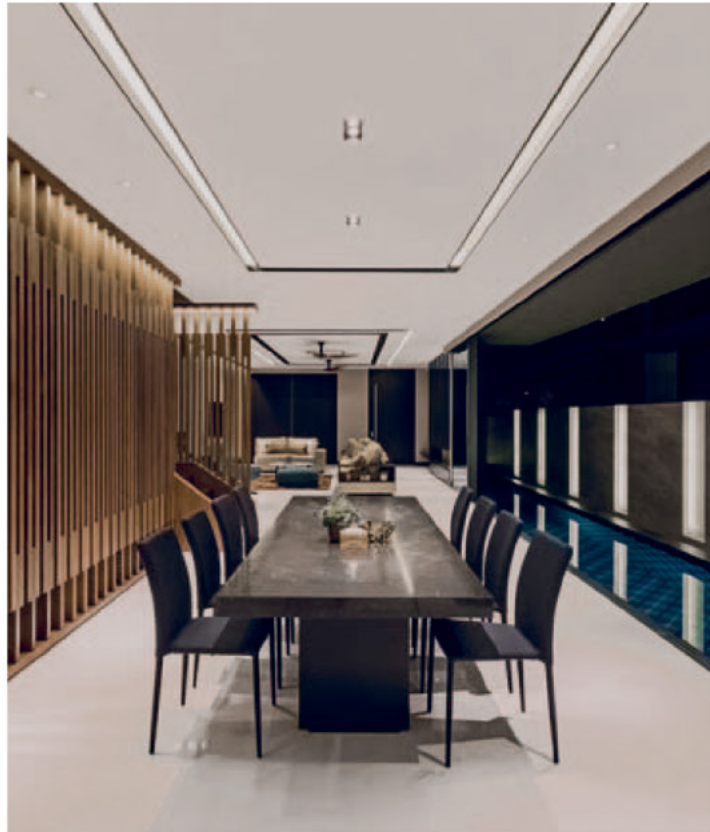


STYLE AND STATURE

UNDERSTATED LUXURY
AND SLEEK MODERN LINES
DOMINATE THIS
FAMILY RESIDENCE



BY ANGELA LOW, IMAGES COURTESY OF DWELL INTERIOR DESIGN



“**T**his project was rather special to me,” says Ed Ong, founder of Dwell Interior Design, on the makeover of this three-storey semi-detached estate. “It was one of the few in a year where the clients gave us pretty much full rein.”

The owners, who have three young children, run an established F&B business. They wanted a modern contemporary space enveloped in quiet opulence, but gave the veteran designer ample space to exercise his creative freedom. Ong was quick to concoct a clear vision inspired by the theme of the design: “I would ask myself, what’s the story of the interior? Which immediately begs the question, what are the main materials and finishes I want to use to communicate this? A designer cannot think about the concept without thinking about this.”

LEFT TO RIGHT
In the common area, the black Caesarstone dining table, teal armchairs, and dark wood touches serve as accents against a muted palette

PREVIOUS PAGE
Walnut columns conceal the central stairway, while adding a sense of warmth to the abode

Vertical design elements create an illusion of height—these include the walnut columns in the living area





ELEGANT SPIN

Walnut was one of the choice materials selected for its warmth, refinement, and timelessness—its deep rich hue stood out against the neutral backdrop of light marble floors and cream-coloured fabric walls on the first floor. The semi-detached house had an elongated profile with an entire length of wall running across the interior. Ong decorated this area with walnut columns, each one meticulously hand-built with two long and two short supporting members.

This arrangement was inspired by the elegant, structured movements of the waltz and the upright posture of dancers. “The walnut column mirrors the physical form of a couple dancing in a waltz. It mirrors two individuals, feeling and moving as one,” explains Ong. “If one can imagine a grand ballroom where a waltz is performed by dozens of couples, one would invariably feel a sense of grandeur. By repeating the walnut columns across the span of the walls, scale is achieved to communicate the same in the home.”



ABOVE

Sitting in the entertainment room at the top floor is a glitzy bar counter that features gold fluted glass panels

OPPOSITE PAGE

To create a seamless look in the entertainment area, the panels adjacent to the TV hide the AV equipment, as well as a bathroom and storage area

VERTICAL ILLUSION

Another catalyst for the creation of columns is the layout of the house. “When a space is this large without a proportionately high ceiling, it can feel somewhat low,” shares Ong. Thus, he opted to focus on vertical design elements as a counterbalance to create an illusion of height. Besides the row of walnut columns, which are also employed at the stairwell on the second and third floors, the indoor wall panels and full-height vertical garden at the entrance boast similar silhouettes as well.

Vertical light coves were also sculpted into the boundary wall by the lap pool. This motif is carried into the gold champagne-mirrored fluted glass cladding part of the dining table and the bar island counter in the entertainment room. Both were custom-made with whole slabs of black Caesarstone, a solid and non-porous centrepiece that lends a masculine sophistication to the space. Chuckling, Ong recalls the heftiness of the bar island countertop: “It was craned up because they couldn’t make it up the stairwell.” The study cabinet—handmade with uneven veneer panels—cues to the vertical design.



CLEAN AND CONCEALED

Coupled with the open-plan layout that provides copious light and ventilation to the ground floor, the interior maintains a sleek look with pristine surfaces and a multitude of hidden rooms. The walnut columns not only serve as a screen for the staircase—these are also part of a movable wall that hides the entrance to the utility room beneath the stairs. What appears as ordinary black-stained veneer panels beside the walnut columns are doors to a walk-in shoe closet, formerly a household shelter and a powder room. Venture to the entertainment space at the top floor, and you'll see similar panels sandwiching a mounted television. While the black acoustic panels store AV equipment as a vertical concealed TV console, the outer wood panels hide a storeroom to the left, and a bathroom to the right.

To elevate the luxury quotient of the interiors, Ong used fabric-textured wallcoverings, a tactile element that “takes modern contemporary up a notch, but is

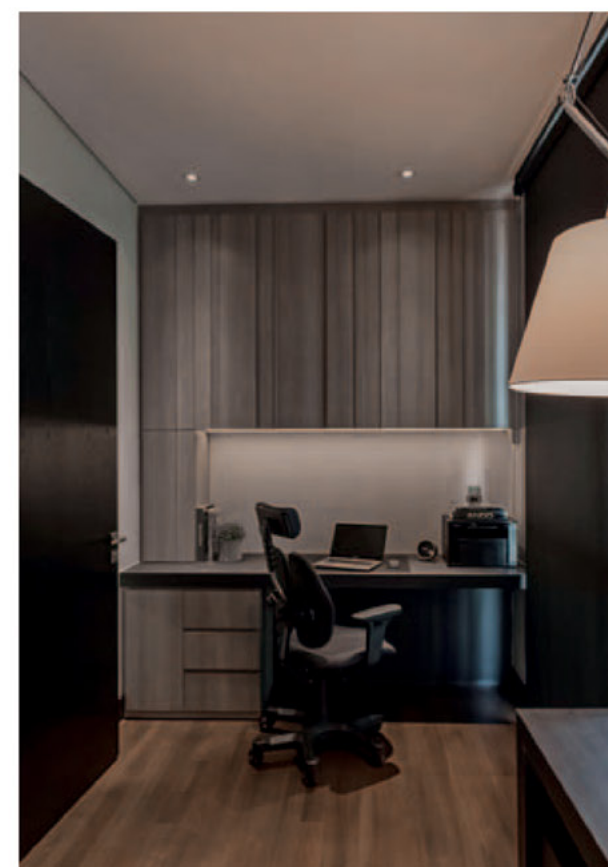
LEFT TO RIGHT

The master bedroom and adjacent tea room on the second floor are decorated in earthy palette for a cosy ambience; smoky hues in the study and master bath create a sleek yet understated look

“Style and stature was what they wanted in this home, without being over-the-top”

still understated.” The sole structural change was the removal of a wall on the third floor, merging a lounge and a bedroom to create a larger entertainment space. The second floor family lounge was also redesigned as a tea room with a display of Chinese tea sets the husband collects from around the globe. The two bedrooms on the same storey were converted into a study and a children’s room with a play loft as well.

“Ultimately, a good designer must direct the concept, the theme, and finally the interior design,” says Ong. “Style and stature was what they wanted in this home, without being over-the-top. In this house, the concept is achieved very clearly, and it’s consistent all the way to the top. We were privileged to work with a client that allowed us to carry our vision all the way through.”



LOCATION
Singapore

TYPE OF HOME
Semi-detached house

PROPERTY SIZE
3,500sqft

BUILT-UP AREA
5,800sqft

INTERIOR DESIGN
Dwell Interior Design

TIME TAKEN
6 months