

# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

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February Gardening Guide with Cynthia Brian ...read on page D12

## Repeat remodelers love life on the trail

By Cathy Dausman



This Love remodel is an updated version of an Eichler home.

Photo Mendelson Architecture

When it comes to home remodeling, Courtney and Steve Love have amassed a lifetime of experience in a mere 15 years.

The Loves' serial remodeling story began in Burlingame, while living in a century-old Craftsman. "I really do love old homes," said Courtney Love. Over the course of a year with the help of "an amazing builder" they expanded their Craftsman home base-

ment, remodeled its first floor (keeping the original windows) and added a second floor.

"It was a fun, good project," Love said. The family lived there for six years before they purchased a tear down in the Burlingame hills. "I don't even know how we got a loan (for that house)," she admits. The couple rehired their builder and began designing a Spanish-style house. Because of the hillside, that

house would become a three-story home.

When the Loves realized the near-constant stair climbing involved, they decided not to move in but rent it out until it could be sold.

But Burlingame can be cool and windy, and Courtney Love longed for the sunshine.

"One year we tied balloons to patio chairs for our daughter's birthday," she said, "and the wind blew the balloons right off the strings."

The Loves began to house hunt in Lamorinda, where their realtor recommended the Lafayette trail neighborhood. The couple made an offer on an aging four-bedroom ranch abutting the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail. Courtney Love had not even seen the inside—she was out of town.

In many ways their new purchase, a 1942 home, had outlived its usefulness. A family of five skunks occupied the crawl space, the master bedroom was virtually unheated (cosmetics in bathroom drawers froze overnight) and drainage backed up into the bathtub. The Loves considered simply remodeling, but not for long.

With their Burlingame Spanish hillside home as yet unfinished, the Loves offered their general contractor a partnership to complete the project, then acquired a second construction loan. They also moved for the fourth time in four years.

Design and planning of their current house took almost two years – a bit longer than the Loves expected, but they wanted to be sensitive to the concerns of their new neighbors. Their dream this time was to build a single story modern home that fit into a neighborhood of ranch homes. ... continued on page D4