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Before & After: A Bright and Elegant Master

By **Irene Edwards** on November 14, 2014



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(The Sandra Napper Chaise by Plum Furniture. Photographs by Virginia MacDonald)

Can a classic space still feel youthful and modern? We say yes—and one look at this master bedroom makeover by Toronto's **McGill Design Group** is enough to prove our point. For this young family, designer Colleen McGill undertook a revamp that added architectural interest and balanced traditional elegance with a light and airy mood. "Everything had to feel like it was gathered over time with a discerning eye," says McGill of her and her clients' shared goals for the space.



The original room (at left) felt dark and heavy-handed, with its deep goldenrod palette, wall-to-wall carpeting, and formal drapery. Despite the relatively expansive square footage, it lacked character; the only significant architectural details were a tray ceiling and a chunky, oversize mantel that became the room's de facto focal point. "Tray ceilings are common in newly built master bedrooms these days," says McGill. "Typically you

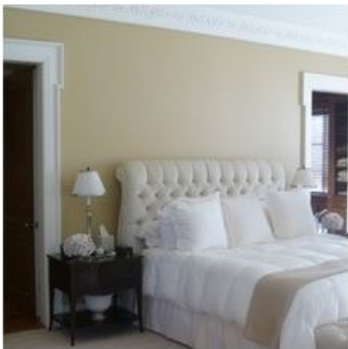
see them paneled, and the walls are left plain, [which can] create a cavernous effect—the master bedroom loses any sense of intimacy."

To counter that, McGill added paneling to create architectural interest and height. The paneling was painted off-white and the tray ceiling a soft, warm gray—"thus brightening the room and drawing the eye upward," McGill says. The mantel was swapped for one in antique Carrera marble with more streamlined proportions. The old-fashioned window treatments were exchanged for beautifully tailored drapery hung high for a subtle yet dramatic effect. And in place of wall-to-wall carpeting, new hardwood floors were installed to match the rest of the home, and a large custom carpet was commissioned with a gold silk motif that echoes the brass accents elsewhere in the space.

The **Sandra Napper Double Chaise** by Plum Furniture (the designer's own line) provides the perfect anchor for this side of the room. Sconces and an eye-catching mirror are fitting complements to the marble mantel.



(The Valentine Bed by Plum Furniture)



As for the most important piece of the entire makeover? "I wanted the bed to have a handcrafted, old-world feel while still looking new and young," says McGill. The solution: trading the tufted version in the original space (at left) for Plum Furniture's custom **Valentine Bed**, with its rich mahogany frame and luxe yet clean-lined silhouette. Nestled into the paneled niche, it embodies the polished yet unfussy sensibility for which McGill is known. "I love every inch of this bedroom! It's light, happy, elegant, and inviting," says the designer. "I'd love to spend every waking—and sleeping—hour in it."



(Designer Colleen McGill of McGillDesign Group)