

This Old House

Fireplace

Face-Lift

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AOL KEYWORD: THIS OLD HOUSE

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PREFAB CAST STONE

BEFORE: The painted mantel shelf on the floor-to-ceiling brick surround and hearth was a throwback to the 1970s.

AFTER: A new cast-limestone mantel brings architectural elegance to the room and echoes the moldings on the walls.

WHAT WAS DONE: The old brick was removed. Then a wood overmantel was installed that matches the picture-frame paneling throughout the room. Next the stone pieces for the hearth and mantel were installed by a mason. Green ceramic tile was used for the surround and part of the hearth.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: For aesthetic reasons, the homeowners wanted the raised hearth removed, but that would have meant completely rebuilding the firebox. So, to avoid the additional mess and expense, it was simply wrapped in cast stone with a tile inlay to seamlessly match the new mantel and surround. It also provides occasional seating.

COST: About \$2,500.

