

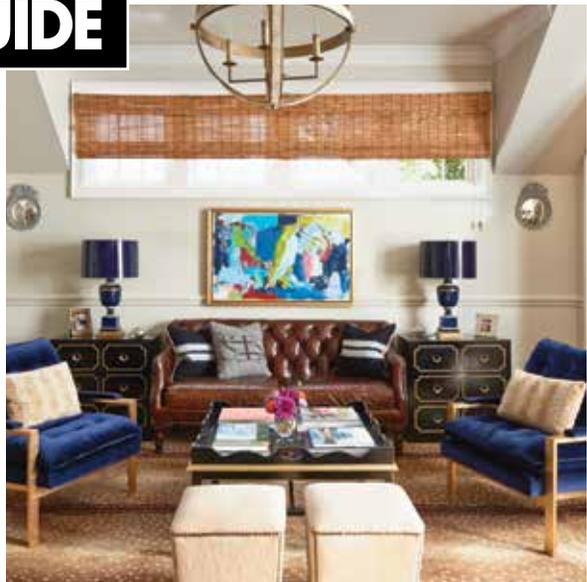
CHARLOTTE URBAN

HOME

CELEBRATING INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN AND PERSONAL STYLE



**BEST OF
GUIDE**





AMERICAN FASHION

FAMILY-CENTRIC DESIGN

By Nancy Atkinson
David Clark Photography

When Tyler and Amanda Covington bought their sprawling ranch home in High Point, they planned to make it their own with artwork, paint, new flooring and a few minor renovations. They hired interior designer Christi Barbour of Barbour Spangle Design to help.

CHRISTI FIRST MET THE COUPLE IN THEIR CURRENT home. “In order to do my job well I needed to know a lot about the family – how they live together and what they love,” says Christi. “Homeowners are not always comfortable being completely open and honest, but the more they are, the better the results.”

“At our first meeting, I told Christi I love to cook,” said Amanda. “I am always feeding someone. She also asked if she could look inside my closet.”

But when Christi toured the couple’s new home she quickly discovered that it was not laid out to meet their needs. She knew the narrow galley kitchen and separate den would not work for the family-centric way they wanted to live.

“I told them we could take the home they’d bought as it was now and put their stamp on it with their look and their things,” she said. “Or we could completely renovate the home and create what they’d asked for.”

Having decided this would be their forever home, the couple agreed to renovate. “We only wanted to do this once,” says Amanda. “And we wanted to get it right.”

Design is a Labor of Love

Christi’s vision included moving the kitchen to the much larger den area, and re-envisioning the entire first floor. She collaborated with John Vaughan of B.E. Vaughan and Sons on all the details.

“The driving force was configuring a family-centric home that was easy to entertain in, a wonderful circular living space that is comfortable and reflects their colorful personalities,” says Christi.

Christi’s design sketches worked in the colors from Amanda’s closet. “She was very conscious of making sure we loved everything; okay was not good enough. She made sure we loved every detail,” says Amanda.

Messy living

Renovation began, taking the home’s first floor down to bare bones, floor joints, ceiling beams and load bearing walls during one of the coldest times of the year.

“The main floor was gutted,” says Amanda, who was at home all day with the couple’s two boys (ages nine months and three years).





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“We stayed in the basement during the day. Upstairs was our sleeping area. I would go from the top floor through the construction, sometimes on my hands and knees, to get a bottle from the refrigerator. But it was all worth it – every bit of it.”

Happily Ever After

The home is the result of a successful collaboration between a couple who knows what they like and a designer who invests time in getting to know her clients.

“It takes more time to design a home around its owners, personality and lifestyle – it is more of an investment,” says Christi. “But in the end it is much more rewarding for everyone. When people come into the home they say, ‘This is so Amanda,’ and that is the highest compliment I could receive.” ❖







THE WOW FACTOR

Amanda loves details, so Christi incorporated extra attention to detail throughout.

1. Brown on brown. On brown. The sophisticated rich brown study was once the dining room. “Tyler trusted us with his study. And he loves it,” says Amanda. Luxe details like the brass coffee table created a masculine meets glam look and offset the dark walls. The built-in cabinets were designed around the antique gun – willed to Tyler by an elderly man he once helped on an elk hunt and framed as a gift by Amanda.

2. The banquette. This family-centric cozy space was inspired by a dinner Christi had with her children, sitting close in a restaurant booth. “I wanted to give Tyler and Amanda opportunity to snuggle with their boys at dinner.”

3. The console. “Home is being surrounded by the things you love,” says Christi. “Amanda saw this console by Mr. Brown London and fell in love with it, so we placed it in the foyer. Now it brings her joy every day when she walks into her home.”

4. The island lamps. “These happened because the eight and a half foot ceilings had me so bummed,” says Amanda. “I couldn’t put a chandelier in the kitchen and wasn’t happy with anything flush mounted. Christi came in with this solution and it was genius. It makes the area cozy but also gives it grandeur.”

5. The arches. “All of the design pictures Amanda showed me included arched hallways and doors,” says Christi. “We couldn’t get all the arches she was asking for, so we framed the dining room with architectural arches and rounded the ceilings in the master bedroom hallway to give her room for the chandeliers she loves.”

The photos from this home are from a filming of an episode of the critically acclaimed PBS show, *A Chef’s Life*. To see all the photos of this home, the dinner party, plus behind the scenes photos of the filming, please visit www.urbanhomemagazine.com.