



# EUROPEAN MODERN FARMHOUSE

By Cheryl Van Tuyl Jividen | Photography by Michael Hunter



*Soon-to-be empty nesters decided to start fresh in one of West Lake Hills' more established neighborhoods. Their vision combines Hill Country and Scandinavian influences in a home rich in organic elements — glass, stone, wood and metal. "The design of this home drew from the client's love of modern, minimalist, European design," says Jennifer Garner, ASID.*





**G**arner, an award-winning, Texas Registered Interior Designer, prides herself on the versatility of her Austin and Hill Country based design services. So was the case with this Austin couple who razed their existing circa 90's home and engaged local architect, Kai Geschke, to draw plans for their new home on the existing lot. Inspired by the client's aesthetic and vision, the new home has clean, modern lines. "It has a

Scandinavian influence with organic finishes, bright light-filled rooms and minimal décor," describes Garner.

There were specifics on the homeowners' wish list: a spare environment so as not to detract or impact the beautiful views and a very white shade of Texas limestone in a Vermeer cut for the exterior and interior which the builder, Arbogast Custom Homes, took great pains to procure. Other decorative elements in raw steel were used to punctuate the white walls which showcase their vibrant art collection.

Garner designed a custom steel lentil and casing to transition from the stone wall entry to the painted walls of the great room. The shotgun entry maximizes the outdoor views with a matching steel door and window unit by Durango Doors. The limestone wall is highlighted by indirect cove lighting to graze the stone's texture and illuminate the art. Underfoot, wide-plank, white oak flooring is accented with an antique rug — the first of many that grace the home — from Black Sheep Unique Rugs of Austin.





Giving the living room purposeful heft, with its double walls of glass and fireplace, Garner chose to cover the space between the beams with wood planking stained in a semi-transparent warm grey. She explains, “Leaving it white without the wood texture wouldn’t have had any impact. The grain and color give the room weight.” The fireplace replicates the entry stone and features a half-inch thick, cantilevered, raw steel mantel. A striking statement, the round metal chandelier from Restoration Hardware spans five feet in diameter. Grey suede leather sofas flank a lightweight concrete West Elm coffee table atop a grey and orange handwoven rug. Pillows in assorted shapes, textures and colors contrast the clean lines of the sofas. Autumn-toned colors, derived from the client’s art collection, serve as accent colors for decor and furnishings, as seen in the canvas painting by Austin-based artist, Maria Martin. “It provides a nice tie in with color and dimensional elements for visual texture,” says Garner.

Mounted over the Wolf® Range, and above the quartz slab backsplash, Garner designed the statement piece of the kitchen — a six-foot-wide raw steel vent hood fabricated by Zach Henke of Austin Iron. “The raw steel naturally has a beautiful visual texture that adds interest for such a large focal point,” she says. The home was recognized by the Austin Chapter of ASID with a Design Excellence Award for Product Design and Specialty Treatment for the custom metal work incorporated throughout.

Custom cabinetry painted pale grey pairs beautifully with the Metro Quartz countertops and waterfall island sourced from AG&M. “It’s a very durable and stain resistant marble alternative,” explains Garner, and is fronted with Tig counter stools from Crate & Barrel. A pair of airy Heracleum II pendant lights from Moooi softly illuminate overhead. “These lights are like ethereal dandelions.”



Adjacent to the kitchen, the breakfast nook and custom-designed banquette is lit by a steel and brass suspension light from Tech Lighting, and Garner explains, “The light is very spare and minimal and it wouldn’t detract from the view outside.” Drawing color from a distinctive photograph in colors of orange and blue, the nook and kitchen tie into accent colors from the great room.

When designing the master bedroom, Garner says, “Our goal of a warm, cocoon-like respite for sleep and relaxation was achieved in this space without the room feeling heavy or





dark.” A darker grey wall and ceiling color give a restful, quiet feeling to the space. In contrast, lighter colors were employed in the rug, furniture and bedding. Soft task lighting was provided by suspending twin Agnes pendants by Circa Lighting® in white and gold over each nightstand. Over the bed is a wall-mounted JuJu hat. “It’s a handmade, white feather, African headdress used as dimensional wall art,” says Garner.

The master bathroom is bright and white with accents of grey, including the natural stone floor in Charcoal by Materials Marketing in Austin, and marble-look quartz counters by Metroquartz. The client didn’t want a tub so the space was instead devoted to a sitting area with a tie-dye fabric swivel barrel chair, makeup vanity and a white painted, pierced-wood drum light.

A tiny alcove located between a bathroom and closet became a charming desk area. Garner says, “We opted to turn it into a ‘jewel box’ space using a vanity with mirror, sconce lights and wallpaper by Cole & Son.”

In the powder bath, a hex floor tile in the Dandelion design was sourced from Austin’s Clay Imports. The vanity focal wall alternates rows of white tile in both square and rectangular shapes and sizes with contrasting grout. Painted black, a custom dresser-look vanity cabinet is accented with soft brass



hardware and a shaped gold mirror is framed between pendant lights from Circa. The un-lacquered brass faucet is by Rohl®. Garner says, “Altogether they project a modern nod to mid-century design.”

Garner concludes, “This project has gained our firm much notoriety. I think projects like this one, that come off so well, are the product of a client with a clear vision and the trust to allow their interior designer the freedom to bring that vision to reality.” ♦

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