

Triangle

DECEMBER 2018

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## features

### 34 BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Interior designer Laura Covington combines classic and modern elements to create a beautiful mix called home for a Raleigh couple and their Wilmington getaway.

### 46 FEELS LIKE HOME

For one Apex couple, creating a forever home that could be passed down for generations was the only inspiration they needed.

### 60 BLUE RIDGE BEAUTY

Tasked with turning a new construction home into a getaway that felt rooted in the history of the mountains, Durham designer Chelsea Benay hit it out of the park. And then some.

KEUCO



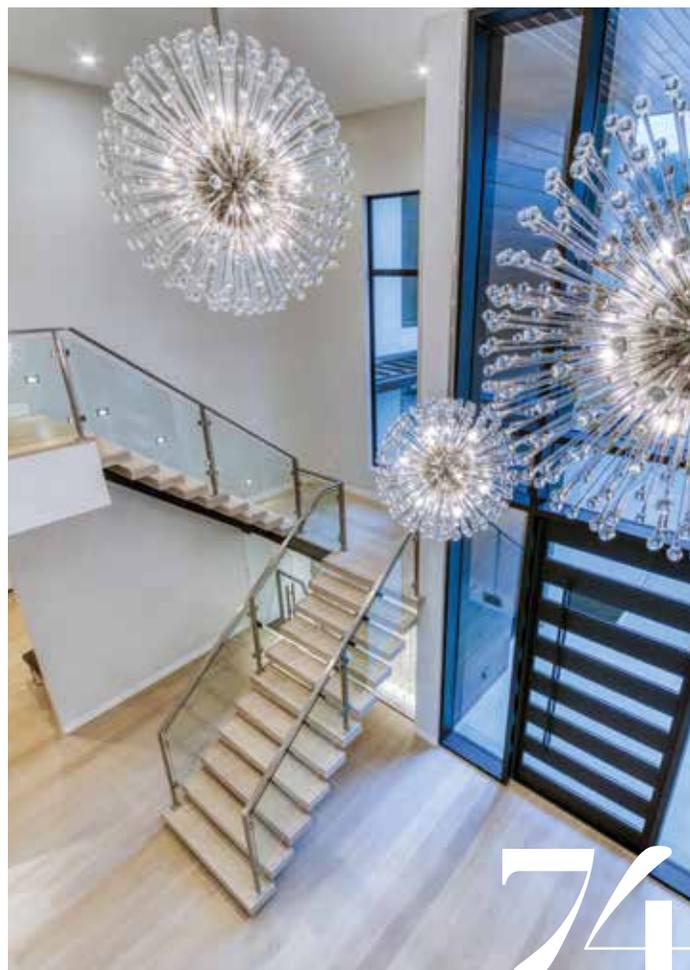
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dwell

- 16** **STYLE**  
Interior designer Deborah Hensley invites us into her home and shows us what it means to care for your guests through thoughtful design.
- 20** **TREND**  
'Tis better to give than to receive is not always the case. Sometimes it's a little give and a little take. Here's our gift guide of some of our favorite items that will make their (or your) spirits bright.
- 24** **MARKET**  
The season for great gatherings is upon us, so you'll need to revamp your entertaining game with these eye-catching pieces for your bar and tablescape.

- 28** **PALETTE**  
A surprising juxtaposition of neutralizing properties and show-stopping qualities, aubergine is a jewel tone with intrigue.
- 30** **DESIGN BOARD**  
Take an insider's look at how interior designer Martha Schneider uses the interplay of fashion, art, and interiors to achieve her timeless transitional style.

resources

- 74** **The Glass House**  
Carolina Glass & Mirror showcases an incredible home with inspiring glass applications.

contributors

- 78** **BUILDING A BETTER HOME:**  
Evan Bost  
Behind the Finish
- 82** **SET IN STONE:**  
Sunny Surana  
Expert Tips

spotlight

- 10** From the Editor
- 88** Arts and Culture Spotlight
- 90** Advertiser Index

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Unquestionably, the political landscape has gripped our lives in ways we never saw coming. For some of us, it's even caused rifts between those nearest and dearest to our hearts. But, the harried world moves on, and we find ourselves back at the time of year where we need to let go of what divides us and embrace what unites us – friendship and family. Coming together over the holidays is a beautiful thing where we create memories that have staying power. For me, this holiday season is even more special, as it will be my daughter's first Christmas.

Our Great Gatherings issue is a celebration of coming together for food and fellowship – nourishment for the body, mind, and soul. Anyone who's ever organized a dinner party or hosted an oyster roast can tell you that it's a full-on production. One way or the other, food must be made, drinks must be served, and plating must be provided. It can be a complex undertaking, and it's the thoughtfulness and care that goes into each decision that makes it such a special occasion. Interior designer Deborah Hensley welcomes us into her home and shares with us how she creates a perfect dinner party tablescape and also provides a few tips and inspired looks for the holiday season (page 16).

In our feature homes, three designers create the perfect setting for each of their clients to relish the time spent with those closest to them. Laura Covington designs an exquisite getaway using a light and airy palette that's perfect for gathering any time of year (page 34). Inspired by her clients' love of the mountains, Vicky Serany of Southern Studio Interior Design combines modern design with natural materials to create a well lived-in space (page 46). And Durham-based designer Chelsea Benay transforms a newly constructed house into a home that her clients and their extended family will enjoy for years to come (page 60).

It is the season of giving, after all, so we've also put together a design-inspired gift guide to give you some ideas for the design enthusiast in your life. You may even find a little something for yourself, too (page 20).

Whether it's offering presents, devoting time, preparing food, or designing your tablespace, it's all a gift of giving to others. I wish you and yours a joyous holiday season and a truly merry Christmas filled with sweet moments that will transform into treasured memories you'll look back on for years to come. Cheers!

Ashley Hotham Cox  
Editor in Chief  
[@ashleyhcox](#) on Instagram



**On The Cover:** Despite the beautiful soaring fifteen-foot windows in this dining room designed by Vicky Serany of Southern Studio, the space is at once intimate and cozy, perfect for a great gathering



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VOL 6 NO 6



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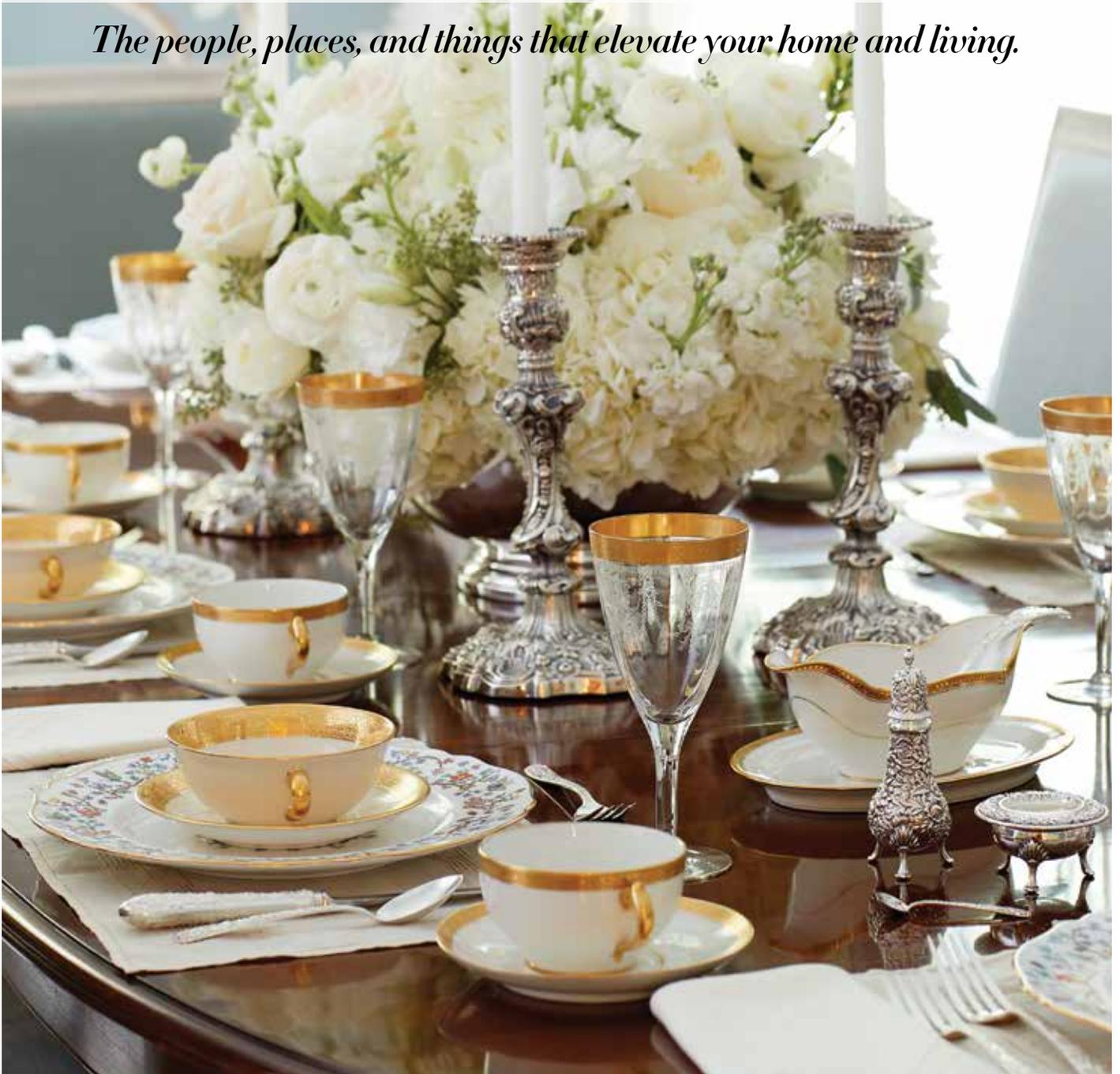
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# DWELL

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Interior design by Deborah Hensley; photography by Stacey Van Berkel

**Style**  
Dine by  
Design

Page 16

**Trend**  
Give and  
Take

Page 20

**Market**  
Spice  
Things Up

Page 24

**Palette**  
Avant-Garde  
Aubergine

Page 28

**Design Board**  
Martha  
Schneider

Page 30

# DINE BY *DESIGN*

Interior designer Deborah Hensley invites us into her dining room and creates an inspiring tablescape full of sentimental wonder, perfect for the holiday season.

Written by Anne Marie Ashley | Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox | Photography by Stacey Van Berkel



**T**here is something important to be said for gathering friends and family around your dining table – the time spent creating a warm and inviting atmosphere, the thoughtful preparation of a mouthwatering meal, and of course, breaking bread with those closest to you. It's a level of care for others that can be hard to match, but one who has mastered it has the ability to not only bring people together but also make them feel truly special.

Fourth generation Raleigh native and interior designer Deborah Hensley has indeed mastered the art of creating great gatherings. With a few doctors in her family, it's no wonder that taking care of others runs deep in her veins. A keen eye for design and a love of architecture, however, has steered her into a career of helping people in an entirely different way – creating inviting and livable spaces that her clients love *and* love to share with others.

In keeping with her talent for design and love for gatherings, Hensley graciously invited us into her beautiful dining room and shared one of her favorite tablescape designs in perfect time for the holiday season. Hand-painted Gracie wallpaper envelops the dining room in a beautiful but delicate blue hue. A Chippendale ceiling design adds visual interest, while a geometric rug from Eatman's Carpets & Interiors and an antique sideboard from Boone's round out the space.

A mix of family heirlooms and specially selected items, her table is at once stylish and reflective. "Everything on the table has meaning," Hensley says. "I find so much comfort in using pieces that have been passed down for generations. I simply love the memories I have using them as a little girl." It's that comfort mixed with a personal touch that Hensley imparts on each of her guests. Engraved sterling silver heirloom baby cups are placed at each seat and double as vases for stunning mini arrangements created by florist Kelly Odom. "I'm a huge advocate for using what you have. I always like to add a little something special for each guest, whether it be in the form of a place card, gift, or in this circumstance, an individual arrangement."

A mix of China patterns keeps things interesting with





Spode Shanghai and a Limoges white and gold design. Heirloom flatware in varying patterns perfectly complements the antique candelabra and candlesticks to create a collected and nostalgic aesthetic, feeling simultaneously elegant and homey.

Above all, preparation is key to creating a smooth and worry-

free gathering. "I typically start a week or so beforehand so I can fine tune everything," Hensley says. "I hate to be running around at the last minute when guests arrive. I take into consideration the time of day, the type of event, and most importantly, the guests. Fresh flowers, good food, and music are musts." ♦



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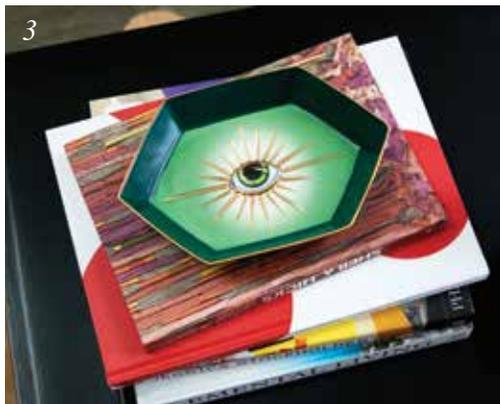
Photography by Tad Davis

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# GIVE AND TAKE

Let's be honest. For any design lover, the holiday season is about a little give *and* a little take. It's hard to shop beautiful objects without buying a piece or two for yourself. From trays and pillows to candlesticks and throws, here are several decorative pieces that will elevate a space and make others' (or your) spirits bright!

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox | Photography by Dustin Peck | Location courtesy of A. Hoke Ltd



1. **Ardmore Lovebird Leopard Silk Pillow** and **Ardmore Feather Velvet Pillow**, \$252-\$396, Available through La Maison.  
2. **Petrified Wood Coasters** by Kim Seybert, \$47 for set of four, Available through B.D. Jeffries. 3. **Lito Lide Poche** by L'OBJET, \$225, Available through Quintessentials. 4. **Sheila Hicks: Lifelines**, \$49.95; **Yayoi Kusama: Festival of Life**, \$70; **Jessica Stockholder – Revised and Expanded Edition**, \$69.95; **Elemental Living**, \$49.95, Available through SOCO Gallery. 5. **Vintage Pink and Black Glass Candlesticks**, \$225 for the pair, Available through Cotswold Marketplace. 6. **Stones Lazuli Candle** by Baobab Collection, \$125, Available through B.D. Jeffries.



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1. **Black Pearls Candle** by Baobab Collection, \$145, Available through B.D. Jeffries. 2. **Trionfo Italiano Decorative Hand** by Gio Ponti for Richard Ginori, \$795, Available through Quintessentials. 3. **Carved Bone Frame** by A. Sonoma Inc. and **Stone Frame** by BIDKhome, \$22-\$24, Available through Isabella. 4. **Dora Maar Bowl** by Jonathan Adler, \$395, Available through Neiman Marcus. 5. **Leo Throw** by Matouk, \$889, Available through Quintessentials. 6. **Chimney Swallows** and **The Rose Swedish Pillows** by John Derian for Designers Guild, \$146 each, Available through The Very Thing Ltd. 7. **Slate Dots Tray** by Notre Monde, \$225, Available through B.D. Jeffries. 8. **Glass Hurricanes with Brass Base**, \$49 each, Available through Alexander Scott.



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# SPICE *THINGS UP*

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox;  
Written by Shelby Sayer

Any host or hostess will tell you that entertaining should have its own Olympic category. From planning and designing to executing and hosting, it's a full-on production. Whether it's new or an oldie-but-a-goodie, here are some unexpected pieces that will amp up your tablescene. It's never too late to spice things up, especially during the holiday season!

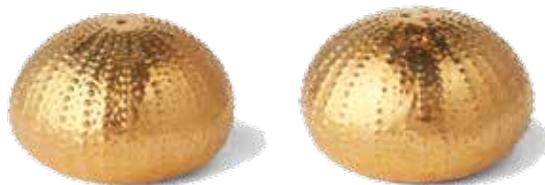


## RAISING *THE BAR*

You'll really up the ante with the Addison Weeks x Eddie Ross barware collection. Best known for his book *Modern Mix*, Ross is a major player in the field of styling and has expanded his know-how with his collaboration with North Carolina's own Addison Weeks. Together, they've curated a unique collection of barware inspired by Ross' love for antique and vintage finds from across the country. Combining their powers, each piece embodies classical designs with modern day touches. Available through Addison Weeks, [www.addisonweeks.com](http://www.addisonweeks.com)

## *JUST* DESSERTS

An enchanting floral pattern painted delicately across Limoges porcelain, the Raynaud Trésor Fleuri collection is equally elegant as it is whimsical. Each piece, including dessert plates shown here, features a seamless pattern that emulates a woven basket for added dimension beneath hand-painted magnolias, water apple, asarum, and rhododendron and is perfect for any occasion. Available through Quintessentials, \$205 each, [www.shopquintessentials.com](http://www.shopquintessentials.com)



## SHAKE *IT UP*

Coastal designs are not prescribed only for coastal settings, especially when they are as elegant as the Sea Urchin Salt and Pepper Shakers by AERIN. The handcrafted ceramic set is given a lavish update with its brass detailing that exudes a casual yet opulent vibe. Available through Quintessentials, \$125, [www.shopquintessentials.com](http://www.shopquintessentials.com)



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## DISCOVERY PLACE

From vintage clothing and jewelry to a full lifestyle label, Italian brand La Double J has it all. Creative director J.J. Martin has used her journalistic eye to scope every nook of Milan to find inspiration from ready-to-wear to tabletop, including the Libellula dinner plate set. Made in collaboration with Italian porcelain greats, Ancap, the vintage dragonfly print was designed in 1905 and sourced from the historic pattern book *Le bon motif*, which was found in Lake Como's Mantero archive. Mix and match with other patterns to create an even more eye-catching table display. Available through La Double J, \$155 for set of two, [www.ladoublej.com](http://www.ladoublej.com)

## KISS & TELL

An intriguing conversation piece, the Kelly Wearstler Kiss wine stopper is the perfect gift for any wine enthusiast. Made in natural solid bronze and sculpted in Los Angeles, this piece is inspired by Wearstler's love for figural forms. Both practical, appealing, and a classic addition for a holiday table setting. Available through Kelly Wearstler, \$195, [www.kellywearstler.com](http://www.kellywearstler.com)



## ARTERIOR'S MOTIVE

Although simple in design, the Arteriors Amortentia decanter from the Windsor Smith collection is anything but ordinary. Featuring dusty rose colored glass, a brushed nickel brim, and chestnut leather stopper, this glass form is wildly intriguing and will add interest to your already well-stocked bar. Pair with the Felix and Elixir to create the ultimate trifecta. Available through A.Hoke Ltd., to the trade, [www.ahokeltd.com](http://www.ahokeltd.com)

## CHILL OUT

Inspired by the materials she would play with as a child in her parents' studio, Kifu Agousti employs whimsical elements of contrast for her KIFU PARIS collection. Crafted by skilled artisans, the ice bucket is constructed using shagreen, mother-of-pearl, and inlaid brass that will patina over time, which is a part of the inherent beauty of this unique piece. Available through Neiman Marcus, \$525, [www.neimanmarcus.com](http://www.neimanmarcus.com)



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Interior design by Jeffrey Bilhuber; photography by Trel Brock

2

# AVANT-GARDE *AUBERGINE*

A dark and delicious  
serving of eggplant

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox  
Written by Christina Spratt Spencer

The mysterious allure of this composed and dignified hue lies in the sultry way it muddles the luxurious red and coy blue with rich licorice notes to create something reserved yet completely complex. With the ability to serve as both a savvy neutral and a bedazzling jewel tone, aubergine, like a fine wine, matures and ages a palette, granting a sense of depth and importance. Always beautiful conveyed in rich textures like plush velvet, mohair, or buttery leather, this regal shade of purple transcends tastes from neoclassical to lavishly layered bohemian and everything in between. Pair with onyx, chartreuse, cobalt, scarlet, moss, or duck egg to bring out its certain *je ne sais quoi*.



1



4



3

- 1. Oliver Street Wilson Sconce / \$805 / [www.oliverstreetdesigns.com](http://www.oliverstreetdesigns.com)
- 2. Hokanson for Scott Group Studio Luzon Rug / to the trade / [www.scottgroupstudio.com](http://www.scottgroupstudio.com)
- 3. Kelly Hoppen Kelly Occasional Chair in Deep Purple / \$1,205 / [www.rousehome.com](http://www.rousehome.com)
- 4. Castel Mara Fabric in Aubergine / to the trade / [www.castelmaison.com](http://www.castelmaison.com)



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# MARTHA *Schneider*

“Where style meets home” is more than a tagline for interior designer Martha Schneider. The owner and principal of Raleigh-based La Maison has always loved the interplay of fashion and interiors. Much like an oil painting, Schneider’s transitional aesthetic reveals itself with its many detailed layers. Here she shares what inspires her design along with a few of her favorite things.

“The client’s personality and lifestyle are my main focus. While I work with fabulous furnishings like embroidered fabrics and cut velvets, it’s important to tailor the project to the client’s everyday functionality,” Schneider says. “Art can be a perfect place to begin. A one-of-a-kind painting from a European artist like Peter Keil can be mixed with old furnishings and current fabrics to create a look that is timeless,” she continues. “The finishing touches of beautiful trim, glamorous lighting, and a special accessory like a textured box or tray tell the story of a home with great style,” she says. “And in most cases, you’ll find the signature stamp of a leopard fabric somewhere in my design.”



1



2



5



4



3

1. AERIN Liscia Chandelier / [www.aerin.com](http://www.aerin.com)
2. Original Art by Peter Keil / [www.lamaisonraleigh.com](http://www.lamaisonraleigh.com)
3. Skin and Bones Studio Ostrich Boxes / [www.lamaisonraleigh.com](http://www.lamaisonraleigh.com)
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# HOME DESIGN



Interior design by Laura Covington; photography by Michael Blevins.

Best of Both Worlds  
Page 34

Feels Like Home  
Page 46

Blue Ridge Beauty  
Page 60



Natural light pours past the textured silk window treatments onto the Lee Industries swivel chairs and Hickory Chair sofas, creating a warm, livable space.

# BEST OF BOTH WORLDS



Written by Lee Rhodes | Photography by Michael Blevins

The home offers a stunning street view, courtesy of bricks painted in Benjamin Moore China White and the cream-color limestone framing the mahogany front doors.





INTERIOR DESIGNER  
LAURA COVINGTON CREATES  
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NEW HOME IN WILMINGTON.

**T**ransitional design occurs when traditional and contemporary designs meet in the middle – but it's anything but indecisive. Instead, it's a fresh take on a classic style. It's antique pieces juxtaposed with clean-lined modern furnishings and timeless architectural elements put up against forward-thinking flair. It's grand but not intimidating, elegant but welcoming.

It's the home of Jenny Purvis and her husband, Will. When the Purvises moved from Raleigh to Wilmington, they opted for new construction. They engaged Parker Group as the builder and Laura Covington of LC Interiors to handle the interior design. Covington was involved from conception to installation, providing input on everything from tile and trim to finishes and the overall palette.

“For the color scheme, we wanted it to feel soft and layered,” she explains. “We used a lot of blues and celadons, and we mixed in different textures such as textured silk curtains and a sisal diamond-patterned rug to give it a layered feel.”

The Purvises had a list of must-haves that were part of the project. Namely, they wanted a traditional floor plan complete with a dining room to the left and sitting room to the right of the foyer, but they also wanted it to flow well for entertaining. Purvis says both she and her husband grew up in homes with high ceilings, so that was a key feature as were decorative architectural details. And she wanted her favorite color, blue, to take center stage.

While the home's exterior doesn't feature blue, it presents an enviable facade. The cream-colored bricks exude a patina of delicate china, nicely offset by the soft taupe of the shutters, which give the home a tonal feel. “Laura definitely nailed it with exterior paint,” Purvis says. “We wanted the house to look like it had been here for a hundred years and to blend in with the rest of the neighborhood. The two big magnolias in the front yard also help.”





Custom front doors open to a classical foyer with signature black-and-white marble floors. “There’s so much symmetry in this space; it commands attention as soon as you walk in,” Laura Purvis says, referring to the pairs of beautiful Gustavian consoles, timeless Mark D. Sikes for Henredon mirrors, and unique Visual Comfort lamps.

The great room is at once luxurious yet comfortable with a beautiful coffered ceiling soaring above a pair of swivel chairs and deep sofas, both perfect for conversation or lazy-day television-watching, with a custom grasscloth coffee table.

Flowing effortlessly from the living room is the light and airy kitchen, where there are layered tones of white, cream, and gray, offset by touches of blue in the custom lanterns and bar stools. Upholstered in soft blue faux leather, the bar stools can easily be wiped down, which is a must since the Purvises have three young children.

Jenny Purvis, who loves to cook, selected family-friendly countertops, as well. “We wanted a natural stone but didn’t want marble, where we might have to worry about spilling

red wine or spaghetti sauce. So we chose quartzite, which is still a natural stone.”

And, as Covington points out, “You’ll see throughout the kitchen and the overall house, that we weren’t scared to mix metals.” The touches of gold on the bar stools mesh with the silver hardware and the custom hood. “It gives it a layered feel without being too matchy-matchy,” she adds.

*Opposite:* The bar area is swathed in the soothing shade of Benjamin Moore Van Courtland Blue, which is juxtaposed by the warmth of the herringbone floor.

*Left:* Natural light fills the black-and-white marble foyer while an exquisite Sputnik chandelier shines down from above.

*Right:* A Pair of Gustavian consoles, Mark D. Sikes for Henredon mirrors, garden stools, and Visual Comfort lamps welcome the Purvises’ guests in the entryway.





Above: In the master bedroom, Kravet Couture embroidered linen window treatments work perfectly with the luminous Benjamin Moore White Dove walls.



Above: The tranquil blue linen covering the window seat, along with the bead detail that defines the cabinetry's inset panels, creates softness in the master bath.



*Above:* The stunning Schumacher Chinois Palais wall covering creates a garden-like atmosphere in the powder room. *Opposite:* The custom-colored Coleen & Company lanterns tie all of the kitchen hues together. The Hickory Chair bar stools reflect a modern French design and pair nicely with the custom cabinetry and quartzite countertops.



“FOR THE COLOR SCHEME,  
WE WANTED IT TO FEEL  
SOFT AND LAYERED,”

— LAURA COVINGTON

The bar space has its own layered combination, featuring silver accents, including a hammered metal sink, lots of glass, and the Old-World blue of the cabinetry and the trim on the barreled ceiling. The marble backsplash is a punchy, modern pattern that plays off the blue. “We wanted to make a statement in this space,” Covington says.

One of the more significant challenges of the home was the powder room, which is a small space tucked under a staircase. To make the room feel larger, Covington chose Mary McDonald’s Chinois Palais for Schumacher wallpaper to give the room an airy, garden-like feel. The ceiling slants above the marble vanity, so Covington created a barrel vault above it to open the space even greater.

The master bedroom has an amazing view and a similar

garden-like feel with light pouring through the windows that highlight the beautiful linens, including a custom headboard covered in cream fabric, bolsters in blue-gray embroidered velvet, and a blue linen bedskirt. Even the bedside tables are wrapped in linen, adding texture and visual interest. “It’s so peaceful and soothing with the light colors and the draperies,” Purvis says. “I could sit in there all day.” Finally, the master bathroom sparkles under the silver leaf chandelier and Visual Comfort sconces. More quartzite countertops, Carrera marble flooring, and mosaic-inspired border in Carrera mini-brick complete the look.

The Purvises are pleased with the way the entire team brought their new home to life by creating what Covington deems “a fresh take on the traditional style.”◆



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"When a home has many beautiful architectural details, it does not require a lot of pattern and color," Vicky Serany says. The chestnut brown leather sofas are by Century.



# FEELS LIKE HOME

DESIGNER VICKY SERANY  
OF SOUTHERN STUDIO  
CREATES A FOREVER  
HOME FOR ONE  
APEX COUPLE.

Written by Laura Palka | Photography by Dustin Peck



*Above:* Soaring fifteen-foot windows and a tray ceiling create drama while dining. Motorized blinds allow flexibility for controlling light and privacy, while LED rope lighting in the baseboards adds ambiance.  
*Opposite:* Say “cheers” to a memorable evening by giving guests a cork keepsake box as a unique party favor.



**P**lanning, building, and designing any home – let alone a custom dream home – is not for the faint of heart. Add to that a space that measures more than 8,000 square feet, and it takes a village of professionals with a collaborative vision to make it a reality.

For Buck and Jennifer Hunt, the process began more than a decade ago in 2007, when they bought land in Apex, North Carolina, with the intention to build their dream home someday. The peaceful setting was inspired by Buck Hunt's childhood growing up in rural Virginia, adventuring through the woods; and the home's design was inspired by the family's frequent trips to the Rocky Mountains.

“We wanted a lot of natural elements like stone and wood, but we didn’t want the feel of a ski lodge, post and beam, or a log cabin,” Buck Hunt says. “We wanted clean and simple lines, particularly for the interior but not a pure contemporary, modern design that was too sleek.”

Initially, the couple, who has a ten-year-old son, decided a 6,000-square-foot home would be perfect, but the footprint quickly grew to allow the great room and guest suites to be more spacious. Working with architect Christopher Phelps and builder Rufty Homes, planning began in 2015 and broke ground in 2016. For the interiors, the Hunts enlisted the help of Vicky Serany, founder and principal of Southern Studio Interior Design in Cary, North Carolina. “Her work matched our tastes, so we met with Vicky and her team, and the connection was immediate,”

Jennifer Hunt says. “We told her we wanted our home to feel warm and cozy but very social and fun at the same time.”

The result is a grand, yet welcoming “forever” home with classic architectural details and a collected feel. “They had a very clear vision for their home,” Serany says. “We spent many hours reviewing inspiration photos. They wanted a timeless home they could share with family and friends and play spaces for their young son to share with cousins and friends.”

Serany used a neutral palette and warm textures throughout while carefully layering natural materials that make a statement and provide visual interest. The soothing aesthetic envelops guests like a cashmere sweater; it is both luxurious and comfortable. In the great room, the colors are drawn from the stone surrounding the fireplace and on the floating mantle. A rich,



Above: Top-performing, high-end appliances make cooking a breeze, including a Wolf range with custom vent-a-hood and a Sub-Zero refrigerator.

chestnut brown leather sofa and natural wood cocktail table anchor the space, and embroidered linen window treatments add softness.

The kitchen features rustic cherry cabinets, an oversized window, an island with generous seating, and a true working pantry tucked behind a pocket door designed to function as a scullery when entertaining.

One of the most interesting spaces (and the favorite of both the Hunts and Serany) is the oval-shaped dining room, which was a challenging design. Guests seated at the custom oval dining table are able to see the adjoining wine and whiskey room through a glass window with a pocket that accommodates a collection of corks.

“The dining room is a funny story,” Buck Hunt explains. “I had a vision for the room where everyone seated would have a view of something interesting. I caught some flack for being so stuck on the dining room. Nobody uses them, so if we were going to have one, I was determined it would be unique,” he says. The family also loves that the room, which extends from the house, is surrounded by dramatic fifteen-foot floor-to-ceiling windows creating the effect of a “reverse snow globe” — a magical treat when winter’s white blanket makes an appearance in the Carolinas.

The equally impressive wine and whiskey room feature stone walls, wood beam shelving for a display of spirits (Buck Hunt is a whiskey collector), and two Sub-Zero wine towers. “Many hours were spent considering every last detail of this space, and the extra effort definitely paid off,” Serany says.



Above: Custom cabinetry and a second refrigerator help keep the pantry organized for daily family living or dinner parties. An extra sink and dishwasher keep dirty dishes out of sight.

Who can resist pulling up a chair for cocktails or watching the game around this impressive bar. A pass-thru window opens to the outdoor screened porch. The Hunts purchased the petrified wood slab that hangs from the wall during a visit to The Greenbrier in West Virginia.

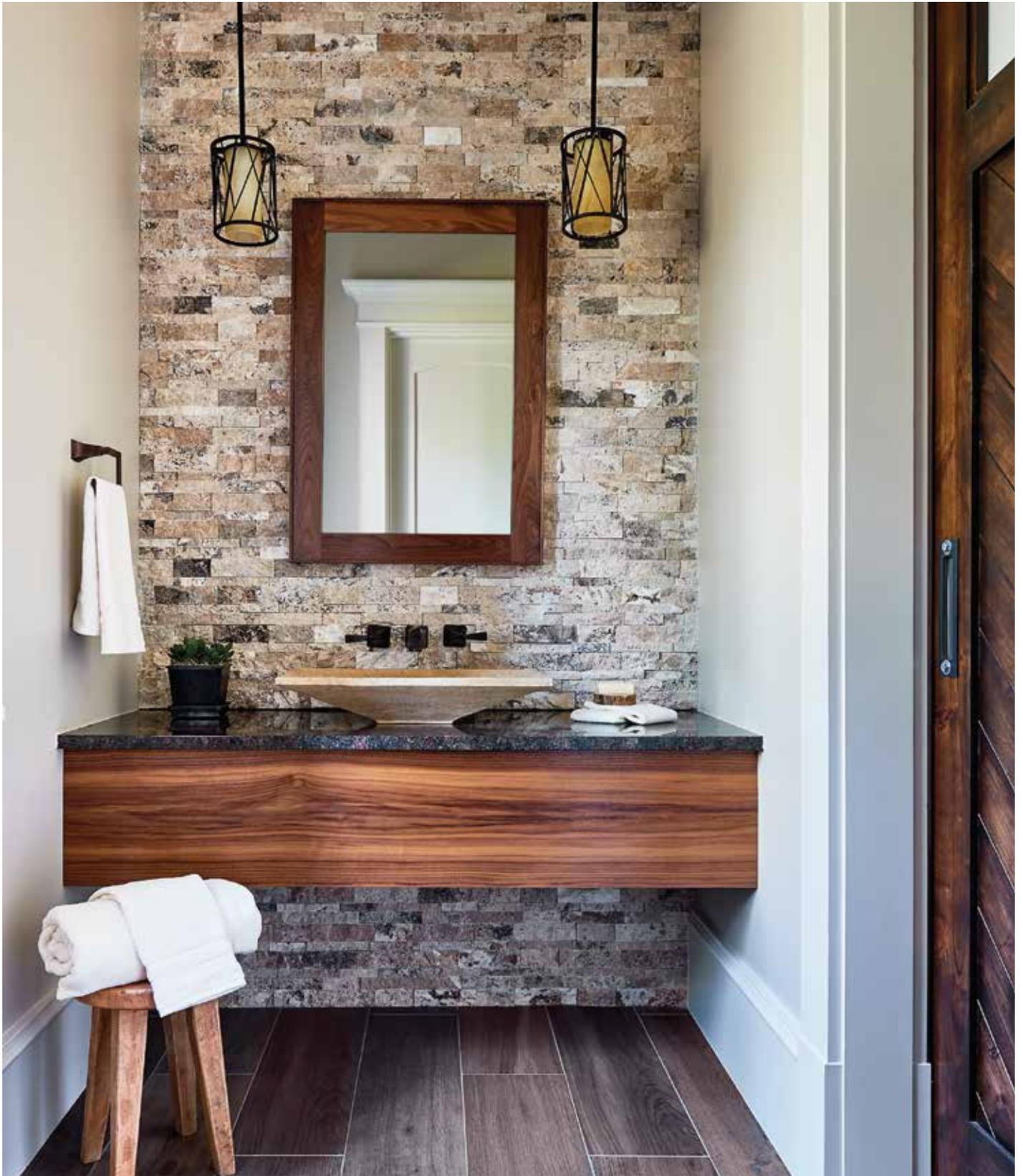






Above: A stained ceiling and large beams add drama to the master suite. The custom bed is crafted with metal, leather, and wood. A chair for reading and luxurious linens complete the design.

Opposite: A custom designed floating vanity, stone vessel sink, and ledger stone wall create a cozy lower level powder room.



The Hunts moved in just over a year ago and got a chance to put the house to the test this past summer with a wine pairing dinner. They say the entertaining spaces functioned beautifully, especially the flow between the kitchen, great room, and bar. “Our guests were able to spread out and have multiple conversations separately but all in the same space, just as we had envisioned,”

Buck Hunt says. And if the party wants to move outside, guests can gather on the large screened-in-porch with a stone fireplace, television, and grill, while the kids can retreat to a playroom featuring a fun loft area.

Serany says there is nothing more rewarding than seeing a home interior she and her team created be shared with family



Above: The wine and whiskey room draws guests in with its enticing collections. Wine towers are by Sub-Zero.

and friends for great gatherings. “The timeline of this project required several years. In our world of instant gratification, we are constantly reminded that quality craftsmanship takes

time,” Serany says. “This home is proof that it’s worth the extra effort and patience.” ♦

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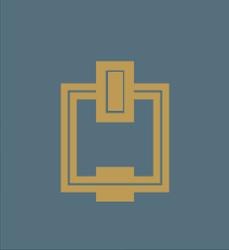


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The swirling Fantasy Brown Marble fireplace surround from Keystone Marble & Granite pops against the white shiplap. The reclaimed wood mantle and hand-scraped pine ceiling beams are stained in warm gray pairing perfectly with the solid, textured fabrics in a natural linen tone on the matching CR Laine sofas and swivel gliders.



# BLUE RIDGE BEAUTY

A MODERN FARMHOUSE INSPIRES  
TRANQUILITY IN THE MOUNTAINS  
OF MADISON COUNTY.

Written by Brandy Woods Snow | Photography by Lissa Gotwals



*Above:* The farmhouse dining table from Four Hands and the elegant lines of the Restoration Hardware side chairs in Perennials textured linen weave set the stage for relaxed entertaining. The simple, chic lines of the Hinkley pendant fixture and the art, sourced from Dwellings of Asheville, keep the space airy and light to let the rustic wood beams do the talking.

*Opposite:* The wet bar features a straight stacked mosaic by Anne Sacks in a soft gray-green hue, white quartzite countertops, and oak inset cabinets with a floating shelf. A trio of staggered glass pendant lights adds to the relaxed glamour.



**A**mong the rolling Blue Ridge Mountains, nestled in the picturesque wilds of Madison County, a beautiful modern farmhouse stands as a tranquil retreat for a Charlotte-based couple.

When Chelsea Benay, Durham-based interior designer of Chelsea Benay, LLC, was approached with the task of turning the new construction home into an airy getaway that felt both rooted in the area's history, as well as convenient and accommodating for the homeowners and their extended family, she visited the site for inspiration. When she saw the stunning homesite and newly constructed barn by Sineath Construction with its hunter green gooseneck lights, the starting points for the design began to fall in place.

The kitchen is fresh and light. A white crackle-glass subway tile backsplash by Walker Zanger from Crossville Studios is a perfect partner to a high-contrast gray-painted island. The gunmetal counter stools from Restoration Hardware invite friends and family to hang out and chat while they cook.







Above: A dark gray sectional from CR Laine accented with dramatic art and fun farm animal throw pillows provides the perfect space to enjoy movie nights, games, and crafting.

“I initially connected with my clients over our shared love of modern farmhouse style and was able to grasp their vision for the project quickly.” Space planning and a cohesive vision that was both functional and beautiful were critical to getting a plan in place,

and Benay credits the communicative client-designer relationship, despite the long distance, in keeping everything on track.

From there, Benay visited her clients at their primary residence to photograph, measure, and consider any existing



antiques or art that might be incorporated into the project. They selected an antique pew bench and antique stained-glass windows for the foyer, as well as antique end tables for the living room. “My clients spent a few years in England, so some of these

pieces were from their time abroad while others were passed down,” Benay says. “I considered how to blend the antique pieces with the transitional-contemporary furniture selections, fusing the two styles with interior finishes.”



Benay's vision included a modern farmhouse aesthetic with relaxed elegance. Because the clients built the home as a vacation getaway for their family to gather—one to be passed down to their children and grandchildren—they wanted it to look like a renovated farmhouse original to the property. This look was achieved with large hand-scraped pine beams, shiplap accents, and quality millwork. A focus on low-maintenance finishes was incorporated early on, as the primary purpose of this home was to be a retreat where the family could relax and be at peace in nature. The Blue Ridge Mountains, winding rivers, and dense forests provided the perfect backdrop, where the homeowners could get their hands dirty, pursuing their love of caring for the property while also enjoying a home perfectly suited to the relaxed mountain lifestyle.

"I was careful to make sure the farmhouse leaned toward rustic elegance rather than heavy rustic, as my clients expressed a desire to depart from the darker finishes and traditional antiques in their main residence," Benay says. "This was achieved with a palette of light neutrals, curved and clean lines in the furniture selections, and also by adding a few pops of modern style with the lamps and accessories. It was important we create a relaxed and airy atmosphere that would stand the test of time."

Benay committed to creating an easy-to-maintain and stress-free lifestyle and paid extra attention to details to ensure ease of use and maintenance. The tiles are almost all porcelain, and the countertops in heavy use areas are quartz, which requires no sealing or resealing. All bedding is washable, and the dining chair fabric is a Perennials performance fabric that provides superior stain resistance and easy cleaning.

"We wanted people to walk in the door and feel at ease, not worried they might spill something or damage fussy furnishings," Benay adds.

A soothing palette of whites and grays, soft, cool colors, warm gray-brown finishes, and rustic wood tones help create the relaxed elegance Benay envisioned.



*Top:* The master bathroom features cabinetry by Keystone Kitchen & Bath and a Caesarstone quartz countertop from Mountain Marble. *Bottom:* The picture of tranquility, the master bedroom's soft-hued linens on the Lancaster Custom bed and textured glass lamps offer a serene, organic palette that is accented by wooden nightstands with an antique look, a Moroccan wool rug for cozy luxury, and woven wood shades. Custom throw pillows in an abstract pattern by Threads for Lee Jofa ties the colors together and completes the look. *Opposite:* The family workroom is a multi-functional space, serving as a pantry, workroom, and mud room. Tall cabinets and open shelving in a painted white finish, as well as a custom work table on castors by Keystone Kitchen & Bath, give the homeowners plenty of storage and functionality.



Contrast and texture were critical components to balancing the light-neutral color palette. Varying light and medium interior finishes combined with darker bronze and metal accents to add depth to the spaces while natural finishes like wood, jute, and linen add texture and warmth.

Each room is unique while also featuring the key elements like wood and painted finishes, cabinetry style, metal finishes, and tile colors. “I strived to ensure every room in the home has a curated feel. When you walk into the space, you know every design element and selection was carefully chosen in keeping with the aesthetic—tasteful, serene, and charming,” Benay says.

In the living room, Benjamin Moore White Dove paint combined with hand-scraped pine ceiling beams in gray stain and a reclaimed wood fireplace give the space a cozy, rustic ambiance. Solid, textured fabrics, custom throw pillows in patchwork geometric fabric, and a hammered metal floor lamp add interest and refinement. In the kitchen and adjacent breakfast room, matching gunmetal counter stools and bistro chairs invite family and guests to pull up a chair and chat amid sprawling outdoor views. The family workroom is a multi-functional space, serving as a pantry, workroom, and mud room with tall cabinets and open shelving that is

connected to the kitchen with a Dutch door.

“I love to cook, and the expansive kitchen with the large Jenn-Air stove is the perfect place to cook a meal for my family,” homeowner Judy Adams says. “The original plan didn’t call for a door, but Chelsea’s idea to install a Dutch half-door was brilliant. It gives the space an extra openness and allows me to be in the kitchen and still watch my eighteen-month-old grandbaby toddle around in safety.”

The bedrooms boast a refined aesthetic that highlights the tranquility of the home and surroundings, and the master suite, which includes a private sunroom, provides unmatched views of the winding mountain stream at the property’s rear. Organic green tones in the focal art piece are mirrored in softer hues on the custom bed and textured glass lamps. In the master bath, Moroccan-inspired tile inset in classic white porcelain stone adds a pop of intrigue against a nature-inspired color scheme.

Adams is thrilled with the finished design. “After moving thirteen times in thirty-eight years, I wanted a beautiful home that could become an integral fixture in the family—one to be passed down for generations. We couldn’t have achieved all of it without Chelsea’s guidance and expertise.”◆

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Interior design by Laura Covington; photography by Michael Blevins.

[The Glass House](#)

Page 74

[Contributors](#)

Page 78

[Arts and Culture Spotlight](#)

Page 88



# THE GLASS HOUSE

By Dana W. Todd



**M**oving away from the expected in residential design, Carolina Glass & Mirror partnered with Jon Rufty of Rufty Homes to design and install an unusual application of glass panels in this modern marvel located in Cary. Glass throughout most of the rooms in this newly constructed home provides an au courant look in a fresh way.

From the front entry, a thirty-five-foot tall curtain wall system creates a spectacular glass introduction to the home and is anchored by a unique 1,800-pound matte black steel door. Overlooked by glass panels in lieu of railings on the stairs, the entrance is a study in sleek simplicity.

Throughout the home, eleven-foot tall windows and glass doors create sliding wall systems to open the entertaining areas of the home onto the outside patio, pool, and golf course beyond. Outside, Carolina Glass & Mirror also installed glass balustrades around the upper patio areas. The fixed glass walls take the place of the usual iron fence surrounding pools and patios and are perfect for creating uninterrupted views.

In its most innovative application, Carolina Glass & Mirror installed painted glass in the kitchen and powder room.

“Behind the bar shelves in the kitchen, we used our GlassKote™ application to design a unique glass backsplash. The process adds depth of color and shine to the wall and provides an easy way for the homeowner to keep the area clean,” Mike Wilkins of Carolina Glass & Mirror says.

The powder room features GlassKote™ glass surfaces on all the walls from floor-to-ceiling for a glamorous, sparkling touch.

At the home office entry, a traditional, rustic sliding barn door

gets a makeover in modern glass, a technique that works well for closet doors, too, according to Wilkins. Another crown jewel in the house is the glass entry to the wine cellar underneath the stairwell. With its glass walls and doorway, the cellar is both practical and a design statement.

“What’s interesting throughout the home is that most walls open to the outside and are not simply fixed windows,” Wilkins adds.

“The use of glass creates a seamless relationship between the inside and outside spaces, making them feel more interconnected,” Lisa Fitchett of Carolina Glass & Mirror says. ♦

If you are interested in modernizing your home, contact Carolina Glass & Mirror to see what its Innovative Glass Division can do for you. See a portfolio of ideas at [www.carolinaglass.com](http://www.carolinaglass.com) or call 919-662-9050. Carolina Glass & Mirror is located at 3501 Integrity Drive in Garner.



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## BEHIND THE FINISH

An extraordinary quality finish does not come inexpensively, and it's not simply a matter of more talented tradesmen being paid more to execute the job. There are often layers of conscientious details that create the luxurious look and feel seen in quality custom homes. Many homeowners are surprised by the price that skilled tradesmen charge. However, when compared to more production-based subcontractors, the proposals from a custom builder's subs may *seem* overpriced, but it's often not an apples-to-apples comparison.

Take a professional painter, for example. To achieve a beautifully smooth and durable wall and trim finish, drywall and trim preparation is paramount. Assuming a quality drywall installation, a painter whose quality meets the demands of a

Featured Advertiser Editorial

luxury custom home will obsessively follow a multi-step process of sanding, masking, caulking, filling, priming, sanding, caulking, and filling again before opening the can of finish coat. This painstaking process is laborious and time-consuming, but it is necessary for custom home quality. For casing, crown molding, baseboards, and other interior trim finishing, a similar multi-layer process is followed to achieve a "furniture grade" finish that eliminates imperfections in the wood and joints between trim pieces. A more stringent, detailed process is typically followed when custom cabinetry is finished on site, hence the potentially high cost of custom built and finished cabinetry. Overall, this requires additional time and material from the painters, but it also requires a building team with trained eyes for detail to ensure the fine finishes are being executed to standard.



Adding to the complexity, a quality paint job can't fix a botched drywall install, and even the best drywall and trim installers in the market can't easily cover up a warped framed wall or an out-of-level subfloor. Meticulous labor, supervision, and quality materials are required throughout framing to ensure wall, ceiling, and floor finishes can be installed with precision. Framing materials, which can range from two-by-fours to pricey options like laminated veneer lumber, engineered joists/studs, masonry, and steel beams, are specified during design/engineering. This means that it's too late in the game to stiffen floors and walls during the paint and floor selection process. Those uneven gaps and joints may not be the finisher's fault, after all.

Behind gorgeous finishes are layers of thoughtful design, high-touch labor, and stringent quality control that unquestionably result in higher prices. But there are no shortcuts to craftsmanship. Bost Custom Homes has been integrating these layers of quality detail into our standard process for three decades. We believe a home is a livable work of art, and we are passionate about designing and building forever homes for our clients – homes that will remain beautiful for generations to come. We realize we're not everyone's builder, but for those seeking a luxury custom home of top quality craftsmanship, livability, durability, and efficiency, we are prepared to welcome you to our team. ♦



Evan Bost is director of marketing and Green Initiatives at Bost Custom Homes, an award-winning custom building firm serving the Triangle. With thirty years of proven expertise, Bost Custom Homes designs and constructs custom residences with superior craftsmanship, a focus on health and sustainability, architectural authenticity, and structural integrity. To begin the conversation of your forever home, call 919-460-1983 or email [info@bosthomes.com](mailto:info@bosthomes.com). Learn more at [www.bosthomes.com](http://www.bosthomes.com) or [www.facebook.com/bostcustomhomes](https://www.facebook.com/bostcustomhomes).



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SET IN STONE



SUNNY SURANA



## THE EDUCATED CONSUMER

Since quartz, quartzite, and granite countertops continue to be top contenders in renovation projects and new construction, a roundup of my best tips may be helpful in the search for the best fit for your lifestyle and budget. After all, purchasing a natural stone countertop can be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, so you want to see as many options as possible. Part of CRS Marble & Granite’s philosophy is customer education, so we feel it’s important to have customers review other suppliers’ stones in addition to our selection to be fully educated.

If you are looking for a wow factor, a one-of-a-kind look, consider an exotic stone. Well worth the additional cost, an exotic stone provides a unique look that makes a statement. Our longstanding relationships with quarries around the world put us first in line for a call when new, unique stones are found. This provides us with an opportunity to offer exotic granite and

quartzite exclusively to our customers in Raleigh, Charleston, Virginia Beach, Austin, Nashville, and Houston. Consider the velvety red and charcoal black of Jacaranda quartzite or the unique blue of Azurite granite.

If high quality on a manageable budget is your particular need, both quartz and granite can serve as solutions. A natural stone combined with a small percentage of engineered resins, quartz is the choice for those who want a consistent look throughout their slab since there is more manufacturing control over color and pattern.

Although granite is priced similar to quartz and is one hundred percent natural, customers need to choose their slab based on sight, not by name. As a product of Mother Nature, granite’s patterns and colors may change from slab to slab, so view it in a warehouse environment with abundant natural lighting and full slabs to ascertain the correct effect. Be aware of added pigmentation in some granite, especially black, which will fade over





time. If the price seems low, ask about color enhancing treatments, which are undesirable and will wear unevenly over time. Opt instead for granite untreated with color processing and well-polished to enhance its natural beauty. Ask your supplier if they conduct onsite visits to the quarries and fabrication plants to confirm the stones undergo a professional polishing job to enhance them as much as possible.

For the most pleasing long-term results, research suppliers and ask questions like: Does this company purchase sustainably-quarried products? Does it use dyes or inferior pigments? Is the pattern uniform? Does the light reflect evenly off the slabs showing an even polishing job? To which quarries is this supplier connected? Does the showroom have experienced designers

on staff to help make selections?

Part of the process of selling stone includes the education process. Your chosen supplier should take the time to answer all of these questions and direct you to what you really need.◆

Sunny Surana is president of CRS Marble & Granite with six locations in the U.S., including Raleigh and two locations overseas. He has been sourcing high-quality stones from remote international quarries for more than twenty years in this family-business-turned-international success model. See full slabs of a wide range of quartz, quartzite, granite, and marble in the 60,000-square-foot Raleigh showroom at 7521 Exhibit Court or call 919-784-9282. Preview stone samples at [www.crsgranite.com](http://www.crsgranite.com).



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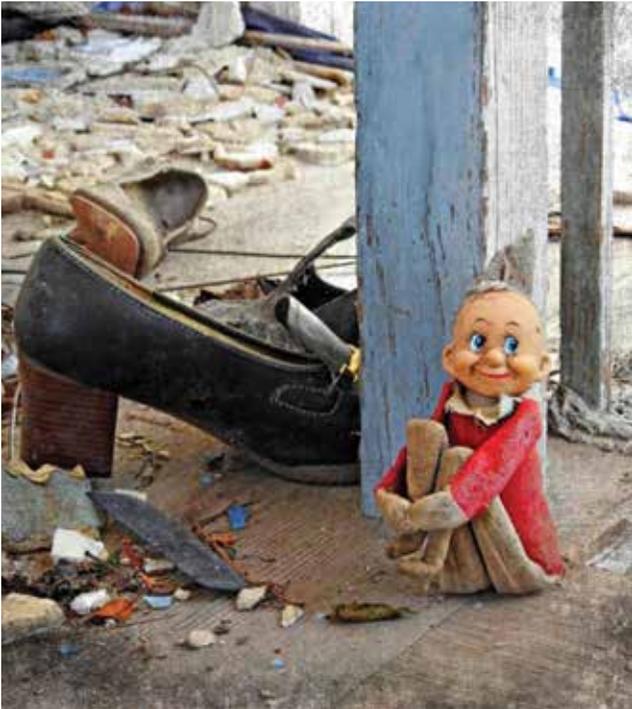
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**Vernon Pratt:  
All the Possibilities of Sixteen**

**Gregg Museum of Art & Design**

Through February 10

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**The Weir  
Burning Coal Theatre Company**

Through December 16

[www.burningcoal.org](http://www.burningcoal.org)

**Candida Höfer in  
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**North Carolina Museum of Art**

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Ambiente Modern Furniture .....	91	General Shale .....	77
Amish Oak & Cherry .....	86	Home & Garden Landscapes.....	94
Apex Cabinets.....	57	Hopper Piano.....	5
ArtSource Fine Art & Framing.....	84	Kitchen & Bath Galleries .....	76
Baker Residential.....	25	Marva Marble .....	2
Bardi Design .....	14	Midtown Custom Homes .....	9
Bella Vista.....	72	Nest Interiors .....	3
Bev's Fine Art .....	29	Pigfish Lane Antiques & Interiors.....	31
Blue Heron Signature Homes .....	13	R. Jacobs Fine Plumbing and Hardware.....	7
Bost Custom Homes .....	78-79	ROCKin'teriors .....	44
Cambrian Co.....	80	Rufty Homes.....	32
Carolina Glass & Mirror .....	45, 74-75	Southern Studio.....	95
Classic Stone Creations .....	93	Southern Hills Estates.....	4
Closet Factory.....	85	Splash Galleries.....	71
Closets by Design .....	70	Steven Shell Living .....	27
Colorful Concepts Interior Design.....	19	The Persian Carpet .....	12
CRS Marble & Granite .....	82-83	The Wade.....	59
Dexter Furniture .....	58	The Warehouse.....	89
Distinctive Kitchen & Appliance World.....	Back Cover	Triangle Tile & Stone .....	58
Ferguson Kitchen & Bath Showroom.....	87	USA Flooring .....	84
Fiber Seal.....	92	Woody's Furniture.....	92

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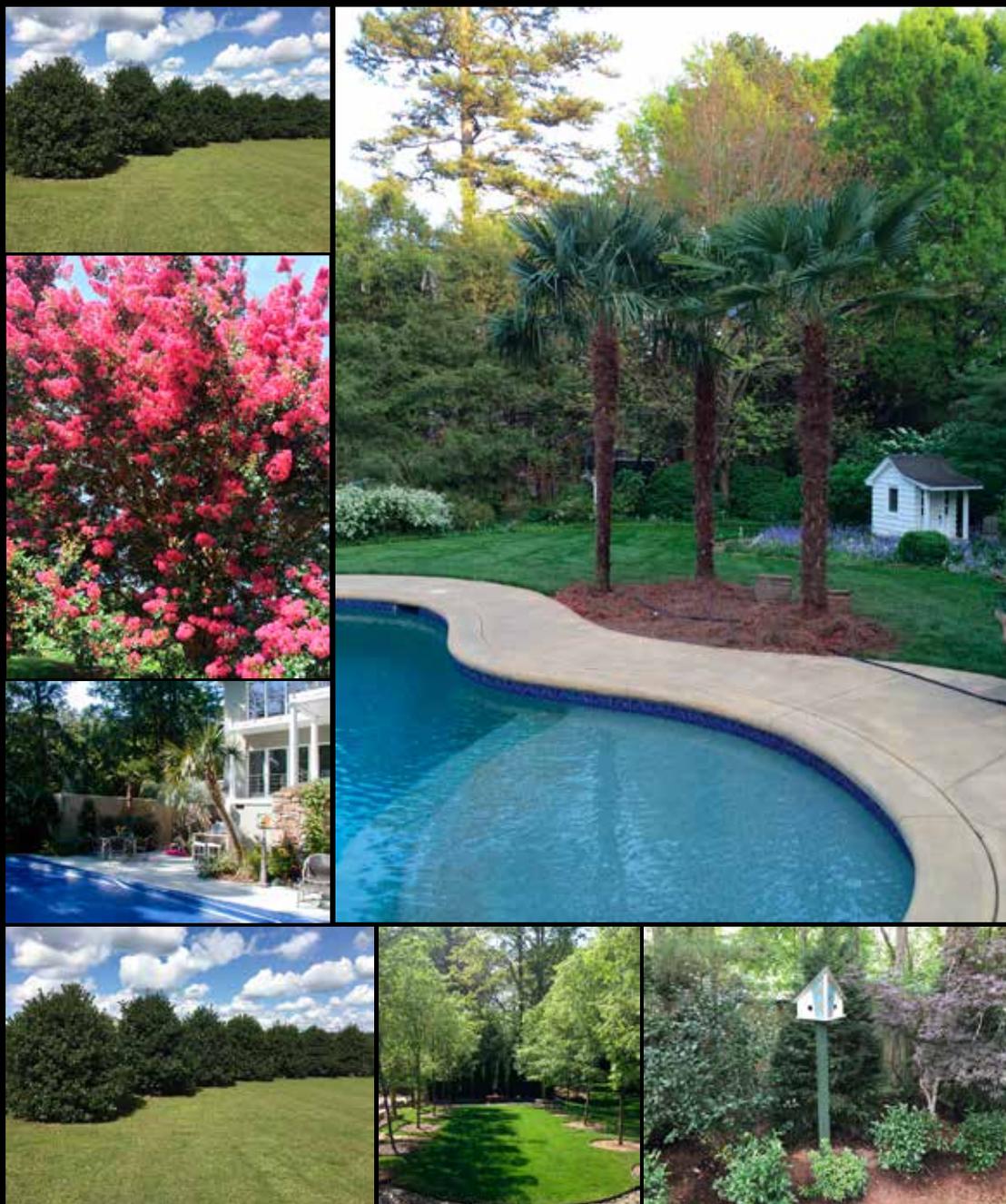
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