

TRIANGLE URBAN

HOME

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CELEBRATING INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN AND PERSONAL STYLE





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By Anne Marie Ashley
Dustin Peck Photography

WHEN JEFF SNYDER AND PAUL MASON WALKED into this Raleigh home during an open house twelve years ago, only one of them was interested in walking further than the foyer. “There was a lot of wall paper, gold accents and colonial styling throughout,” explains Jeff. “But, I saw past the things that were less than appealing and knew within about 5 minutes that this would be our house.” The house had many of the “must-haves” on their list for a new home, including the layout and a great location in the Inman Park neighborhood. “Inman Park was the ideal location because of its proximity to shopping, restaurants, downtown Raleigh, RTP and RDU,” says Jeff. “We knew it would continue to grow and develop, but it also gave us a quiet space in a family-oriented neighborhood, which we love.” It took minimal convincing of Paul, but the pair purchased the home and got to work making it their own.

With Jeff’s passion for interior design, the project was (and still is) a labor of love. Before he was able to pursue design full time, Jeff used the home as his creative outlet and admits that being his own client has been good and bad. “On one hand, I give myself free reign to design however I want to, to experiment with different looks;” he explains. “On the other hand, I found that I rarely allow a space to be ‘finished’.

Sometimes only a few months pass before I’m onto the next iteration.” Structural changes took the longest, but were set on the fast track when the couple’s hot water heater broke two years ago. Though it was a major inconvenience, Jeff and Paul jumped at the chance to make the changes they’d been discussing. Over the next 5 months, all water damage was repaired, and in the process, they were able to remove some useless space and awkward walls as well as redesign bathrooms





to better serve the layout. “The majority of our changes were cosmetic,” adds Jeff. “But they were changes that allowed the structure and finishes to catch up to the design aesthetic I’d created with our furnishings.”

Drawing personal taste from their collection of Architectural Digests (dating back to 1993!), years of House Beautiful and Elle Décor issues, not to mention Pinterest and simply, his personal style, Jeff has curated the look of their home with a collection of items found from all corners – as close as High Point and as far as California. In fact, Paul found the anchor chairs for their dining table through a chance encounter while on business in San Francisco. “The chairs were purchased by this woman in anticipation of a home they were going to buy in Lake Tahoe,” recalls Paul, “but it turns out they didn’t match the aesthetic of the home they ultimately purchased and these beauties had been sitting in storage for over 10 years – completely untouched and brand new!” Finds like these combined with personal items, often coming with a story, are what makes Jeff and Paul’s house a home. The frames on the wall at the top of the stairs, for instance, were originally placeholders until they found the ideal piece; but after living with them for a time and receiving many compliments on the original concept, the frames, filled with plastic hotel room keys from their travels around the world, became a highly personal part of their décor.

“Accessories add a depth, interest and personality to the space,” advises Jeff. “It’s the part of decorating many people struggle with the most, however. My rule of thumb is to give as much thought to your accessorizing as you do to your other, larger decorating and design decisions.” He continues, saying that it’s easy to want to rush the process when you finally get to the accessorizing phase, but try to avoid filling walls and tabletops just to fill them. “Keep it personal – do you love it, is it interesting to you, and does it enhance the rest of the space without distracting from it?”

Perhaps the most interesting room to result from the renovation was















the “lounge” area. “I call it a lounge because it truly feels like you’re in a cocktail lounge at a special place,” says Jeff. Once the half walls separating the formal living room and dining room were removed, Jeff and Paul decided to create two separate and distinct, but complementary sitting areas in one long room. An old Hollywood-style bar serves as a room divider of sorts, surrounded by black and white photos of all the Hollywood greats, including Paul Newman, Frank Sinatra and Audrey Hepburn. “In one side of the room, I used furniture with more traditional lines and neutral finishes,” offers Jeff. “In the other space, I used more contemporary pieces with pops of color.” Two different,

though similar area rugs mark the spaces, and large art similar in scale and style hang above each sofa. The modern, sculptural light fixture anchors each room from above.

In the end, both agreed that this was their favorite space in the home, offering a comfortable and stylish retreat after a long day in their new retail décor space off Glenwood Ave., Simon’s House Interiors. “It’s truly satisfying to have my passion for interior design realized in a retail store where I can help others curate their homes,” Jeff smiles. “Your décor should bring you joy every time to you come home and I can say I truly practice what I preach.” ❖