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Peek inside Darren & Evelyn's love nest

JUNE 2004
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Cool white walls and homogeneous tiles prevent the orange-red colour theme from becoming too warm and overpowering. **OPPOSITE** The dining area boasts a retro-inspired bench, '60s chairs and stools. The TV console is built into a false wall. Red plywood laminate was overlaid for a mod-retro look, and the nooks below the TV are practical flap-down shelves with sliding drawers for the cable box.



Scarlett Love

Reds and oranges turn this into a fun and playful home.

Photography Alan Lee **Styling** Nonie Chen **Text** Wyn-Lyn Tan

Stepping into Celine's and Jeff's five-room HDB flat in Woodlands, it is not difficult to guess what their favourite colours are. The entire apartment is bathed in hues of red and orange, and even Celine's bedroom slippers are a cheeky scarlet with white hearts.

"We both like orange and red, and we were going for a fun, playful retro look that was not over-the-top or Austin Powers," she says. Right from the start, the couple was clear about what they wanted and did not want. "The minimalist look was out of the question as that is too cold and predictable," says Jeff.



For designer Jeremy Ong from Design Scale, his clients' active participation in the whole designing and renovating process was a bonus. He says: "They knew exactly what they wanted, right down to the precise colour scheme. There was a clear direction and no guesswork. It was easy to grasp what they wanted."

The couple's tight budget also meant it was even more important that there be no unpleasant surprises or expensive mistakes. However, clients and designer had no reason to worry – they got along easily and kept the communication lines open. "Jeremy was very frank with his opinions, and advised us which of our ideas could be retained and which could be substituted as he knew we were on a strict budget," says Celine.

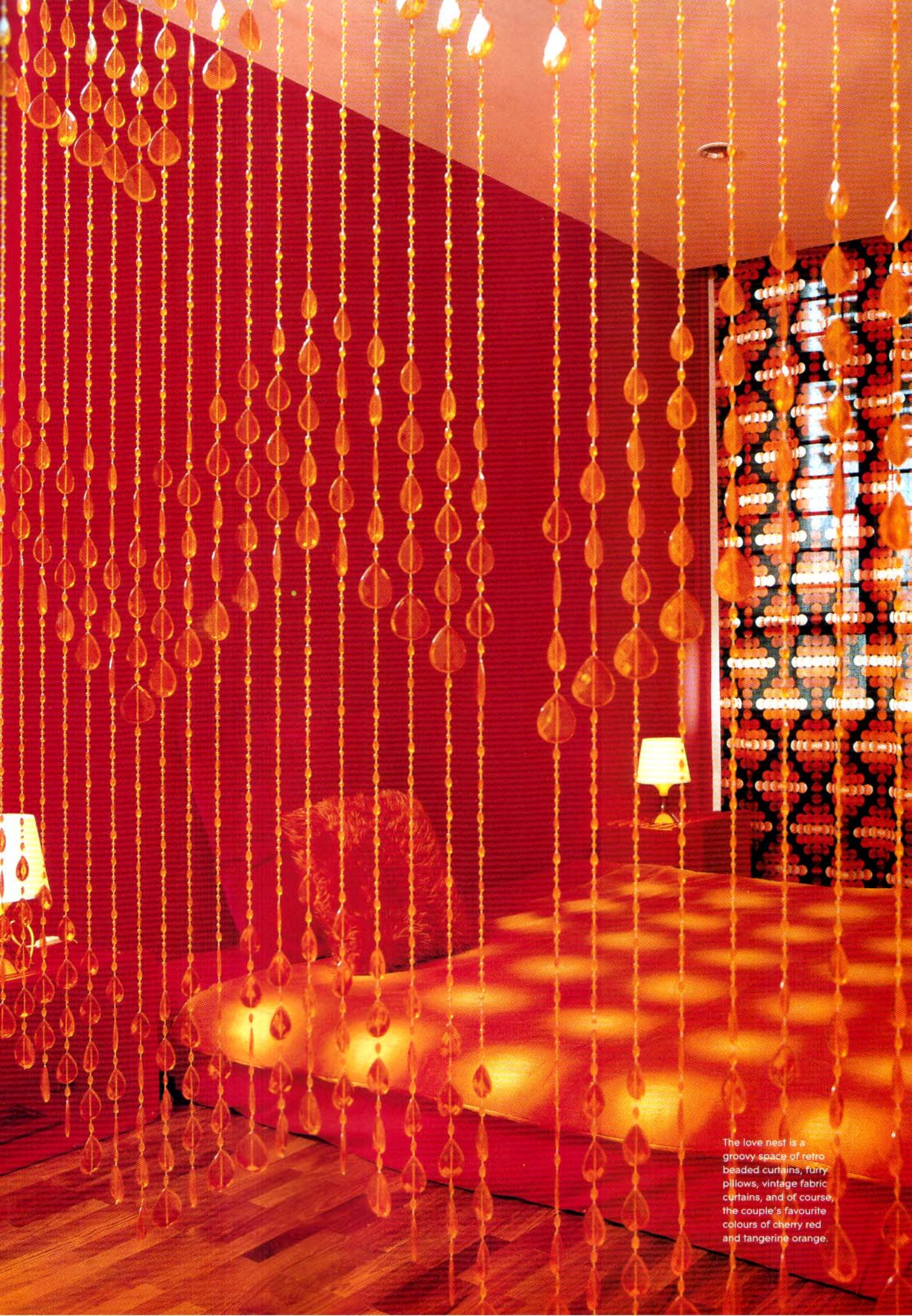
Not using things in a predictable fashion gave standard furniture a new look.

For instance, she was initially keen on a smooth Corian solid surface counter top for the kitchen, but incorporating it would have overstrained their budget. The alternative? An orange post-form laminate set against red glass panels and flushed white cabinets for an equally effective and glossy, streamlined effect.

The couple, who spent just \$40,000 in all on renovations and furnishings, manage to keep appearances up but costs low – with a smart combination of inexpensive Ikea furniture and selected pieces of cool vintage furnishings from retro shop Lorgan's.

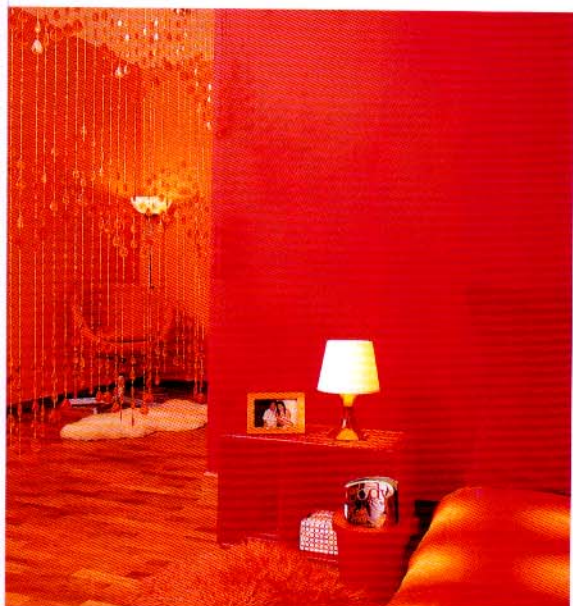


ABOVE The custom-made chaise is both practical and funky – under the seat is sliding-door storage. Celine found the swing seat from Ikea; she draped over a cream fur rug for added glam.



The love nest is a groovy space of retro beaded curtains, furry pillows, vintage fabric curtains, and of course, the couple's favourite colours of cherry red and tangerine orange.

BOTTOM The master bedroom has been expanded to incorporate a study area. **RIGHT** The inexpensive white laminate cabinets and orange post-form laminate counter top kept the kitchen renovations within budget. The couple's splurge was on the Ariston's design fridge.



Not using things in a predictable fashion gave standard furniture a new look. In the hall sit two Ikea chaise lounges. Placed side by side, they become one funky oversized sofa. The feature wall was painted a bold ruby red to add spunk to the space, and the homogeneous floor tiles and the rest of the walls were kept a neutral white to provide the perfect foil for the vivid bursts of Pop colours. Add a fuchsia rug and tangerine '60s floor lamp, and little else is needed to liven up the room.

In the dining room, contrasting black homogeneous tiles were used to demarcate the area. Again, an Ikea swing seat was matched with vintage fabric curtains and swivel chairs, while the cherry red chaise was custom-made out of plywood laminate and red PVC-wrapped foam strips.

For the master bedroom, the couple requested a spacious ambience, so Jeremy decided to combine the original master bedroom with the adjacent room. Rather than knocking down the wall between as is the norm, he removed the two rooms' entrance walls instead, and repositioned the master bedroom door by extending the entry out into the corridor. Sparkly plastic beaded curtains add a sexy appeal to the cosy sleeping area and set apart the new home office space where the computer is. "We love the generous space," says Celine, and she and Jeff count their new suite as their favourite hangout in the house.

WHERE TO GO

Design Scale Tel: 6396-6081.

Ideas we love



DO-IT-YOURSELF Cut costs by doing your own handiwork, or enlisting help from friends or family. Celine bought vintage fabric and a family member helped her to sew it up into curtains.

BE BOLD The use of striking colours can add instant zest to a space. If on a budget, bright wall paint is inexpensive and effective.

MIX AND MATCH You do not need to buy all-designer furniture. When tastefully coordinated, a few selected vintage gems mixed with your budget furniture works just as well.