



the new traditional

By Anne Marie Ashley

IT MAY SEEM LIKE A TALL ORDER TO ARTFULLY MARRY a warm vintage farmhouse with modern lines and clean design – a daunting task, no doubt. Michelle Simms and her husband, however, have made it look easy with their custom-built home in the Bedford community of Raleigh. Working with architect Tony Frazier of Frazier Home Design, home builder Terramor Homes and interior designer Sandra Moncada of The Couture Haus, the team successfully created a home that’s not only functional in every inch, but also a study in the marriage of style and design.

“The balance of blending vintage farm style together with modern design was a constant conscious effort throughout the design of our home,” Michelle explains. The initial objective started with the sole design plan of the entry and stairway, setting the tone for the rest of the home. “We wanted an abundance of natural light, a seamless connection among every space of the home from basement to top floor and a wow-factor upon entering,” adds Michelle. The staircase can be seen on every floor, from the basement recreation room to the foyer and living room, and ending at the top of the second floor. “Creating separate entertaining areas was not the goal... family and friendship enjoyment and togetherness is the value system in our home and one

we want to maintain as our young kids become teens,” she says.

Over the next eight months, the new home was constructed with every detail in mind and grew outward from the staircase. At the first landing and turn of the stairs, an 8-foot tall window begins and continues all the way up to the second floor. Three more long, vertical windows were added following the stairs up, allowing extensive natural light into the foyer, stairway, second floor landing and even into the opening of the basement. Each window was carefully trimmed with matching, earth toned, aged and rustic brick to maintain the exposed and vintage look the family wanted to achieve. From here, the rest of the open concept design unfolded. The screened porch is accessible from the dining area, but more impressively, by a 16-foot wide sliding glass door across the back wall of the family room. When fully opened, an 8-foot-wide opening is created, making the living and eating areas fully integrated.

In the kitchen, cabinets were chosen in a classic farmhouse style – pure white, ceiling height and with simple inset doors and classic chrome hardware. Soapstone countertops also lend to the classic farm look and the impressive island is covered in more modern white granite. “The island really pops with the grey and turquoise,” says Michelle. “It





“The balance of blending vintage farm style together with modern design was a constant conscious effort throughout the design of our home.”



can seat six for everyday eating and also allows for full functionality while enjoying all the activity in the rest of the home.”

Each child’s bedroom was given equal attention to detail and designed with their tastes in mind and the master bedroom is most definitely a retreat. With calming, spa-like colors on the walls, six large windows and the continued classic trim that was used throughout the rest of the home, it’s truly a respite for Michelle and her husband. The highlight of the room is the set of large barn doors that enclose the seasonal closet, doubling as a focal point. Painted in distressed white with black iron hardware, the doors add the casual tone for which the couple wished. “We wanted to incorporate the spa-feel of our bedroom and bathroom with the rest of the home,” explains Michelle. “A gorgeous

free-standing oval tub is centered in the room under a vaulted ceiling and the large casement window overlooks the river and greenway area behind the home. It’s truly beautiful.”

Michelle shopped for her furnishings all over, including stores like West Elm, Greenfront in Raleigh and Ethan Allen, among others, choosing pieces that would stand the test of time. When asked what her design tip is for new homeowners, she suggests that you create a home that lives for you and your family. “No matter what size home or price range you are building in, it’s your personal space that represents your personality, your lifestyle and your values. So the design and the flow should reflect you,” she says. “That’s what makes a house a home – the special touches.”❖