

When Linda Lim and Mike Fleming disagreed with their designer about a bold chaise longue in the entrance of their new home, it could have been cause for alarm. After all, this was the man whose company was providing a truckload of furnishings for the palatial new house they were having built off Bukit Timah Road.

Their preference for all things beige, earth and taupe was challenged by the swirling red-and-black graphic print suggested by Vince Chiang of Centrepiece Furnishing. The result? An arresting first impression of their dream home and a deeper trust in their designer's skills.

Linda and Mike lived for almost 20 years in a rambling black-and-white bungalow on blue-chip Ridley Road, now a Pat's Schoolhouse for several classes of very lucky children.

Their treasured photographs show a charming, homely place filled with old treasures and antiques. "I love junk shops!" laughs Linda, rattling off some of her favourite vintage haunts, including 2nd Look at Kaki Bukit and Like That One at Bukit Batok.

A few special items have made their way to their new home, too. An antique chess table with brass accents and an heirloom Art Deco sideboard sit comfortably with contemporary pieces for a stylish, personal interior decor.

Realising that much of their furniture needed to be given a fresh look for the new home, Linda saw Vince and Centrepiece Furnishing mentioned in an *Expat Living* article (finder's fee, anyone?), and found his pricing competitive, his taste elegant and his service attentive.

Thus began a rich and creative partnership. When asked how many pieces Vince provided for the house, Linda exclaims "Everything!" He advised, listened, supported and encouraged the pair as decisions

Front & Centre

by Gill Haylock




were made about designs and upholstery for couches, cushions, armchairs, dining chairs and bed headboards for the seven-bedroom family home.

When Linda's great sense of style deserted her momentarily and she chose a discordant fabric for the master bedroom ottomans, Vince re-upholstered them for free – in the fabric he had suggested in the first place. And with true magnanimity, he threw in the couch cushions at no extra cost.

As a flooring-materials specialist who travels extensively, Linda knows her marbles and woods. She chose cream marble tiles and Burmese teak floorboards throughout the home.

Juxtaposed against walls of ochre and tan, they give the three-storey house a warm, earthy, Mediterranean ambience.

"I go to Italy every year for my business and I look at the colours there," says Linda. "They're so rich." Carpets from Turkey, Italian hand-painted ceramics and Israeli artworks (a gift from her daughter) complete the look.

It's taken almost 12 months to get their home to polished perfection, but Linda and Mike think that all those evenings spent poring over fabric swatches have been worth it. Their home is a magnificent collaboration between client and creative specialist. 

Centrepiece Furnishing is at 998 Toa Payoh North Industrial Estate #04-03. For more information, visit www.centrepiece.com.sg or call 9030 5057.