

Triangle

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HOME

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"The home is modern in design but has a midcentury flair. The vibrant combination of blue and orange seemed perfect and coincided with the client's personality, so we ran with it," says Branch of the great room.

Architect Sophie Piesse had a challenge on her hands. She was tasked with creating a modern, industrial, one-story dwelling on a steep, wooded 0.6-acre lot in the historic district of downtown Hillsborough. Not only would the architect have to overcome the landscape of the lot in her architectural plans, but she would also have to adhere to the guidelines set forth for all historic homes in the district.

"On a steep lot, [designing a one-story home] can be tricky, but it gives a wonderful tree house feeling off the south and east sides of the home," she says. And while some architects might view the historic requirements restrictive, Piesse embraced them, allowing them to influence the architecture and materials.

To achieve the homeowners' modern industrial aesthetic, Piesse utilized steel and wood accents with pops of color on the exterior and interior. "The home has a quiet entry from the street," she says. "You get a hint of the color, the materials, and the style, but then you enter it and the main space opens up in every direction and definitely

Into the WOODS

ARCHITECT SOPHIE PIESSE AND DESIGNER LAUREN BRANCH BRING ONE COUPLE'S DREAM OF A MODERN HOME IN THE WOODS TO FRUITION.

TEXT BY BLAKE MILLER

RIGHT: Branch steered clear of colorful barstools to allow the striking walnut countertops and dining table made from the pecan tree on the property to shine. Molded acrylic chairs from CB2 were perfect. Cabinets are by Mark Burford of Wood Done Right.



TOP AND BOTTOM: Blue corrugated metal paneling combined with Sherwin-Williams Knockout Orange on the front door give the exterior a punch. Branch continued the exterior color palette inside with her interior design. The trifold doors provide a seamless indoor-outdoor experience.

hits that wow factor.” Inside, the open floor plan features pecan and walnut wood accents—sourced from trees cut down during the home’s construction—on the fireplace cladding, entertainment mantel, kitchen island, dining table, and primary bedroom headboard wall. “I love the fearless color use—splashes of orange that carry from the outside in, playing off bold blue inside and out,” she says.

The homeowners also enlisted designer Lauren Branch of Kèfi Home Interiors to work on the furnishings. “Given that there was one great room that included the kitchen, dining, and living rooms, we wanted to create a space that was contiguous in style and color, modern but welcoming and warm,” says the homeowner. With that direction, Branch coupled the contemporary architecture of the home with organic wood finishes as well as vintage and secondhand items to add warmth.

Wood from the leftover two-hundred-year-old pecan tree on the property was used to construct a feature wall in the primary bedroom. Branch then enlisted local woodworker Christian Fittro of Board & Batten to create the floating side tables. The Hinaki pendant lights from Trig Modern were chosen by the client.



ABOVE: Branch kept the primary bath clean and simple by using Stone Talk tile on the flooring, as well as on the back shower wall and wainscoting, in three similar but different shades. The Barclay Lydia Slipper Tub offers a soothing respite while a Flock of Light chandelier by Moooi hangs above.

BOTTOM: Branch added a small reading nook to the left of the fireplace. The large floor-to-ceiling window and added cushion make it a relaxing spot to read or nap.



The dining table made by Raleigh Reclaimed is crafted from the two-hundred-year-old pecan tree on the property and sits atop a vintage 1950s rug. In the family room, a large, curved velvet sofa with midcentury legs by Room & Board provides “a lovely softness to the room and helped to bring in some balance with all the straight lines,” adds Branch.

With the help of Piesse and Branch, the home is exactly what the homeowners envisioned. “They love the home and tell me every time we talk,” says Piesse. “It is so important to exceed clients’ expectations and create something that they truly love living in, and it was a joy to create this together.” ♦