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What's wrong with this picture?

Besides the historically discordant fence, the house was missing its second-story porch.



The addition of a traditional second-floor piazza and a new wood gate restored this home's classic Single House street profile.



OLIVIA AND WALKER BROCK looked at dozens of Charleston's iconic one-room-wide Single Houses before they finally found one with their coveted "Three Ps"—porch, privacy, and parking. Unfortunately, the house lacked a fourth "P"—period authenticity. "Over the years, things were added that were too ornate for a small 1780s tenement house," explains Walker. "We took out crown moldings, appliques—even the hinges." Throughout the renovation, Olivia, who has a master's degree in historic preservation, considered every detail from the shutters to the light switches to make sure they were appropriate for the style and period. By updating the kitchen and adding savvy built-in storage solutions, they ensured the house got a 21st-century refresh while simultaneously returning it to its simple roots. "Restoring an early Charleston Single House was a dream come true for me," Olivia says.

ADDED AN UPPER PORCH (pictured above and on page 19) Multistory side porches, known locally as "piazzas," are an enduring characteristic of Charleston architecture. Over the years, the Brocks' house had gone from having two porches to none to one, but with some historical sleuthing, they found an early 20th-century photo of their place with its second-story porch intact. Under the watchful eye of Charleston's Board of Architectural Review, they were able to restore their home to its double-

piazza glory—while also picking up some terrific outside living space.

REFRESHED THE PALETTE Olivia replaced the gray-and-black exterior with a new color combo of light green clapboards with cream trim and shutters—paneled ones for the ground floor and louvered ones for the second. The glossy exterior doors' dark blue paint (Gentleman's Gray by Benjamin Moore) was copied from the color they'd used in their bedroom when they lived in New York City. "It looks like a totally

different color on drywall," says Olivia. "Here on the wood doors, the blue feels very nautical."

BACKDATED ACCESSORIES While they kept many of the original materials, such as the shutters, some newer elements needed to be replaced. The wall-hung gas lanterns and custom-size pendants are reproductions of period pieces. At the driveway, the simple, new wooden gate that replaces the previous iron version is friendly and 18th-century appropriate.

what they did
STREET FACADE

what they did
LIVING ROOM

SIMPLIFIED THE ARCHITECTURE

A 1990s renovation made this house more ornate than it was meant to be. The Brocks removed thick formal moldings and faux-plaster fireplace appliques and took the room's detail back to a simpler look more in keeping with the home's place and time.

Before, the room had two sets of louvered plantation shutters at each window. The new ones are solid panels that are hinged in three places to align perfectly with the three-pane-wide windows. "We didn't need upper shutters," says Walker, "and this looks more orderly than having shutters that bisect the window."

WARMED THE PALETTE

Olivia employed two gray paint colors from Farrow & Ball to create a subtle backdrop for the room. "The baseboards, chair rail, bookcases, and wainscot insets are Mouse's Back, which is a shade darker than the Light Gray walls. Nothing stands out; it all melts away," she says.

ADDED BUILT-INS

Two problematic alcoves, too narrow for furniture, flanked the fireplace. Custom bookshelves solved the problem, providing storage and "brightening the room with color," notes Walker.

INSTILLED A BRITISH COLONIAL MOOD

Olivia leaned on a favorite childhood story, Rudyard Kipling's "The Elephant's Child" to inspire her design. The mix of greens and grays, brass accents, an elephant end table, and zebra-upholstered chairs are all sly references to the story and its African setting.



BEFORE

What's wrong with this picture?

Thick crown moldings, too-big louvered shutters, and a supershiny polyurethane varnish on the floor were 20th-century conceits that sapped coziness and charm.



Patterned pillows of Raoul Textiles fabric and thoughtful hits of lavender enliven the neutral living room.



what they did
KITCHEN

CHANNELED THE PAST

The Brocks wanted their kitchen to look as if it had been added on in the early 20th century. That meant shiplap walls, no upper cabinets, mahogany countertops, and unlacquered brass hardware. They either hid appliances, such as the refrigerator, or chose versions that had a vintage vibe. With its creamy finish and brass accents, you would think at first glance that the range was from decades ago.

SHINED THE FLOOR

The new pine floor was laid on the diagonal, prepared with two coats of both sealer and primer, and then finished with two coats of high-gloss gray paint. "The thought is that it will wear over time, which may prove to be nice, but if not, it'll be easy to put down a fresh coat," says Walker.

SNEAKED IN THE LAUNDRY

The Brocks swapped a gratuitous and space-stealing back staircase for a newly built pass-through butler's pantry. Along one wall, the washer and dryer are cleverly concealed behind pocket doors.



BEFORE

What's wrong with this picture?

With a stained wood floor and an overabundance of dark cabinetry, this kitchen felt heavy and serious.



New French doors flood the kitchen with light and connect it to the back garden, creating a truly indoor-outdoor space.





Mismatched furniture from a variety of retail sources lends a gathered-over-time look to this patio.



What's wrong with this picture?

A clunky fence tried to hide the HVAC units, while the lack of a door limited access.



what they did
BACK FACADE AND GARDEN

OPENED UP THE FACADE

Adding another window to the second-floor master bedroom gave light to the interior and symmetry to the exterior. Olivia says it was such an obvious idea that she and Walker couldn't figure out why it wasn't already there. Down below, a new set of

French doors with sidelights replaced a window to provide a connection between the kitchen and garden, making it convenient for outdoor entertaining.

CREATED AN OUTDOOR ROOM Moving air-conditioning units to the roof opened up a

world of possibilities in the garden. The Brocks fooled the eye with downsized plantings running parallel and perpendicular to the house's rear facade, creating a square that seems like an outdoor family room. Olivia wanted the garden to feel European, with furnishings that went together

but didn't match. The wicker chairs are from IKEA, the sofa is from Ballard Designs, and the dining table and benches are floor samples from Pottery Barn that Walker spray-painted. "I wanted it to feel like it had evolved and hadn't just been thrown together in an afternoon," says Olivia. 