

WELCOME HOME

By **JULIE CATALANO** | Photography by **MARK MENJIVAR**

The homeowners' vision was as clear as day: Build a home where everyone felt at ease, starting with their young family and then extending out to the small, newly created neighborhood in Austin's West Lake area. A space that would evolve into the place to be — a perfect combination of a kid-friendly environment inside a very grownup house, where all are welcome.

Lead architect Kristin Wiese Hefty of Dado Group in San Antonio knew how she would approach the task, working with construction project manager William Clay Hefty; project designers Luis Vargas, Ryan Schmidt and John Rizer; and Spaulding Structural Engineering of San Antonio. The gently sloping lot, a little more than one acre filled with oaks, dictated the two-story home's wraparound design that hugs the sparkling pool centerpiece. "I wanted the house to sit within the trees and the boulders and blend with the site," says Hefty. Clean contemporary lines are softened by modeled stucco and warm woods — a combination of Douglas fir and radiata pine. Rows of Fleetwood energy efficient windows in dark anodized aluminum provide a seamless and stunning indoor/outdoor experience.

In a house destined for lots of visitors, traffic flow was essential. The team created a hierarchy of public spaces in the front, connecting them with the private spaces in the back using a gallery hallway of glass. The heart of the 3,361-square-foot residence is the open floor plan of the main living/dining/kitchen area, flanked by a screened porch that is an extension of the living area, complete with gas fireplace.

Designer Brooke Anderson, owner and lead designer of Bay Hill Design in Austin, fashioned an interior based on the residents' very active lives that range from hosting huge school functions to children's spirited birthday parties to polished cocktail receptions. The goal was an emphasis on practical livability, durability and kid-proof materials without





sacrificing pizzazz. “I think spaces need to be livable, but being livable doesn’t negate good style.” The result here was “high style but very user-friendly. The kids can be swimming while the adults are on the fabulous rooftop deck. The owners wanted family-friendly spaces that didn’t look like family-friendly spaces.”

Anderson achieved that look throughout with patterned fabrics and punches of color set against a unifying color scheme of black, white, grey and wood — especially dark hardwood floors — that grounded every space. The neutral palette was borne out of a practical element that presented a unique design challenge, especially in the great room area where the kitchen, dining, living and screened porch present one large expanse. “There are so many windows in the house, which is the best thing about it, I think. But when you stand in one area and see all of these spaces, and every room connects through the windows, everything has to work together. So our color scheme had to be consistent throughout the house.”

One exception was the “very fun, over-the-top” downstairs powder room, with its explosion of color in the Schumacher

Chiang Mai wallpaper. A custom black lacquered floating vanity with brass hardware completes the exotic look.

The den, also downstairs and off of the main living area, was another private space, this one tailor-made for the man of the house. “It’s one of my favorite rooms,” says Anderson. “All of the other spaces are big and white and airy, and this has a compact, cozy feel.” The wood burning fireplace is one of two, with the second on the rooftop deck. The room features Benjamin Moore® paint in Galveston Gray, a Kravet® velvet sofa, Schumacher velvet pillows in purple, and wing chairs with pink, purple and orange ikat fabric from Threads by Lee Jofa, to give “a little bit of glam in his manspace.”

For architectural lighting, Dado Group brought in lighting consultant Christina Brown from Studio Lumina in Austin. “The owners wanted nice lighting and Christina designed a really nice system layout,” says Hefty. Low voltage, energy efficient four-inch cans were used in the recessed lighting in the ceiling.

For decorative lighting fixtures, Anderson chose quality over quantity, pointing out that there are only about a half dozen signature pieces throughout but they make a statement, like





the Paul Ferrante twig chandelier in the dining area, Stray Dog Designs lighting in the girls’ room, and a Ro Sham Beaux turquoise beaded light fixture in the powder room.

All of the baths are stellar, says Anderson, but the standout is the master bath, with concrete gray and white Ann Sacks/ Popham tile “so it’s very serene. You just walk in and take a deep breath.” Serenity continues in the master bedroom, where “we kept it very cool, with a subdued gray, white and mauve

scheme.” The silk drapery and fretwork cut velvet pillows are by Jim Thompson Fabrics. Schumacher grasscloth in a silvery mauve graces the walls.

For the owners, the master suite with its view of their land and the greenbelt behind it is a treasured respite from the whirlwind of activity that takes place in this lively and loving home, which was built to be just that. Within weeks of moving in, the owners were off and running, hosting a sizable function for the school district, followed by serving as the hub of holiday celebrations for family and friends.

Anderson says that Hefty’s thoughtful architectural design was a big factor in how perfect the space is for entertaining. “How a house flows is huge. Is the flow right? Can you get from the backyard to the front door

without a million turns? How do you welcome people into your home?” For at least one happy family, with open arms. ❖

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