

home renovation

Basement bonanza

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photos LARRY ARNAL

A designer's perspective
on crafting an
investment *gem*



Life has a way of rushing by faster than we often realize. One moment you're navigating the chaotic waters of parenthood with young children,

and before you know it, you're standing at the threshold of a new stage—renovating your basement after the kids have nearly completed their university journey.

After 26 years in their beloved Beaches home, our clients decided

it was time to rethink the space and future and brought us in for the challenge. The goal was to convert the basement into a separate legal apartment that would enhance their property's value and bring in some passive income as a rental.



A vision for light and livability

From the outset, the primary aim was to ensure that the new basement apartment would not fall into the trap of being a typical dark, cramped space often found in older century homes. To address this, the basement floor was excavated and lowered to raise the ceiling height by two feet to achieve a generous clearance of more than eight feet. This significant adjustment, coupled with comprehensive waterproofing of the walls and flooring, was critical to transform the area

into a spacious and welcoming environment.

Given the reduced hours of sunlight available during the winter, infusing the basement with ample natural light was crucial. This was achieved by installing two large windows and layering the space with multiple sources of artificial lighting to ensure it remained bright and airy throughout the year. A strategic addition was a floor-to-ceiling mirror to reflect and amplify the natural light, enhancing the illusion of openness and brightness.

To make the space cosy and efficient, in-floor heating was added to eliminate

bulky radiators that would otherwise take up valuable real estate. Finally, an on-demand hot water tank was chosen because it occupied less space and ensured that hot water would always be readily available without the need for a traditional large storage tank.

Innovative design and creative solutions

The design of the basement apartment was carefully planned to

balance aesthetics with functionality. The layout features an open-concept living, dining and kitchen area, plus, two bedrooms, one of which can be used as an office and a guest room, as it is equipped with a Murphy bed.

Additional spaces include a bathroom, ample storage and a dedicated laundry area.

To further enhance the functionality of the apartment, these innovative design choices were incorporated:

- **CLEVER CONCEALMENTS:** The electrical panel was hidden behind some artwork, a smart way to hide a visually unappealing yet vital component of the space.



A previously unused cubby space was transformed into a stylish makeup table area with a mirror, for increased functionality and aesthetic appeal in one of the bedrooms.

- **COLOR AND COMFORT:** To counteract a stereotypical drab basement style, the use of colour and texture was incorporated in various areas to add visual interest. A warm and lush olive green provides a cosy, serene retreat in the main bedroom. The bathroom comes

alive with powder, olive and fragola Mutina Puzzle Murano coloured tile in the mosaic wall. The entranceway was designed with built-in shelving and concealed storage for keys and small items, while a subtle touch of practicality was added with a designated space for the dog's bowls.

- **FURNITURE AND LAYOUT:** The furniture was carefully curated to blend comfort with functionality. The design allows the space to be intimate and comfortable for everyday living, yet versatile enough to accommodate entertaining up to eight guests for dinner.



A future-ready investment

Transforming the basement into an investment apartment not only increases the home's market value, but it also provides a steady rental income. This renovation offered our clients flexibility for the future, whether they choose to rent it out, use it for visiting family and friends or move into it themselves. The project successfully combines beautiful style with practicality, making the basement a valuable and adaptable addition to their home.



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