

HEARTH THROB

Complications fuel new ideas for a fireplace facelift



A fireplace design by Sol Quintana Wagoner radiates style without stealing the scene from living room window views.

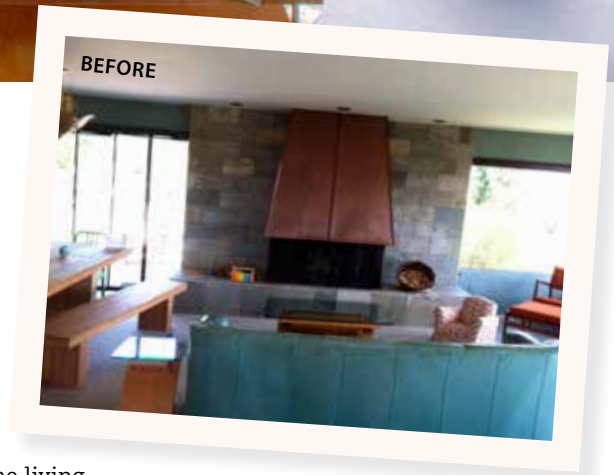
The redo agenda for a Carlsbad home's fireplace aimed to keep its main accent: an arresting copper hood. But sometimes, as in this makeover, desired intentions have to be scrapped and new plans formulated.

"The initial idea was to keep the copper fireplace but change the backdrop tile and the hearth to reflect the client's desire for a more modern space," designer Sol Quintana Wagoner of Jackson Design and Remodeling says. "However when we demolished the wall to the studs, we saw that the studs were burned and the wall and side of the house had fire damage, leaving the structure considerably compromised."

After this unexpected revelation, it was no surprise that the homeowners decided

to avoid a wood-burning unit despite having to lose the impressive copper feature. Instead, to address their safety concerns, they opted for a three-sided, direct-vent design. For a focal point that commanded attention without overrunning the living room's compelling ocean views, Sol chose backsplash and fireplace claddings in varying gray shades. A vibrant orange hearth echoes the flickering flames and addresses the homeowners' exuberance for color.

"Having the hearth and wall in contrasting colors divides the fireplace into a horizontal line and a vertical one," Sol explains. "This visual deconstruction gives it contemporary style."



Oversize, textured backsplash tiles look like wallpaper and, with barely visible grout lines, give the impression of a striking, uniform surface.

"Even though the fireplace is big and bold, it is not intrusive," Sol says. "It is a thoughtful element in a carefully planned composition of design that adds to the beauty of the space without being distracting." ❖