



# SOFTENING THE EDGE

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BANDD/DESIGN IS A FULL-SERVICE INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM, BASED IN AUSTIN, THAT BELIEVES THAT EVERYONE DESERVES TO LIVE, WORK AND EXPERIENCE LIFE IN AN AESTHETICALLY-PLEASING ENVIRONMENT.

To subtly imbue the dining room with the essence of Lenny Kravitz's Brazilian farm compound, Austin artist, Hillary Cumberworth, painted a mural of whimsical smoke as the backdrop for this impressive custom raw edge dining table by Design Within Reach, along with dining chairs by Woody Armchair.



FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL DESIGNER,

Sara Malek Barney, is the creative mastermind that has led BANDD/DESIGN since its inception in 2017, designing for new builds and renovations in Austin and beyond. They recently completed an interior design project for a family relocating from San Francisco.

“They are a young family investing in their space for the first time so it was super exciting,” remarked Sara. “They brought nothing with them and wanted us to take care of everything, down to the forks and plates in the house, so we worked on every element.”

To initiate a new project, Sara likes to spend a lot of time getting to know the homeowners and their family’s likes and dislikes. “We want them to feel like it’s their home, not ours, so we embark on a pretty detailed discovery phase that includes things like their favorite TV shows, favorite drinks — all the things about them that aren’t just about design,” she explained.

In this instance, the homeowners wanted a space that was designed for entertaining with inspiration drawn from the Brazilian farm compound owned by celebrity musician Lenny Kravitz.

With bold images of wild murals and black leather float-

ing in her head, Sara’s first response was, ‘are you kidding me,’ but after taking some time to reflect and brainstorm, she found a way to incorporate this inspiration into her design.

“One thing that stood out was the big mural on the wall in Kravitz’s bedroom and the giant dining room table that seats 20 people under a massive chandelier,” she noted.

Sara, who enjoys working and supporting local artists who make everything from murals to custom furniture, hired artist Hillary Cumberworth to paint a fluid yet sophisticated mural on the wall in the dining room. The mural, which climbs up the wall onto the ceiling, represents smoke or the wispieness of smoke. “It’s pretty

These light bamboo custom-made chairs with room for two are the star of the kitchen, giving it that California beach motif Sara intended. The concrete dome pendant lights by Shades of Light are the ideal accent to keep the look classic.

Although the fulcrum of the room is the unusual mosaic round table by Bernhardt, the fireplace, with its custom grey plaster and wood mantel, truly pulls the room together. It’s also worth noting that they installed built-in seating to accentuate a custom feel here.



tempered, but it's a nice way to be edgy without being over-the-top," said Sara.

To complement this showpiece and continue to extrapolate from Kravitz's ranch home for inspiration, she added built-in seating in the dining room, along with sconces, to bring some thrilling pops of unexpected elements to the room yet keep it suburban-friendly and, more importantly, cozy for the whole family and their future guests.

To really hone in on a concept, Sara and her team dive in by sharing inspiration photos back-and-forth with their clients. Sara elaborated that they really like using tools like Pinterest and Houzz. "Do you like stripes or paisley, for example? I might say I like modern but that can mean two totally different things, so we use these helpful tools to make sure we're understanding each other," noted Sara.

On the wall behind the luxurious Caffrey & Co. king-sized bed swathed in Crypton Laguna Cloud fabric, Sara implemented a geometric-patterned design using wood planking to add a one-of-a-kind textural element to the primary bedroom, painted in Sherwin Williams' Dignity Blue. This growing trend is an imaginative alternative to the more common accent wall.

To complete the homeowner's intention for the office, Sara painted the walls in a dark blue called Cascades by Sherwin Williams®. However, the office wouldn't be complete without its outstanding custom raw edge desk.



In this case, the homeowners only gave nominal direction, so in an effort to ensure they were speaking the same language and that Sara's concepts were on the right track, BANDD created photo realistic renderings of the dining room and kitchen.

The primary bedroom is another example of how Sara created a space that authentically reflected the style and sensibility of the client. "It's dark for a reason. They wanted a room that felt cozy and warm, like a little cave, so the dark walls give it a moodier vibe. It's a sanctuary," shared Sara.

Another fundamental design aspect of the primary bedroom is the back wall behind the bed that was achieved organically through the design process. While some clients might be intimidated by adding such a diverse element, these homeowners embraced it. Instead of painting an accent wall or using wallpaper, Sara wanted to give the room an interesting textural element by using wood planking to create a design that's both unique and subtle. "That's our design in a nutshell," she said, confidently. "Our designs aren't super loud or aggressive, but I like to add these textural elements that have a subtle touch."

The office, too, was meant to have a more somber moody vibe, achieved with dark blue walls and a comfy brown leather chair, along with a standing desk made with a custom wood slab. The wood and style of the desk are similar

to what was used in the dining room, in order to seamlessly marry the spaces together.

In the kitchen, Sara changed out the backsplash and added complementary lighting, along with custom tile around the base of the island. To lend an even more authentic look, they had custom chairs made in the Philippines out of bamboo that allows the family to cozy up together. The color palette was a nod to the homeowners' California roots for a lighter, beachy feel.

"I think the colors on the walls between the primary bedroom and the office help create a cohesive look," said Sara. "We also incorporated a lot of their family photos and things from their travels to bring all the spaces together."

When all is said and done, it's these personal touches that make a house a home and few do as ingeniously as Sara and BANND/DESIGN. ♦

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A spare room ultimately serves as the kids' playroom and homework area.

The powder bathroom gets rave reviews from the homeowners' guests when entertaining thanks to its stunning wallpaper, Queen of Spain, by Schumacher and the lovely silver vanity mirror by Uttermost.