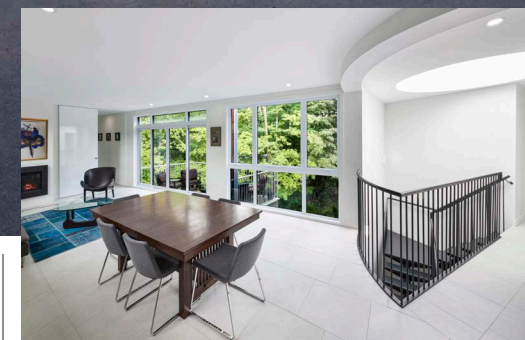


**THE OWNERS OF THIS UNUSUAL ADDITION** to the neighbourhood are not newcomers. Both university professors, they had lived a few blocks away for more than a decade in a '50s bungalow. They embraced the values of suburban design – big backyard with mature trees, smaller windows out front, all bedrooms in one area separate from the shared space, a single level so that you can grow old at home. "It's smart, pragmatic," says Kariouk. "Those are the characteristics they wanted to preserve."

The design for DASH Home (DASH is an acronym incorporating the first letters of each family member's name) evolved organically over several years. "It's important to get it right when it's forever. You have to think ahead." The living space is on one level, albeit elevated, but there's space for an elevator shaft and a caregiver's room in case they are ever needed. It is a true forever home, designed now for an active young family and equally ready in a few decades for retired empty-nesters.

The build was a work-in-progress for about four years, partly because the owners took a year-long sabbatical. All that time gave them pause to consider deeply how best to embrace a new interpretation of mid-century values while preserving the mature trees and coping with the vagaries of the diamond-shaped lot with very little street frontage and a steep decline out back.

The home's footprint is modest, but the impact huge. They live among the trees: leaves rustling, branches swaying, birds calling. When the project was finished, Kariouk surprised the family with brass plates embedded in the hearth of the fireplace bearing an inscription by 19th-century English poet Christina Rossetti: *Who has seen the wind? Neither you nor I: But when the trees bow down their heads, The wind is passing by.*



■ **TOP:** The antithesis of the recent incursion of big-box houses in the area, the new house is lifted and more porous, with lightness throughout

■ **MIDDLE:** The elevated dining and living rooms ensure privacy while providing spectacular views through the adjacent treetops

■ **BOTTOM:** The owners' big splurge was a separate kitchen with top-end appliances – a must-have for the owners, who love to cook