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features

62 BOTTOMS UP  
Finding a home with an unfinished basement, the Gall family worked with designer Heather Garrett to make it into a fun and functional adults-only retreat.

74 FAMILY TIES  
MA Allen of MA Allen Interiors shares her design talents with her in-laws, creating a home that fits perfectly with their lifestyle.

86 TIMELESS APPEAL  
Cary-based interior designer Vicky Serany unites with home builder Mary Ludemann to create a stunning South Carolina showhouse.
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MARKET
Add shimmer and sparkle to your bath and beyond with these bold and innovative showstopping pieces.

TREND
What are this year’s hottest kitchen trends? We asked three local designers to weigh in on their favorites.

STYLE
A Raleigh couple recruits designer Anne Wagoner to renovate their problematic kitchen, transforming it into a showcase for their antique ironstone collection.

PALETTE
The perfect palette cleanse to layers of pattern and color, there is an ideal shade of off-white for everyone.

DESIGN BOARD
Raleigh designer Niki McNeill’s greatest inspiration emerges through stillness. Take an insider’s look into other forces that drive her work.

MOUNTAIN MOOD
Asheville, the go-to getaway with its cool mountain air, is now a thriving Appalachian-inspired culinary scene.

RUSTIC AND REFINED
The two idyllic mountain towns of Cashiers and Highlands have become a popular retreat from summer’s heat. Find out what makes this mountain setting so enchanting.

BEAUTY IN BLOWING ROCK
No longer a sleepy mountain town, Blowing Rock is emerging as a mecca for arts and culture. Check out where to go, what to do, and places to dine.

PRISTINE PRIMLAND
If you’re looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of daily life, this Blue Ridge Mountains retreat is the ultimate escape.

SPARE NO DETAIL
A collaboration with Kitchen & Bath Galleries makes one kitchen a point of connection.

NEST BEST THING
Home furnishings store Nest Interiors opens a new boutique in Cameron Village.

FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL
Locally owned R. Jacobs offers a vast collection of contemporary plumbing and hardware.

THE MILLWORK EXPERIENCE
Lee Stephenson tells us when to move away from retailers and opt for a custom creation.

SET IN STONE:
Sunny Surana
Move Over Carrara

BUILDING A BETTER HOME:
Evan Bost
Deep Dive

FROM THE EDITOR

ARTS AND CULTURE SPOTLIGHT

ADVERTISER INDEX
I’ll never forget the bewildered look on my builder’s face when I showed such excitement for the one-piece elongated toilet I selected for my powder room. We had just moved back to North Carolina from New York and had begun what would be a nine-month renovation to our first home. At the time, I didn’t realize what my style was, but when I came across that sleek, modern toilet to go in the powder room, I was elated. Its modernity spoke to me.

In our annual Kitchen & Bath Issue, we highlight the home’s two most utilized areas. And the dichotomy between the two spaces is interesting. They both receive the most wear and tear, so durability and function are paramount. The kitchen—often referred to as the heart of the home—is the most populated space. It’s where family and friends congregate. In contrast, the bathroom, especially the master bath, is a place for privacy and respite. For many, it’s their sanctuary. I swear my freestanding tub has restorative powers.

Throughout our pages, we highlight stunning new bath products that go beyond the call of duty. From surface materials like tile and marble to vessel sinks and faucets, discover how these modern marvels can elevate your private quarters (page 16). Trends come and go. Some are more like fads with fleeting lifespans while others have greater staying power. Here, three local designers share some of their recent work that showcases their favorite trends taking place in the kitchen (page 22).

Featured in this issue are three homes that exemplify refinement. Based on looks alone, you would have no idea that an expansive 3,500-square-foot space was once a basement. With the help of Heather Garrett, who designed using high-end fixtures, textiles, case goods, and more, this once mundane room is now the ultimate adults-only retreat (page 62). Connections make the difference, especially when it comes to large-scale renovations. For one couple, they gained not only a daughter but also a very talented interior designer when their son married MA Allen. See how Allen shares her design talents with her in-laws to create a custom home that fits perfectly with their lifestyle (page 74). When interior designer Vicky Serany and builder Mary Ludemann teamed up to create a South Carolina showhouse, their vision for Southern living and entertaining came to fruition (page 86).

Moving beyond the city limits, we explore the Appalachians and the beautiful retreats located along their mountainous range. From enticing culinary spots to thriving art scenes, the Appalachians offer more than just a captivating landscape (page 39).

Whether you’re gearing up for a weekend getaway or planning to stay put, give yourself a little R&R. We all deserve it from time to time!

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On the Cover: Designer Heather Garrett transforms an unfinished basement into an adults-only retreat with a French-salon vibe, making it fun and functional, swanky and comfortable (page 62).

---

Ashley Hotham Cox
Editor in Chief
@ashleyhcox on Instagram
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CRYSTAL CLEAR
The ultimate in luxury for your bathroom or powder room, these crystal handles from Dornbracht reflect light left and right. The sleek design is powerful yet delicate with a bold sophistication that commands attention but requires none.

rjacobsfph.com

POWER GRID
The ideal from Kallista to Live Artfully has been brought to life with the new GRID collection of faucets and handles. The geometric design pays homage to the clean, minimalist forms birthed in the De Stijl movement, marking the shift from excessive decoration to precise works of art. 3D Systems technology is used to create the faucet through 3D printing, and the result is a master class in the study of negative space. The handles are cast, hand-buffed, and powder-coated, creating a lightly textured look. Form and function are artfully paired for a one-of-a-kind look that adds a dose of luxe to any landscape. fergusonsshowrooms.com

MODERN MARVELS
Innovation and design collide to bring the boldest and brightest to the bath and beyond.

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox
Written by Anne Marie Ashley

COVER STORY
These mix-and-match faucet handles from Graff are made of real Italian marble from the Tuscany region and offered in three variations. Choose any of seventeen brass finishes to complement the marble for a completely custom and beautiful combination. The handles are part of the new MOD+ collection intended to weave iconic colors, materials, and functionality together to create ultimate versatility and aesthetic. The brass base is thoughtfully designed, and a brass clip is added for both original design and maximum movement.

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LET IT SINK IN
Whether choosing an undermount or self-rimming version, Rocky Mountain Hardware’s latest offering in stunning vessels, including the Alice, shown here, wows with high shine and incredible architecture. Plus, the grid-design drain adds the perfect pop of interest and modernity. Everything is expertly crafted in America from the finest art-grade bronze and has a hand-applied patina that grows richer over time.

wilkinsonsupply.com

THE BRONZE AGE
Kallista’s breathtaking series of expertly crafted solid cast-bronze decorative vessels not only immediately captivate, but also linger with a deepened patina over time, bringing back the beauty of the bronze age. The new Myam vessel’s interior is offered in polished bronze, white bronze, or satin bronze, all of which can be combined with a matte eggshell exterior finish in white or black for a stunning contrast. The use of cast bronze as an interior finish only enhances the form’s handcrafted appeal with subtle surface character and slight irregularities. Kallista chose bronze for this vessel not only for its strength and durability but also for its capability to precisely translate material when cast. Whether going for a statement in high-traffic rooms or a centerpiece in more intimate spaces, the Myam vessel is always ready for center stage.

fergusonshowrooms.com

ALL ABOUT THE BASSINES
Made in France with exceptional finishes and the finest design, the Leto collection from Bassines highlights the materials by simplifying the shape. The aesthetically pleasing conical shape can be installed in one of three positions, including above surface, semi-recessed, or fully recessed, creating a vision of simplistic beauty in any form. The vessel is available in stainless steel, copper, black, and brass, in brushed or polished finish. It’s permanently resistant to scratches and retains its bright appearance thanks to a Phase Vapor Deposit coating—a vacuum treatment in a high-temperature heated furnace where metal vapor is deposited into a thin film on the stainless steel, bonding closely with it and protecting it for life.

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Photo courtesy Exact Tile, interior designer Jennifer Justice, photographer Alex Sattler
HIP TO BE SQUARE

Hand-drawn curves and undefined shapes are the hallmarks of the Mochi Collection by Commune. The freestyle nature of the tiles defies conventional tile design by allowing the customer to be the designer, creating something fluid, one-of-a-kind, and personal. The results exude a contemporary and ethereal quality that brings about unlimited options. The magic happens with the tiles repeat in an out-of-the-ordinary fashion, creating unexpected relationships. Available in two colorways, pink and indigo, the resulting wow-factor can be seen even before installation. xsurfaces.com

TIP THE SCALES

San Francisco artist Erica Tanov has teamed with online tile pioneer Clé to create a stunning new concept in accent tiles. The Shimmer Collection features American-made brass tiles that can be installed in a fish-scale pattern to create a truly unique accent or statement wall in any hallway, bathroom, or kitchen. Inspired by the brass paillettes from a favorite pouch of Tanov’s, she teamed up with architect Douglas Burnham of Envelope A+D to bring the concept to life. With two different size sequins to choose from, customers can experiment in an artful way, bringing a new facet to tile design. cletile.com

A THIN LINE

Dekton Slim, the new large-format tile from Dekton by Cosentino, is a master class in clean lines and minimalist design. Perfect for nearly any space from kitchens to bathrooms to accent walls, the ultra-thin 4 mm surface is fire-, stain-, scratch-, and humidity-resistant and has minimal joints with easy installation. Unlimited custom options and the ability to cut it to size create an endless design portfolio to fit your needs and aesthetic perfectly. Available in eight colors, options range from a marble look to solid white with natural stones in between. cosentino.com

Artistic Tile Euclid by Alison Rose triangletile.com

New Ravenna Bismark Grand Bright Young Things Collection newravenna.com
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WHAT’S COOKING

The kitchen is the heart of the home. Here, local designers weigh in on this year’s hottest kitchen trends that make their hearts skip a beat.

Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox

KATE HUTCHISON
KATE.H.DESIGN

“LOOK DOWN! I LOVE THAT STORAGE SOLUTIONS CONTINUE TO GET SMARTER AND LOWER! BASE CABINETS ARE A GREAT WAY TO MAXIMIZE THE AMOUNT OF STORAGE YOUR KITCHEN CAN PROVIDE, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOUR WALL SPACE IS LIMITED BY WINDOWS OR AN OPEN FLOOR PLAN. RECENTLY, WE’VE SEEN A HUGE SHIFT IN FOCUS WHEN IT COMES TO ORGANIZATION. PEOPLE ARE NO LONGER HIDING THEIR ‘STUFF’ BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, BUT INSTEAD LOOKING FOR BETTER AND MORE PRACTICAL WAYS TO ORGANIZE, WHICH ISN’T ALWAYS AT EYE-LEVEL. MY ADVICE: USE DRAWERS WHENEVER YOU CAN.”
DEBRA ZINN  
DEBRA ZINN INTERIORS

“I LOVE ELIMINATING THE UPPER CABINETS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO OPEN UP THE SPACE. IT ALSO GIVES YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHOWCASE A BEAUTIFUL TILE OR BACKSPLASH RUNNING ALL THE WAY UP TO THE CEILING.”

LIZ GOLDBERG  
CAROLYNLEONA

“We are all about statement lighting in the kitchen! While functional lighting is a must, go for fixtures that also speak to you. Think of this as the jewelry in your room.”
“NATURAL WOOD DETAILS IN KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS HAVE BEEN HANGING OUT ON THE SIDELINES FOR A WHILE, AS PEOPLE WERE OBSESSED WITH WHITE-ON-WHITE . . . ON WHITE. NOW WE’RE STARTING TO REALIZE (ALBEIT, SLOWLY) THAT ONE WAY TO WARM UP A SPACE IS BY USING WOOD TONES. THIS DESIGN TIP IS ESPECIALLY GOOD FOR THOSE WHO AREN’T INTO COLOR AND PREFER TO STAY NEUTRAL.”

RIMA NASSER
TEW DESIGN STUDIO
After thirteen years of living in their Raleigh home with a problematic kitchen, Linda Orser and Skip, her husband of fifty-three years, decided they had to either move or renovate. They opted for the latter and enlisted the talents of Anne Wagoner Interiors to transform their outdated kitchen into a showcase where they could display their extensive antique ironstone collection. “After realizing that our design requirements were different from basic kitchen design, our builder, Sam Barrow, recommended Anne after working with her on other projects,” Orser explains. “And she’s absolutely a delight to work with.”

“I was the missing link,” says Wagoner, principal designer of her namesake Raleigh-based design firm. “The client had a specific design direction that she wanted to accomplish, and the builder is so fabulous at executing things, but he didn’t quite know how to get there. I came in with conceptual ideas and bridged that gap.”

Wagoner embarked on translating Orser’s vision, which was largely based on Swedish decor, into a reality. “I adjusted some of the finishes and the details to highlight the level of sophistication that Linda had in mind,” Wagoner explains. “For example,
“Buying a piano does not have to mean waiting for a pianist to play it at home. It’s a major leap, a milestone — with superb craftsmanship.”

~ LANG LANG
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Anne Wagoner painted everything in Farrow & Ball Slipper Satin. A stained, distressed wood library ladder provides access to the top cabinets and offers visual contrast to the neutral tones.

Based on the client’s tear sheets, Wagoner had her decorative painter do a faux-antique pine finish on the back of the hutch, making a new piece of furniture resemble Old World style and providing the perfect backdrop for the ironstone collection.

Unpolished brass fixtures, including a faucet by Waterstone, juxtapose the monochromatic palette.

Wagoner restained the island and replaced the hardware and countertop to match the rest of the kitchen. She designed a half-moon corner detail on the quartz countertop by Cosmos Granite & Marble to help with clearance issues.

“I ADJUSTED SOME OF THE FINISHES AND THE DETAILS TO HIGHLIGHT THE LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION THAT LINDA HAD IN MIND.”

– ANNE WAGONER

Top Left: Anne Wagoner painted everything in Farrow & Ball Slipper Satin. A stained, distressed wood library ladder provides access to the top cabinets and offers visual contrast to the neutral tones.

Bottom Left: Based on the client’s tear sheets, Wagoner had her decorative painter do a faux-antique pine finish on the back of the hutch, making a new piece of furniture resemble Old World style and providing the perfect backdrop for the ironstone collection.

Above: Unpolished brass fixtures, including a faucet by Waterstone, juxtapose the monochromatic palette.

Previous: Wagoner restained the island and replaced the hardware and countertop to match the rest of the kitchen. She designed a half-moon corner detail on the quartz countertop by Cosmos Granite & Marble to help with clearance issues.
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they had planned on glass-front cabinetry with backlit lighting. Instead, I chose to do European-inspired wire mesh over those areas so that it had another level of finish, up a notch from what a builder would have known to do.”

In a nontraditional twist, Wagoner keeps the palette monochromatic, using a light neutral taupe color on the walls, cabinets, and trim to minimize contrast and make the kitchen appear larger. Wagoner also cut half-moon shapes into corners of the quartz countertop of the island to be purposeful about the clearance issue. “I wanted to be strategic and give it a bespoke detail,” she notes. The distressed-wood rolling library ladder, brass hardware, and custom faux antique pine finish on the back of the hutch add visual contrast. “My decorative painter made the hutch look like an antique piece of pine furniture that Linda had loved in an inspiration photo,” Wagoner explains.

Savvy at turning design challenges into opportunities, Wagoner dealt with the awkward placement of the pantry by celebrating it. She admits, “I either had to make this really fabulous, or it was going to ruin the rest of the kitchen.” She created custom hand-carved doors, had them distressed and painted with a custom blue glaze, and finished with center-mounted brass hardware. Behind these exquisite blue doors, Orser stores much of her ironstone, which had previously been scattered throughout her home. The builder added detail to the millwork inside the pantry so that the doors can be left open, and a delighted Orser says that when she has guests over, she adds electric tealights to highlight her collection.

---

Left: To deal with the awkwardly situated pantry catty-corner to the kitchen seating area, Wagoner created custom doors painted with a custom blue glaze, then finished with center-mounted hardware from Classic Brass.

Right: Just beyond the pantry, a butler’s pantry features a custom blue glaze, Classic Brass hardware, and a Cosmos Granite & Marble countertop in linen.
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THE WADE
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Produced by Ashley Hotham Cox
Written by Christina Spratt Spencer

An endlessly versatile and barely-there hue, off-white provides the perfect palette cleanse to swirls and layers of pattern and color. Subtle nuances whisper a wide range in undertone from completely neutral, pure, and clear to a scale of the faintest notes of ballet blush, cool greige, or creamy ivory—and everything in between. Honest and forthcoming, it showcases the truest depth and dimensions of its pairings, offering gallery-like presentation. Sophisticated with more traditional elements like well-worn antiques and warm wood tones, sleek and savvy with pared-down transitional tastes or minimalistic modern accents, or calming with a streamlined hush to layered eclecticism, there is a shade of off-white for every aesthetic taste and palette.

1. Interior Design by Lisa Sherry of Lisa Sherry Interieurs
2. Blueprint Lighting Ludo Wall Sconce / $795 / blueprintlighting.com
3. Annie Selke Lust Linen Ivory Puff Sham / $80 - $90 / annieselke.com
4. Oasis Chevron Pure / $65 per square foot / renaissancetileandbath.com
5. Palecek Antilles Porcelain Bowl and Vases / $439 - $648 / palecek.com
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For Raleigh native Niki McNeill, founder and principal designer of SingleBubblePop, some of her greatest inspiration emerges through stillness, which she applies to every design project. Evolving from a pre-med student to a television production assistant, McNeill navigated a unique path to where she is today. Here, she shares other driving forces behind her work.

“I was fortunate enough to study abroad in Florence, Italy, for a semester, and the allure of Tuscany never left me! Combining that with my Southern roots has been a huge inspiration for me. Both Italian and Southern cultures revolve around family and hospitality, which is the focus of a lot of my projects. Mixing heirloom pieces with multi-generational comfort is what I love to do!”

“When a client asked me to design her Dutch Colonial farmhouse, we were sure to layer in tons of color and traditional silhouettes. My client was inspired by nature and animals, so we included this pheasant-centered toile wallpaper in a vibrant blue.”

1. Currey & Company Zara Medium Lantern / $980 / furniturelandsouth.com
2. Pink Italian Florentine Tray / $199 / chairish.com
3. York Wallcovering Exotic Plumes in AF1947 / to the trade / yorkwall.com
4. Howard Elliott Marquette Mirror / $975 / colorfulconceptsinteriordesign.com
5. Vintage Hand-painted Screen / $1,500 / chairish.com
6. Kravet Lyford Chair by Jan Showers / to the trade / ahokelimited.com
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Cotton Candy, Christina Doelling

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PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF PRIMLAND

Mountain Mood
Page 40

Rustic and Refined
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Beauty in Blowing Rock
Page 50

Pristine Primland
Page 54
Asheville has long been known as the perfect weekend getaway for Carolinians looking to escape the heat and take in some cool(er) mountain air. But now, more than ever, this popular mountain town has so much more to offer, especially when it comes to its food scene. For Asheville, it’s about getting back to its roots, which means drawing inspiration, techniques, and ingredients from the Appalachians. From James Beard–nominated chefs to notable new restaurants with can’t-miss dishes steeped in deep Southern history, there’s an abundance of new offerings appearing every month in Asheville’s emerging modern Appalachian culinary scene.

Here’s a look at how the Appalachian-inspired culinary scene is unfolding in Asheville and why you need to take advantage of it now.
Cambrian Co.

Lazy Daze Arts and Crafts Festival, Cary - 8/24-25  |  CenterFest Arts Festival, Durham - 9/21-22
Asheville Fine Arts Show, Asheville - 10/26-27  |  Carolina Artisan Craft Market, Raleigh - 11/1-3
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**EAT**

**Chow Chow**
This fall, from September 12 to 15, Asheville will play host to the inaugural Chow Chow, a brand-new food festival bringing together chefs, farmers, and other producers who are the foundation of the region’s growing culinary identity. It will take place in downtown Asheville and has some big names behind it—including James Beard–award winners Meherwan Irani and Katie Button—and it will feature more than two dozen signature events.

**Cider Fest**
For the seventh year, on October 12, Cider Fest will take place along the French Broad River, not far from downtown. There will be nearly one hundred different varieties represented from two dozen makers of cider, mead, apple wine, and apple spirits, all paying homage to the long history of craft beverages in the Appalachian region.

**Button & Co. Bagels**
Because locally grown flour is flavorful but typically only used for biscuits, Button, a James Beard finalist and owner of Asheville’s famed Cúrate restaurant, got creative with her recipe and mixed the locally grown flour with flour from the North to give the bagel the right, doughy texture. Button also uses sorghum syrup, made from a Carolina-grown grass, to help sweeten the dough.

**The Greenhouse**
It’s a family affair at The Greenhouse, a new bar and modern-American restaurant that will highlight apples in a fun and flavorful way. The concept will feature craft cocktails made with locally produced cider, a charcoal oven that uses wood from surrounding orchards, and a menu highlighting local beef fed with apple mash left over from the cider-making process.

**Benne on Eagle**
When five-time James Beard–semifinalist chef John Fleer went to work on his newest venture, an Appalachian-inspired soul food restaurant, he wanted to incorporate the oft-overlooked culinary contributions of African Americans. So he went into The Block, the historic African-American neighborhood, where he built Benne on Eagle and recruited recipes and talent such as Hanan Shabazz to help craft the menu. Seventy-year-old Shabazz, who once owned her own soul food restaurant, whips up can’t-miss fish cakes, bread, and more for the restaurant.

---

**Benne on Eagle**
This is Southern comfort food with a twist! Come hungry and make sure to try the Potlikker Braised Chicken Wings, Braised Rabbit, Fried Catfish and Waffles, and Hot Water Cornbread.

**Button & Co. Bagels**
Don’t miss the egg and cheese with Benton’s Country Ham bagel sandwich. Or grab a plain bagel and make sure to smother it in chef Katie Button’s house-made pecan butter.
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**STAY**

The Foundry Hotel
This former twentieth-century steel foundry (it once made the steel that was used to build much of Asheville and the nearby Biltmore Estate) was restored in 2018, resulting in a charming, upscale boutique hotel. In keeping with its original early-1900s architecture, the restoration maintained details such as the original brick and hardwood floors, as well as the original pulley elevator, exposed beams, steel-star fastenings, and industrial-style windows. The guest rooms are an eclectic mix of new and old with exposed brick and framed pictures and artifacts from the Appalachian Mountains.

Nest Boutique and DIY Studio
Asheville’s famed Art Deco skyline got a new icon and four-star luxury property when Hotel Arras opened this summer in the heart of downtown. The 128-room hotel is filled with local artwork and an effortlessly luxurious and comfortable aesthetic for which the Kimpton brand is known. Named for a region in France famous for its woven fabrics, Hotel Arras captures the essence of the eclectic Asheville arts community, even offering guests private art tours throughout the hotel.

Hotel Arras
Asheville’s famed Art Deco skyline got a new icon and four-star luxury property when Hotel Arras opened this summer in the heart of downtown. The 128-room hotel is filled with local artwork and an effortlessly luxurious and comfortable aesthetic for which the Kimpton brand is known. Named for a region in France famous for its woven fabrics, Hotel Arras captures the essence of the eclectic Asheville arts community, even offering guests private art tours throughout the hotel.

Guests can choose from two on-site restaurants run by the local husband and wife duo who own Posana, also in downtown Asheville. Expect family-style Mediterranean cuisine at Bargello. Or grab a seat at the counter and watch as wood-fired gourmet pizzas are pulled from the scorching hot oven. District 42 takes a different approach to food with small bites complemented by hand-crafted cocktails that are a nod to old Asheville.

**DO**

See the Biltmore in a new way by exploring George Vanderbilt’s farming legacy on the estate’s Segway Tour. If that’s not your thing, you can also enjoy English tea service, check out America’s most-visited winery, or eat at one of the Biltmore’s many restaurants where they serve their own pasture-raised meats and produce.

**SHOP**

Bette
Two girlfriends opened this shop that carries something for “every Bette.” (The store got its moniker from the old-time name that refers to an attractive, stylish, and self-confident woman.) Bette has everything from basic jeans and fun tees to cocktail dresses. Make sure to snag Hazelwood Soap Company’s bestselling beach-scented soaps and candles created just for Bette.

Porter & Prince
Recently voted the Most Beautiful Independently Owned Store in North Carolina by Architectural Digest, this charming shop is filled with curated home furnishings, fine linens, and unique luxury gifts. Porter & Prince has been an Asheville staple for more than two decades. While you’re there, scoop up French Milled Shea Butter soaps, satin loungewear, and silk linens.

Nest Boutique and DIY Studio
This fun clothing and crafts store is full of affordable, trendy clothes, accessories, home decor, and gifts for all the fun girls in your life. They also offer regular DIY classes.
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RUSTIC AND REFINED

A getaway to the mountain resort towns of Cashiers and Highlands offers equal parts simple charm and elegant luxury.

Written by Sarah Crosland

With their bustling small-town streets and colorful tree-filled vistas, there’s no better time than early fall to plan a visit to Cashiers and Highlands. The two idyllic mountain towns, long a favorite for Southerners seeking a retreat from summer’s heat, have become popular in recent years for those in search of elevated cuisine, luxury spas, and upscale shopping—all in a picturesque and peaceful setting.

In Cashiers, you’ll find Lonesome Valley, a verdant meadow in the shadow of a granite rock face. Here the cozy Canyon Spa, tucked inside a historic cottage, features treatments made from farm-fresh ingredients in a garden just across the field. Next to the garden is Canyon Kitchen, an award-winning restaurant with a menu that changes daily and includes local offerings ranging from trout to quail.

Just twenty minutes up the curving mountain road is Highlands, where Old Edwards Inn is taking focus on the land to the next level with its new Glen Cove community. Opening this fall, the “agrihood” will have an organic farm, garden, and trout pond as its centerpiece.

While these additions may be more recent, they reflect the same focus that has lured visitors for decades—the chance to relax and unwind amid the simple pleasures of life in this enchanting mountain setting.
EAT

Canyon Kitchen
Arrive early for dinner at this acclaimed restaurant in Lonesome Valley. Order one of the cocktails made with herbs from its adjacent garden and take a stroll around the picturesque pasture before your meal. Chef Ken Naron, whose background includes stints at Michelin Star restaurants in California, creates fresh, seasonal dishes with both global and local flavors for the nightly price-fixed menu. (Canyon Kitchen is only open May through October, so plan accordingly.)

Madison’s
On warm nights, the windows open up to the Wine Garden in this farm-to-table restaurant housed inside Old Edwards Inn. The sound of the garden’s waterfall sets the scene for an authentic mountain meal with hearty dishes like braised short ribs, roasted pork tenderloin, and hand-crafted pasta with a local lamb sauce. For a more intimate dining experience, request seating in the wine cellar, a wine-walled room that feels more European than Appalachian.

Mountain Fresh Grocery & Wine Market
This specialty food shop and restaurant in Highlands includes a sandwich grill, coffee bar, wine bar, wood-fired pizza counter, and bakery—and a selection of wine to rival any grocer in the state. It’s the ideal destination for a post-hike bite or a casual dinner with gourmet flavors.

STAY
The original Old Edwards Inn and Spa with its red brick facade and flowering window boxes sits squarely in the center of downtown Highlands. But the Inn has continued to expand since its original early 2000s renovation, adding cottages, guestrooms, suites, and even vacation homes. Regardless of where you choose to stay on the property, you’re in for a decadent experience. Bubbly wine greets you at check-in, warm whirlpools offer the chance for a dip in any weather, and a famously well-stocked fridge full of Dove Bars provides the chance for a playful indulgence (or two).

This kind of thoughtful attention to detail can also be found in the Inn’s accommodations. One-of-a-kind antiques fill many of the rooms and cottages, while sumptuous Italian linens and local art add sophisticated accents. Luxury amenities like Molton Brown soaps and heated bathroom floors round out the luxurious spaces.
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Thin Brick Flat and Corner Pieces
BEAUTY IN BLOWING ROCK

Once considered a sleepy mountain town, today Blowing Rock is booming with a thriving arts scene, outstanding dining, and plenty of shopping.

Written by Blake Miller

One might think they’d arrived at the entrance to the sky as they summit the switchback turns leading to the small town of Blowing Rock. It is, after all, 3,500 feet high, perched atop the glorious Blue Ridge Mountains overlooking some of the state’s most magnificent valleys and mountain ranges. The views—from the overlooks to the secluded wooded back roads bursting with azalea blooms in the spring and a bold palette of oranges, reds, and yellows in the fall—have served as inspiration for artists for centuries. Acclaimed twentieth-century American artist Elliott Daingerfield set his roots in Blowing Rock and was easily the trailblazer for Appalachian artists to follow.

And follow they did. Today, Blowing Rock is less a sleepy mountain town and more an emerging arts and culture scene. The Artists in Residence at Edgewood Cottage—Daingerfield’s former home and Main Street’s first art studio—hosts High Country artists weekly from May through September. The rotating selection of artists features a variety of media and celebrates its tenth anniversary this summer. And there are more arts to be had. Created by a handful of area artists in 1962, the popular Art in the Park showcases the work of more than ninety artisans from May through October. Because of its high standards and professional jury, Art in the Park features some of the Southeast’s top artists, who display everything from handcrafted jewelry and pottery to photography and painting. If that weren’t enough to solidify Blowing Rock as a prominent fixture in the South’s art scene, the Plein Air Art Festival, where top artists set up their easels and paint “en plein air,” coupled with the new Sculpture Walk Weekend at Chetola Lake, should be.

There’s more to Blowing Rock, of course, than its art scene. Here’s a look at where to go, what to do, and places to dine while in town.
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STAY

Part of the beauty of Blowing Rock is its intimacy. Small, early twentieth-century homes have been restored and transformed into exclusive resorts and inviting bed and breakfasts. These charming places are not just places to lay your head, but rather destinations unto themselves. Such is the case with Westglow Resort & Spa. This Relais & Châteaux property is the former home of Daingerfield and was lovingly restored to its circa-1917 splendor during a massive renovation in 2005. Daingerfield camped out on the forty-three-acre property for two weeks before building the Greek Revival mansion to ensure that the home had the best views and morning and afternoon sunlight. White rocking chairs line the side porch of the home, which overlooks the Blue Ridge Mountains, while the front of the home, with its stunning manicured drive, features expansive views of the mountains and beyond; both settings are ideal for a morning coffee or pre-dinner glass of wine.

DO

Blowing Rock’s proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway and Pisgah National Forest makes it a favorite with nature- and adventure-lovers alike. A light hike on Cone Trails is great for the beginner, while the experienced hiker will want to head to Ship Rock, which is home to some of the area’s most epic rock climbing.

For something less active, a stroll down Main Street is a must. Wander in and out of antique shops and clothing boutiques before settling in at one of the restaurant bars to have a pint of a local North Carolina beer from places like Wicked Weed, Booneshine Brewing, and, a favorite, Blowing Rock Brewing Company.

With Blowing Rock’s arts scene blowing up, a gallery crawl through town is ideal. Start at Edgewood Cottage at the end of Main Street where you’ll find free weekly art shows featuring a variety of High Country artists. Be sure to wander down the side streets where other smaller art galleries are, as well.

Unwind after a long day of hiking with a spa treatment at Westglow Resort & Spa. Choose from an array of menu treatments such as an aromatherapy massage. The best part of the spa, though, is its view. Relax in a lounge chair in the common area, which features an astounding, near 180-degree view of the Blue Ridge Mountains—breathtaking during the fall color season.

EAT

High Country Boil at Rowland’s at Westglow Resort & Spa

This elevated take on a traditional Southern dish is easily one of Rowland’s best entrees on the menu. Featuring a tender grilled lobster tail and claw over a “high country boil” of soft, local red potatoes, shrimp, and clams with a buttery roasted squash cream and Old Bay aioli, this dish cannot be missed.

Habi Mac & Cheese at Bistro Roca

There are four signature mac & cheese options, but if you’re going to pick, opt for the Habi mac & cheese. This indulgent “side” dish is creamy and spicy due to the Habi (habanero) sauce drizzled atop crunchy pieces of bacon and onion and smooth cheese.

French Toast at New Public House

Sure, dinner is fantastic here, too. But New Public House’s breakfast is simply outstanding. The perfectly grilled French toast is served with a slightly sweet anglaise and fresh berries and is excellent when coupled with a side of crispy bacon.
Most people hear about Primland from other people who have experienced Primland. This Blue Ridge Mountain retreat is that special kind of place where, once you visit, you need to tell everyone about it simply so that you have an excuse to come back. The resort is the ultimate escape from the hustle and bustle of daily life—and only a quick three-hour drive from Raleigh.

Primland is celebrating the anniversary of The Lodge on August 29, ten years to the day that it opened. To celebrate, the resort staff is drawing inspiration from the original grand opening. As in 2009, guests can expect an abundance of local flowers and produce and specialty cocktails to complement the occasion.

The Lodge at Primland
STAY

The property has several lodging options, but the centerpiece is The Lodge. Keeping as much of the natural environment intact was a priority for the late Didier Primat, founder of Primland. Likewise, the stunning building is a testament to nature and conservation, with building materials locally sourced from barns and buildings and the roof constructed from recycled tires. The interior of the Great Hall of The Lodge is meant to evoke upscale comfort in a home away from home aesthetic. Guests will find twin stone fireplaces, familial details like board games, and aboriginal art curated by the owners.

Rooms in The Lodge take cues from the environment with live-edge and natural wood pieces, subtle earth tone accents, and natural stone in the bathrooms. The smallest option, the Mountain Room, ranges from 518 to 800 square feet. For the utmost in luxury, book the Pinnacle Suite. Located in The Lodge’s Observatory Tower, this 1,800-square-foot getaway includes a custom-designed spiral staircase to the bedroom loft and expansive views of the vistas beyond.

DO

Starwalk

An observatory in an old grain silo is an unusual addition to a resort—but it’s an interesting way to cap off a day in the wilderness. A guided tour of the night sky, the Starwalk takes place every night at Primland, showing celestial bodies near and far. There’s no artificial light on-site, so even with the naked eye, you can’t beat the view.

Golf

Designed with a mountain location in mind, the Highland Course at Primland is a delight. The Audubon-certified eighteen-hole course was designed by preeminent golf architect Donald Steel and is meant as a challenge for golfers of all levels. Golf Digest ranked the course as number twenty-eight on its list of top public courses in 2017–2018, and it was chosen by Golf magazine as the number two course in Virginia.

EAT

Primland houses three on-property eateries: 19th Pub, Elements, and Stables Saloon. Open for breakfast and dinner, Elements is Primland’s upscale dining option and pulls from local flavors for its seasonal menus. (There’s also a by-reservation chef’s table that’s worth it to all foodies.) Get a dose of the property’s history with moonshine at 19th Pub, a more relaxed option with a cocktail menu that heavily features the spirit. And for a casual experience with traditional Southern food, drop by Stables Saloon, located on the second floor of Primland’s old horse stables. While staying on-site, Primland’s pig candy (thick-cut bacon coated in maple syrup and cayenne pepper) is a must-try—you can even get an order to go for the ride home.

RTV Adventures

The best way to see the 12,000-acre property is to sign up for a Recreational Terrain Vehicle (RTV) off-road adventure. All off-road tours are guided and can accommodate up to four passengers, and guests have the option of a one- or two-hour tour. Expect to cross streams and rock beds and stop at overlooks around the property, where on a clear day, guests can easily spot downtown Winston-Salem.

Spa

The Spa at Primland takes cues from Native American influences and rituals of the lands the resort sits on, which were once home to eight tribes. The spa services pull from Native American figures and legends, as well as honored ingredients like blue corn, which is used in several of the spa’s body therapies and treatments. Guests will also notice more subtle touches, like traditional native music in the background. Services include massages, full-body treatments, yoga, and meditation.
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An original sculpture of metal discs hangs on the wall over an iron table by Uttermost.
BOTTOMS UP

HEATHER GARRETT DESIGNS A 3,500 SQUARE-FOOT RUMPUS ROOM FOR ADULTS. THE ONLY CATCH? IT’S A BASEMENT.
A chandelier made with strips of leather by South African–based Ngala Trading Co. anchors the salon. The easy, comfortable upholstery and seating is from Lee Industries, and a brass hammered side table by Julian Chichester adds a jolt of modern.

Opposite: Leather chairs from Lee Industries make for a cool and approachable seating area beside the bar. Brass tables from Made Goods and Julian Chichester are perfect for cocktails, coffee, or books.
The elusive basement. Many from the North or the Midwest who have migrated down to the South may be familiar with the stunning lack of basements in the region. It may seem strange, but functionally, it makes total sense. Basements were originally built below the frost line in the colder, dryer regions of the United States to make homes more foundationally sound—not to mention, they’re the ideal safe room for tornadoes. But let’s face it—both frost and tornadoes are hard to come by in this humid climate, so here in the South, basements are just another way to add some fun and functionality to your home. With the help of interior designer
Heather Garrett, this is exactly what Amanda Gall and her husband, Ken, did to their Croasdaile Farm home in Durham. “We needed to live close to Duke for my husband’s job,” Gall says. “We fell in love with Croasdaile Farm not only because of the proximity but also because of all the young families and major charm the neighborhood provided.” They purchased a home with an unfinished bare-bones basement and knew going into it that they wanted the space to be for adults. “My husband and I didn’t want it to be a typical rumpus room for kids,” Gall says. “Instead, we wanted it to be a retreat for adults. Something comfortable and lounger, but with a chic, sophisticated style that had a little glam to it—something you might find in a boutique New York City hotel.”

After realizing that Heather Garrett was the designer of most of her inspiration pins on Pinterest, Gall knew she had to work with her on their empty basement. “When I met with Amanda, her direction was something like, ‘I am trying to build the walkout basement of my dreams, but I don’t know exactly what that looks like,’” Garrett recalls. “But in talking, we discovered the Galls were looking for kind of an updated French salon feel—someplace swanky but comfortable where they could entertain their friends or escape to when they wanted to relax.” They also specified that Ken Gall needed a study that was hidden away where the kids couldn’t find him and interrupt work, and they both love massages, so a room where they could have in-home massages would be a plus, too.
With 3,500 square feet to work with, Garrett took on this project as if it were a whole home design. A full kitchen, bar, office, two guest rooms and three bathrooms, a media room, three fireplaces, and a living room were all included in the design. And it needed to be seamless with the other floors of the home. For a year, Garrett worked with the Galls to create the ultimate adult retreat.

“The challenge I had with this project was just to forget that it was a basement all together,” Garrett says. “Instead of wondering how to make it not look like a basement, I embraced it and tried to work with the naturally darker spaces and corners to make them moody, comfortable, and loungey.”

*Left:* The study is hidden away behind a secret door, the ultimate getaway for work or relaxation. With a masculine yet elegant feel, a kind of loungey experience is amplified with a brass and iron pendant from Arteriors. Ambient sconces, also from Arteriors, flank the Sony television, which can display a favorite painting when not in use. Custom curtains made with Kelly Wearstler fabric are a neutral pop of interest. The leather sling chair is from Lee Industries, and the silvered resin coffee table is from Oly.

*Right:* Cole & Son wallpaper adorns the walls of the powder room. The custom chainmail sink was a stroke of genius from Heather Garrett Design, mimicking the bar edge in the pass-through to the kitchen. A live edge walnut countertop creates a natural and rustic appeal, while sconces from Visual Comfort and a mirror from Uttermost bring the glam.
Garrett started with the salon inspiration by adding ceiling beams to the main living area. A show-stopping chandelier made of strips of leather by Ngala Trading Company in South Africa added the ultimate punch of glam. From there, she bridged the living room and kitchen with a bar, also covered in leather with brass accents, with a pass-through to the kitchen that is surrounded with an antique mirror. The counter has what Garrett calls a “live edge,” one she mimicked in the powder room, and sheets of chainmail to create a skirted look.

The kitchen wows with textured wallcoverings by Kelly Wearstler for Groundworks and a pendant from Arteriors. A companion chandelier hangs in the adjacent wine room, where a paned glass door allows you to view the treasures inside. “Since this was a basement, I kind of could do whatever I wanted, design-wise,” Garrett says. “I could go over-the-top, and the wine room was no exception.”

In the living room, hideaway doors can be retracted completely to open out onto the terrace, giving the appearance of zero walls, and a sitting area off the salon cultivates cocktails and quiet conversation. Garrett’s favorite room, the office, can only be accessed by a hidden door—the privacy the Galls requested in the design. “It’s kind of a dream of mine to be hidden away and forgotten,” Garrett laughs, “so the office is amazing to me. It’s masculine and stylish, and the Sony picture television is, like, the coolest invention.” When not in use, the homeowners can choose a custom frame and piece of artwork to display on the screen; it disappears to reveal your favorite channels once it’s turned on.

A massage room was added with custom seat-height tables that Garrett covered with velvet slipcovers. In the media room, the Galls’ only request was to have the “world’s most comfortable couch.” After all, “comfort is king,” Gall says. After trying many, Garrett couldn’t deny that the Cloud sofa from Restoration Hardware was the most fitting for both the room and the Galls’ request. “If there is one room where we always end up saying, ‘How lucky are we?’ it’s the theater/media room,” Gall says. “It’s perfect for hunkering down and being a homebody.”
Gall feels that hiring a designer is the key to getting the absolute most out of your dream space. “Give them some leeway, don’t try to micromanage the design process—it’s like taking away the painter’s brush before they’ve finished a masterpiece,” she says. “Giving a designer your trust and the freedom to create will give you magic in the end.”

“The most limiting element in any project is the functionality of the room,” Garrett explains. “I can fill a space with the most gorgeous pieces and design, but if it doesn’t function for the family using it, it doesn’t matter.” Garrett continues by saying that if her design suits the function of a room, be it inspiring, fun, soothing, togetherness—if it satisfies the specific function, then she’s done her job. This basement is living proof.
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS DREAM

Dream, dream, dream
When I want you in my arms
When I want you and all your charms
Whenever I want you, all I have to do is
Dream, dream, dream

When I feel blue in the night
And I need you to hold me tight
Whenever I want you, all I have to do is
Dream, dream, dream

-The Everly Brothers

Furnishings by Hickory White
Vintage Audubon bird prints passed down through the homeowner’s family find a home over the Hickory Chair sofa.
INTERIOR DESIGNER MA ALLEN KEEPS IT ALL IN THE FAMILY WHEN DESIGNING THE PERFECT HOME IN RALEIGH FOR HER IN-LAWS.
Cole & Son wallpaper in the dining room is at once familiar and sophisticated but also serves as one of the few newly designed pieces in the room. The rest is repurposed from the homeowner’s collection, from the table and chairs to the oyster plates on the petite sideboard sourced by MA Allen.

Opposite: A welcoming foyer guides visitors inside the home with custom glazed panel walls designed by MA Allen and painted by Can Decorative Painting. A painting passed down from the homeowner’s father greets guests, hung above a collection of the homeowner’s vases. The travertine tile floor is inlaid with white oak wood flooring—a design executed by MA Allen to ease the transition into the adjacent room.
When you’re passionate about what you do for a living, you want to share it with the world—including and especially your family. So when MA Allen of MA Allen Interiors had a chance to share her talents with her in-laws, Chris and Charlie Wagner, she happily engaged. Even better, from designing a completely custom home and pool to completing the interiors, Allen took part from start to finish.

“My mother-in-law, Chris, was looking for a lot that would accommodate a pool,” Allen explains. “Margaret Richards, the other designer on this project, suggested a lot on Churchill Road,
and we went to take a look.” It turned out to be an ideal location, and once purchased, they tore down the existing home and started from scratch. “This is a second marriage,” Wagner says, “and building a house was something we wanted to do together. We knew we wanted a pool, so we upsized. The extra space lends itself to play dates with grandchildren, plenty of room around the dining room table, and all the fun that a pool has to offer.”

Over the next eighteen months, the team worked closely to create a home and aesthetic that fit perfectly with the Wagners’ lifestyle. “Chris’ style is very traditional—my husband grew up in a saltbox house—and with that came many early American antiques,” Allen says. “I wanted to curate her collection and add new items to the mix, which is very much a part of my design philosophy. I find the tension between the two very exciting.” The result was a space that was rooted in family tradition but full of fresh and fun twists on classic style.

“Chris is an avid gardener and loves earth tones and flowers, so the design of the home reflected that passion in the colors and patterns,” Allen says. “You don’t have to look much further than what is right in front of you when looking for inspiration for a client’s home.” Allen goes on to say that the best advice she can give is to analyze every aspect of your life and then break it down. Determine the best place for everything you use and how to store it—from pet food to the pile of papers kids bring home from school, from a Vitamix blender to a collection of porcelain figurines. “Good design should reveal itself in ease of living.”

**Opposite:** A pair of sconces from Circa Lighting brings a flattering glow to the powder room. A chinoiserie wallpaper from GP & J Baker takes the sophistication up a notch, a perfect pairing with the custom vanity from MA Allen Interiors. The gold faucet is by Brizo, and the mirror is by Made Goods.

**Top:** The Morris & Co. woodland animal print fabric in this reading nook makes it a perfect getaway for the grandchildren or a relaxing spot to take in the views. Circa Lighting sconces add just the right amount of light when needed, and custom cushion fabric and pillows from MA Allen Interiors tie everything together.

**Bottom:** In the guest bedroom, MA Allen found a home for her client’s oyster plates above the bed. The headboard from Century Furniture is covered in Schumacher fabric and sits pretty next to the antique side table and chair—part of the homeowner’s collected pieces.
In the living room, Allen created a truly family-centric space. “For this home, we used Chris’ collections as our main inventory of accessories,” she says. “We created a portrait wall opposite the built-in bookshelves, which are filled with old books, black-and-white family portraits, and heirlooms.” A passed-down collection of French glass finials were interspersed throughout as well. A similar approach was used in the dining room with a collection of oyster plates that found new beauty displayed on the wall.

“My top influence in style is my mother. She had great taste,” Wagner says. “She appreciated the details: good looking trim, nicely proportioned lamp shades, well-hung pictures, and tasteful, edited accessories. Charlie, on the other hand, is more metropolitan—after all, he lived in New York for fourteen years and is an excellent photographer. His photography is an important part of what makes our new house our home.” The gallery was designed to be not just a pass through, but a space to display her husband’s photography from his travels. Allen
wanted this presentation of photography to be next level, so she proposed having his images printed on glass for a more reflective and dynamic medium. To further stylize the Wagners’ photography, Allen split an image of an elephant into a triptych panel.

“The best part of this whole project is the fact that I get to revisit it often—from casual family gatherings and holidays to just a Tuesday evening swim with the kids,” Allen says.

When it comes to choosing a favorite part of the design project, the pair has a hard time choosing just one room. “As far

Left and Right: The light and bright kitchen is clean in all white and made interesting by an antique runner for a change of pace. A built-in china cabinet is a special spot for treasured items. Lighting from Circa Lighting adds drama while Newport Brass fixtures bring another element of style.
“GOOD DESIGN SHOULD REVEAL ITSELF IN EASE OF LIVING.”

- MA ALLEN
as my favorite room, I love the upstairs window seat,” Allen says. “Chris challenged us to make that space more than just a window at the top of the stairs. Paneled fronts and sconce lighting, a roman shade, and soft goods really created a beautiful and inviting space. But I also love the kitchen, where my kids spend countless hours honing their baking skills. And, of course, the foyer will always be a favorite. It perfectly sets the tone for the rest of the house with intricate travertine, an oak floor pattern, and classic paneled walls with a strié glaze finish.”

“Well, I really love the living room. I feel the closeness of family and newness of our life today,” Wagner adds. “The colors in the fabrics are so pleasing, looking outside in the back as the seasons change. The kitchen is amazing, too. And I love the dining room. And the master bedroom. It’s very hard to decide!”

Opposite Top: The sitting area in the master bedroom is cozy and sophisticated with chairs and ottoman from Hickory Chair, custom Cowtan & Tout drapes, and Stanton rug.
Opposite Bottom: An antique Chinese screen that belonged to the homeowner’s mother is the centerpiece of this bedroom. The bed from Bernhardt Furniture is a beauty, and bright Circa Lighting lamps pack a punch of color.
Above: Tiles from Triangle Tile & Stone create a soothing retreat in the master bathroom. Newport Brass faucets from Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery make a statement, and custom countertop detail design by MA Allen brings a luxe feel to the ultimate master bath.
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TIMELESS APPEAL

TWO DESIGNING WOMEN TRANSFORM A SHOWHOUSE INTO A FORT MILL SHOWSTOPPER.

Top-of-the-line kitchen appliances keep the look sleek and tailored. The Dura Supreme Silverton cabinets in a lovely shade of latte are by Walker Woodworking. Antique brass fixtures are by Newport Brass with cabinet hardware by Restoration Hardware.
Working at home might be preferred in this handsome study. Custom-built cabinetry painted Outerspace by Sherwin-Williams creates a large focal point. The Homer desk is by Vanguard Furniture.

Opposite: Crisp white wainscoting adds a welcoming touch and is the perfect way to style the expansive walls of a two-story foyer. A plush, low-profile upholstered bench from Lee Industries wows in Botswana Onyx animal print fabric.
Who doesn’t love when a chance meeting leads to an amazing creative collaboration? In this case, it was a festive street party less than two years ago at the Southern Living Home Summit in New Orleans that brought together designer Vicky Serany, founder and principal of Southern Studio Interior Design, and Fort Mill, South Carolina-based custom home builder Mary Ludemann of New Old.

“We immediately connected and spent the evening discussing building and design as we followed a band marching through the French Quarter,” Serany recalls with a smile.

Fast forward to the fall of 2018, and the pair, along with Ludemann’s husband and business partner, Troy, were visiting the site and reviewing plans for what would become The Bramble, a Southern Living Inspired Community, and the 4,200-square-foot Burnham showhouse located in Fort Mill.

Both firms are known for their casually sophisticated, livable designs. Their goal in this home was to push the limits of design and showcase some new ideas while still creating realistic spaces. “Our buyers want right-sized rooms, not a bunch of cavernous spaces,” Ludemann says. “They want each room to be thoughtfully planned for the type of living that will go on in that space.”

One look at the result and it’s clear that this team—with an assist from dozens of participating artisans and vendors—hit the sweet spot of what gracious living and entertaining in the South looks and feels like heading into the next decade: luxe functionality. While the ubiquitous modern farmhouse remains popular, it is quickly evolving and incorporating other architectural styles like craftsman and European.

Buyers still request shiplap, but here it’s mixed with bold stone accent walls and modern geometric-print wallcoverings. There’s also less gray and more jewel tones—a trend Serany predicted last year. “We used a warm textural palette with the added drama of the emerald-green color in the main living areas. We saw a lot of emerald green during our visit to the furniture market in High Point and decided it was time to bring this fresh perspective to life,” Serany says.

The key starting point was a fabric by Thibaut called Mitford—a lively combination of greens, black, and cream that was used for the window treatments and worked to bring nature indoors. Wallcoverings in smaller spaces like the pantry, laundry, and powder room complement this bold pattern.
A pair of swoon-worthy emerald-green velvet sofas by Lee Industries anchor the living room, while a soaring stone wall crafted of thin-cut Tennessee Fieldstone by General Shale serves as the perfect backdrop for a conversation around the fireplace.

An open floor plan means all eyes can focus on the dramatic kitchen and its eight-foot-wide custom matte, black metal hood with bronze strapping. Serany’s Southern Studio team designed the range wall, and New Old enlisted Modern-Aire Ventilating to fabricate it. “It took eight men to lift and install the hood, and let’s just say it was nail-biting to watch,” Serany admits. The black and antique brass finishes extend to the lighting, fixtures, and hardware. The island, combining custom cabinetry by Walker Woodworking and a waterfall countertop of hand-cut honed Bianco Avion marble, provides plenty of prep space and comfortable seating. Black cowhide counter stools bring in rich texture. Two oversized Hollis Lanterns by Hudson Valley Lighting tie the space together, while a backsplash of white arabesque-patterned tile adds shine and pattern.

Just off the kitchen is every well-appointed home’s best-kept secret: a scullery. A British staple made famous by shows...
like *Downton Abbey*, this workhorse is making a twenty-first-century comeback. Large windows and light countertops by Silestone keep it bright, while the cozy feel comes from the stone-to-ceiling backsplash, graphite-toned cabinetry, and black and white porcelain flooring by Tile Collection. A twenty-four-inch under-counter beverage center by Sub-Zero frees up space in the main kitchen, and a thirty-inch Whitehaven Farmhouse sink by Kohler handles any party cleanup and other behind-the-scenes tasks. Custom shelving in the walk-in pantry, designed by IMPACT Design Resources and stocked by Williams Sonoma, surprises with hanging storage space for kitchen linens, while...
the laundry room incorporates a built-in dog bed underneath a handy desk that doubles as a folding station.

In the master bath, more beautiful details abound, seamlessly blending old and new. A shapely, freestanding soaking tub gets a vintage vibe when paired with a floor-mount tub filler in champagne bronze. A combination of shiplap and gleaming white tile on the walls and shower extends to the ceiling and provides interest and texture without a lot of color. The charcoal-hued porcelain tile flooring offers a rich contrast. Serany found the wooden

Opposite: Baker Weave wallcovering by Thibaut adds just the right hint of green to the powder room, while Venetian Bronze fixtures from Brizo pair beautifully with the extra-wide vanity from Restoration Hardware and luxe white countertop by Silestone in Classic Calacatta in a suede finish. Top Left: The scullery stuns with its mix of textures and bold flooring. A smaller Whitehaven farmhouse sink by Kohler echoes a larger one in the main kitchen. A champagne-bronze Trinsic faucet by Delta ties in with aged brass cabinet hardware from Restoration Hardware. Sculptural artwork and a painting add color and play off the glass bottles throughout the home. Top Right: The mudroom proves that a much-used space can be both functional and uncluttered, with an assist from a custom sawn-oak storage bench and floating shelves in a Rubio Havanna finish by Walker Woodworking. The cushion fabric, Parada by Thibaut, perfectly pulls in the black and green accent colors. Bottom Left: A cheery laundry room is always on trend, especially with this fun Hillcock wallcovering by Thibaut. The black and white tile—Palazzo Deco Florentina in Castle Graphite from Tile Collection—continues from the mudroom and scullery. The washer and dryer are by Electrolux.
chair, which doubles as a towel holder, during a recent shopping trip to the Brimfield, Massachusetts Antique Flea Market.

An upstairs guest bath stuns with its sleek pharmacy-style black vanity by Restoration Hardware and a striking abstract wallcovering called Metal Stars by abstract artist Windy O’Connor. Her original pattern continues into the bedroom on textiles for pillows and window treatments.

It’s details like these that are meant to inspire, yet still be accessible—things people can take away and incorporate into their own homes. “This home is a style that begs for you to take your shoes off, come in, and enjoy. I think people really like the juxtaposition of the space,” Ludemann says. “Kind of like the oxymoron of New Old—it’s the balance achieved in the differences.”

Opposite: This modern-glam guest bathroom beckons you to come in and take a closer look. The whimsical textile pattern Metal Stars, created by artist Windy O’Connor, influenced the adjacent guest bedroom design as well.

Above: A tranquil guest bedroom painted Silver Strand by Sherwin-Williams takes its color cues from the adjoining bath with pillows and window treatments in fabric designed by abstract artist Windy O’Connor. The bedding is from Pine Cone Hill.
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Television renovation shows often galvanize homeowners to remodel their own kitchens and bathrooms. Watching the shows and their designers and contractors is a good first step in the education process, but Chris Edwards wants you to know that it’s only part of the process. There is a project progression behind the scenes that homeowners need to understand to complete—and even enjoy—remodeling projects.

Edwards, executive director of Apex Cabinets, a division of Markraft, is in the business of setting expectations. The Apex team has plenty of experience working with network producers; they have participated in several HGTV shows and plan to continue to do so. Edwards says homeowners need to be aware that there are many more details when it comes to budgeting and timing a project one-on-one with a remodeling professional.
The budget is a key element for most homeowners. “Setting an appropriate budget is dependent upon whether a homeowner is keeping the same room layout and updating products or moving walls and redesigning the room’s flow, which is a much costlier project,” Edwards says. “Each kitchen is so different, which makes each homeowner’s budget a unique number. A general number like a home’s square footage is not a good measurement of how much a kitchen renovation will cost, for example. Kitchens comprise a wide range of square footages as a percentage of a home’s total square footage, and cabinet options and accessories affect price.”

Homeowners also need to know that the timeline is longer than a television show might represent. “Our process at Apex begins with a showroom appointment with a designer, which takes one to two hours,” Edwards explains. “Homeowners must anticipate meeting with the designer up to four times over several weeks as decisions and revisions are made.”

From there, Apex generates an order, and customers experience a wait for products to arrive. “A few arrive as quickly as three days, but many products take three to six weeks to arrive. We schedule an installation date with our customers within a week after product arrival. Installation takes a few days, depending upon complexity and size.”

Post-installation service is another important consideration for homeowners, and one not mentioned on most broadcast shows. Apex, for example, sends a team of field service representatives to take care of any punch-list items immediately after installation and to handle any necessary warranty or service issues.

“Overall, HGTV is a good starting point, but there is so much more homeowners need to know before committing to a project.”

―CHRIS EDWARDS

“HGTV IS A GOOD STARTING POINT, BUT THERE IS SO MUCH MORE HOMEOWNERS NEED TO KNOW BEFORE COMMITTING TO A PROJECT.”

Contact an APEX CABINETS designer at 919-362-7979 or visit MARKRAFT.COM/APEX to schedule an appointment.
Countertops. Walls. Floors. Ceilings. Tabletops. The home’s many surfaces are an integral part of architecture and design, not just for their beauty but also for their functionality. With these surfaces facing the everyday wear-and-tear of foot traffic, food prep, and hygiene rituals, it’s important that they are durable and low maintenance.

Cosentino specializes in collaborating with customers to create high-value, innovative surfaces that add beauty and brawn for a variety of applications. Their Silestone, Dekton, Sensa, and Natural Stone lines are the perfect solution for homeowners and designers looking to add style and substance with their surfaces. The Dekton line, available in thicknesses from 4 mm to 30 mm, is created through a sophisticated, innovative process that results in zero porosity and ultra-compaction, making it highly resistant to the elements with the size, lightness, and strength for an array of applications. Available in nearly sixty colors from nine collections, homeowners are sure to find the perfect hue for any home project.

“Not only is Cosentino known for providing amazing countertop surfaces, we also offer products that fit any application within all segments—residential, commercial, cabinetry door designs, furniture tops (both outdoor and indoor), fire surrounds, and more.” Jonathan Dawson, general manager of the Raleigh Consentino Center, says. “Of note, the Dekton Slim line has significantly extended the capabilities in our portfolio, giving clients the desired versatility of a durable, high-performance surface covering in an ultra-thin build.”

The Dekton Slim’s 4-mm thickness makes it extremely adaptable, offering homeowners and designers an unlimited amount of design implementations from a single product. Because it’s offered in a large, cut-to-size format with slabs measuring up to 126 inches by 56 inches, homeowners will find their surfaces more hygienic because of the need for fewer joints. Currently available in a broad palette of colors from Dekton’s natural and solid collections, homeowners can select surfaces that speak to their home’s personality, ones that blend seamlessly with their aesthetic, or bolder options that inspire conversation. The amount of customization offered by Dekton Slim ensures each application will be a uniquely beautiful and durable choice.
Because of its moisture- and stain-resistant properties, Dekton Slim is the ideal product for use in bathroom and kitchen applications. In bathrooms, where excessive humidity and exposure to household chemicals are certain, Dekton Slim offers the resilience needed to maintain a healthy, clean, and beautiful space—all with no more maintenance than a soft, wet cloth! Likewise, in the kitchen, where cleanliness and durability are an absolute necessity, Dekton Slim features low porosity and liquid absorption rates as well as a resistance to scratches, stains, and heat damage.

“The Dekton Slim line offers a host of advantages for homeowners who want to live fully in their homes without the constant worry and stress of high maintenance routines,” Dawson says. “And with the ultra-thin construction, homeowners often realize substantial cost savings because less quantity of product is needed for projects and installations. It’s a win-win.”

And for those looking to spice up other areas in their home, Dekton Slim’s ease of fabrication allows for its innovative use in cabinetry and furniture, featuring doors and tabletops that withstand household traffic and abuse without bumps, scratches, and stains.

“The unlimited design possibilities with Dekton Slim will bring your inspiration to life,” Dawson says.◆
SPARE NO DETAIL

Functionality and beauty harmonize in a renovation project that combines a kitchen and dining room into one exceptional space.

Written by Dana W. Todd

After the Vick family had lived in its ranch-style home for two years, they decided they loved everything about it—except the kitchen.

“The kitchen was not functional for me as the cook of the house,” Shauna Vick says. “It was dark, and the adjoining dining room had beautiful windows but a weird alcove and had become an Amazon package storage space.”

Vick knew the functionality she wanted and called in Kitchen & Bath Galleries to make her ideas a reality and add the creative craftsmanship that would keep the family happy in its new home for many years.

Vick’s mantra is “A place for everything and everything in its place.” Working with Kitchen & Bath Galleries designer Rebecca Rotella, they formed a collaborative team that came up with a
feature-full kitchen featuring Dura Supreme cabinetry that better serves the family.

The team carefully thought through every task that happens in the kitchen, creating a drawer or cabinet to hide the clutter that is a natural part of each activity. A purse drawer, for example, is a place for Vick to drop her belongings at the end of the day, and spice drawers are located next to the ovens where her husband preps meat. A drawer-within-a-drawer holds lids that accompany mason jars and food storage containers. A large cabinet houses all the small appliances behind bi-fold pocket doors custom designed by Kitchen & Bath Galleries. A set of deep drawers below the appliance garage hold sugar and flour for ease of access during baking. Other drawers are specially designed for specific meals, such as the Italian and Asian drawers and the tea/coffee drawer beneath the coffee pot. Drawers between the double dishwashers create proximity for putting away clean dishes. Hidden drawers inspired by small but efficient Dutch kitchens make use of underutilized space for storing trays and platters.

All those Dura Supreme white drawers and cabinets needed some balance, so Rotella designed a shiplap-inspired island with alternating colors of stain and a wooden range hood to coordinate with Vick’s brainchild of custom-designed ceiling detail made of reclaimed wood. “The mixture of wood with the white cabinets provide texture and dimension to the space,” Rotella says. “Plus, the contrast of dark soapstone with aqua veining adds character.”

Knocking out the wall between the kitchen and dining room opened up the space, allowing Vick to incorporate a large family table that seats twenty people and providing space for built-in furniture like a china cabinet and buffet to eliminate the need for purchasing separate pieces.

The process has given the Vick family a large kitchen used daily for cooking, homework, eating, hanging out, and entertaining.

“We wouldn’t do anything differently,” Vick says. “The kitchen is welcoming and a real point of connection. It is a testament to Rebecca and the team at Kitchen & Bath Galleries.”

—SHAUNA VICK

“THE KITCHEN IS WELCOMING AND A REAL POINT OF CONNECTION.”
Walk into the new Nest Interiors home furnishings store and immerse yourself in marble, silver, gold, luxurious fabrics, fresh home diffuser scents, elegant glassware, and colorful pillows. The urban-chic-meets-transitional-design boutique recently opened in Cameron Village, bringing inspired home products and specialty gift selections to the area.

“We have operated a store and design service in Wilmington for eight years and opened the Raleigh store due to overwhelming customer requests,” Nest Interiors owner Monika Williams says. “Customers can shop for specific home decor or gift items in the store, where they receive the benefit of no-cost design services by one of our interior designers on staff. We are also well known for our unique gift-wrapping services, which provide an extra special touch for our customers purchasing specialty items for giving to others.”

Walk the store floor for inspiration from a multitude of vignettes that showcase transitional style at its best. If what you are searching for is not on the store floor, one of Nest Interiors’ designers will source the item you want from hundreds of vendors that supply furniture, glassware, tabletop design products, rugs, pillows, fabrics, wallpaper, gifts, and other decor to the store. By relying on Nest’s in-house designers, homeowners can experience the best of buying in-person—touching fabrics and seeing furniture details—as well as browsing through Nest’s resources and relying on their designers’ experience with products.

“We work with whatever fits our customers’ needs, whether they wish to buy one piece from the retail store to freshen their
homes or they desire to work with an interior designer for a full solution for one room or an entire house,” Williams says. “We don’t want clients to be intimidated by a steep hourly fee. We feel good design should be affordable to everyone.”

Since Williams travels to High Point Market and AmericasMart Atlanta twice annually, the products are always being refreshed and transformed in the store. She tells customers to visit frequently, as the store receives new shipments almost daily.

“Most customers tell me our store is warm, comforting, and friendly like they wish their homes to be,” Williams says. “What a compliment! I think it’s a testament to how we listen to our customers and expand our products and services to solve their design dilemmas.”

“MOST CUSTOMERS TELL ME OUR STORE IS WARM, COMFORTING, AND FRIENDLY LIKE THEY WISH THEIR HOMES TO BE.”

—MONIKA WILLIAMS
FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL

Discover a big city showroom right down the street.

Written by Dana W. Todd

The South has always been steeped in tradition in outlook, hospitality, and interiors. Our market is one of the last to accept with open arms a more contemporary aesthetic. Recognizing this shift, R. Jacobs Fine Plumbing & Hardware set out to broaden its product lines to encompass not only the traditional but also a wide range of the most beautifully designed and technically advanced contemporary plumbing available worldwide. You’ll still find that clawfoot bathtub with its nostalgic floor-mounted tub filler on the showroom floor, but you’ll also see a modern rectangular bathtub paired with a tub filler that produces a sheet of water.

This expanded collection of contemporary plumbing creates a unique opportunity for R. Jacobs to partner with a select handful of cutting-edge global companies from around the world, joining a long
list of Made in America companies that round out the curated offerings of bath and kitchen plumbing.

Faucets and plumbing hardware are the jewelry of the home, but there is a whole other side to the plumbing world. R. Jacobs displays specialty products including steam showers, dry saunas, whole house water filtration systems, and furniture-quality freestanding and wall-mounted vanities. Additionally, R. Jacobs Fine Plumbing & Hardware has one of the largest selections of cabinet and door hardware in the Southeast.

“I wish every vendor was like R. Jacobs. Rick only sells quality, so I can choose anything with confidence. If he doesn’t have what I want, he will use all his resources to find just the right thing for me,” Lisa Sandman says, a Raleigh homeowner who has worked with R. Jacobs on four residential design projects.

Jacobs is extremely passionate about what he does. “Our product lines are sensitive to changing lifestyles that crave simplicity and function,” he says. “The product designs provide a modern twist that complements the traditional Southern style.”

“We are a small, locally owned company despite our international product offerings,” he continues. “We want our clients to be thrilled. We are an extension of their dreams. As you leave the showroom, you will often hear from the staff, ‘Thanks for coming in, and thanks for shopping local.’”

“OUR PRODUCT DESIGNS PROVIDE A MODERN TWIST THAT COMPLEMENTS THE TRADITIONAL SOUTHERN STYLE.”
—RICK JACOBS
Big box retailers stock an abundance of homebuilding products, from doors and windows to architectural details. But how do you know when it's time to move away from stock products offered by this type of retailer and turn to a custom millwork company? There are four situations in which a custom manufacturer may be the right choice for your project.

You need an unusually sized or oddly shaped product. When designing a new window, door, cabinets, or even shutters for a custom home or historical renovation, standard sizes available at run-of-the-mill retailers may not work. “There’s a need for high-production facilities, but there also is an important role for the smaller custom shop where the customer drives design,” Lee Stephenson of Stephenson Millwork says. A three-generation family-owned company based in Wilson, Stephenson Millwork designs and produces custom millwork for residential owners and commercial new construction and renovation projects.

You want a unique design. Maybe you have a specific vision of how the crown molding, kitchen cabinetry, or custom entrance door should look and cannot find the exact product at a traditional retailer. In such a case, a millwork company can help bring your design to life and showcase your unique idea to the world. A shop such as Stephenson Millwork’s design center at Dock 1053 in Raleigh enables you to see a broad range of options and meet with a
You demand custom quality. By its nature, custom work is detail oriented, so choosing a millwork company is an excellent way to ensure your product will fit precisely and last for generations. A trade professional turns to a millwork company for custom order fulfillment, so it’s important that your millwork provider has a reputation for working with the area’s top builders and residential designers.

You want consistent service. “Our roots go back to 1946 when my grandfather started a small cabinet shop,” Stephenson says. “Today, we have more than 700 years of millwork experience in the front office alone. Our production employees average twenty-eight years of service, so there’s a wealth of experience we bring to a project that is unique.” Take advantage of the opportunity to work with a local business that has a depth of knowledge and professionals who will still be there in the future when you decide to begin a new project. Having that history between consumer and company is invaluable.

“I have been working with Stephenson Millwork for thirty-five years,” Carter Skinner of Carter Skinner Residential Designs says. “They have gotten good at anticipating my needs and interpreting my drawings.”

“Each project by Stephenson Millwork is managed by a skilled and experienced professional, making custom design fun and exciting,” Joel Williams of Williams Realty & Building Company says. “They inspire clients and deliver astonishing results.”

—LEE STEPHENSON

“THERE’S A NEED FOR HIGH-PRODUCTION FACILITIES, BUT THERE ALSO IS AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR THE SMALLER CUSTOM SHOP WHERE THE CUSTOMER DRIVES DESIGN.”

Contact STEPHENSON MILLWORK at Dock 1053 in Raleigh at SMCINC.COM or call 919-829-1005.
The timeless appeal of marble is now available to meet the exacting demands of today’s kitchens.

Demand continues to rise for a new luxury stone in the marketplace: hard marble. Up to eighty percent of our customers walk in CRS Granite & Marble’s showroom door wanting the gray and white look of Italian Calacatta or Carrara marble but declaring they don’t want soft marble. Many of them walk out choosing a Brazilian hard marble, and here’s why.

As a hybrid stone, it is more suited for today’s hardworking family kitchens. In the Countertop Testing Station in CRS’s showroom, we exposed slabs of hard marble to wine, toothpaste, ketchup, mustard, tomato sauce, and lemon juice for up to two hours at a time. We found no etching or shadowing of the hard marble with any of these products, leaving us with a great sense of confidence that it is an enduring material for rigorous kitchen use.

Since we have seen such good results from testing, during international buying trips, we began seeking out Brazilian quarries who operate according to CRS’ high level of quality standards. We found a reliable partner who is an established exotic and specialty stone manufacturer and exporter. They recently opened a Brazilian marble processing plant and continue to explore new quarries for hard marble slabs. The company’s modern processes...
have improved the recovery of this natural, luxury stone and made it possible for CRS to bring it to our customers. With a focus on providing high-quality finishes, including polished, brushed, leathered, and honed finishes, we can bring this range of options to fit well within a multitude of kitchen design styles.

Hard marble exhibits many artistic qualities with an inherent beauty that only nature can create. As a luxury one-of-a-kind, but not trend-dependent stone, it can adapt to the personalities of kitchen design styles from contemporary to farmhouse to transitional and traditional. The organic movement of its veining provides a custom look for each installation we do and makes Brazilian hard marble a creative choice for homeowners who need hardworking kitchens that are gorgeous.

**SUNNY SURANA** is president of **CRS MARBLE & GRANITE**. Visit the Raleigh showroom at 7521 Exhibit Court, visit **CRSGRANITE.COM**, or call 919-784-9282.
Summer swelter is here, and when the hot sun beams fourteen hours a day, what home amenity delivers more satisfaction than a backyard swimming pool?

Pools provide relief from the heat, entertainment and recreation, and a soothing ambiance of sight and sound. For our custom home clients who decide to include a pool, we assist with placement, design, installation, and integration into the outdoor living space. When you’re ready for your pool, there are some important design considerations that can help you decide which style of inground pool is right for your property.

Do you prefer an organic or angular shape? Perhaps your home’s architecture can lend a hand. Traditional Georgian homes, modern farmhouses, and contemporary homes may clash with a curvy, meandering pool. A rectangular design may complement the architecture better. However, weigh this against your desired uses. Rectangular pools are typically better for activities like swimming laps or playing pool volleyball, but curved pools can better provide a sense of leisure, with integrated benches, solar ledges, and private “nooks.”

Regarding depth, the deeper the pool, the larger it will need to be to maintain a gentle slope from the shallow section. Deeper pools require more excavation, concrete/plaster, and potentially larger pumps. We recommend that the average backyard pool be no deeper than seven feet.

Steeply sloped backyards make for a challenging pool project. Remember that retaining walls and imported/exported earth are expensive. Most people prefer easy access and visibility from their home’s living space to the pool. If you have a high foundation on the back of the house, instead of one long staircase, consider a terraced hardscape design that leads from finished floor level down to a patio or landing area, then down farther to the pool deck.

Enjoy an extended usable season and the relaxing sound of a spillway with a heated spa that spills into and partially heats the pool. For spa placement, the closer it is to the house, the more likely you are to use it in colder weather. However, placing it on the opposite side of the pool from the house allows you to enjoy the spillway from the back porch or patio.

Because of its design flexibility, durability, and beauty, the most widely used construction method is a cast-in-place concrete pool finished with decorative plaster. Pool plaster comes in a variety of colors and textures, like a pebble or quartz-exposed aggregate upgraded finish. To achieve Caribbean aquamarine water, lighter-colored plaster should be selected. For a darker, natural appearance, stone-colored plaster may be desired. Also keep in mind that control of color-changing lighting, spa heating, and fountain pumps are all remote and even app controlled.

And most importantly, ensure that your pool is properly permitted, approved by appropriate inspection personnel, fenced in per code, and bonded for electrical safety. For custom home or renovation consultation, give us a call.
“WHAT HOME AMENITY DELIVERS MORE SATISFACTION THAN A BACKYARD SWIMMING POOL?”

Evan Bost is the director of marketing and building performance at BOST CUSTOM HOMES. For information, call 919-460-1983, email INFO@BOSTHOMES.COM, or visit BOSTHOMES.COM.
Spotlight: Laura Berendsen Hughes
The Centerpiece
September 6–October 2
thecenterpiece.com

Laura Berendsen Hughes’ acrylic equine paintings bridge realism and abstraction by relying on the beauty and drama of color and shape. Inspired by the dramatic, monumental shapes of horses, the Durham artist pairs this recognizable form with varied abstract underpaintings to create works that emanate originality, complexity, and depth. The final titles of these pieces are drawn from the poetry of Rumi and seek to express transcendence and the ecstatic state of union with the divine. Spotlight: Laura Berendsen Hughes begins with an opening reception on Friday, September 6, from 6 p.m.–8 p.m.

The Collector’s Eye
North Carolina Museum of Art
Through October 6
ncartmuseum.org

North Carolina abounds with passionate collectors of things: cars, furniture, glass, posters, historical documents, paintings, drawings, and photographs. Collectors of any type should be celebrated. They bring together the bits and pieces of our culture and give them coherence and meaning. These related exhibitions focus on two private North Carolina collections of American photography from its early decades when image making seemed more magic than science but never less than art.

Sunflower Selfies and Beyond
Museum Park, Lowe’s Pavilion
August 1
ncartmuseum.org

Pop-In Artist in Residence: Casey McGuire’s Dream House
Artspace
August 2–August 31
artspacenc.org

Summer Daze Music Festival Vol. 2
Coastal Credit Union Midtown Park at North Hills
August 17
summerdazefestival.com

Southern Surreal: Masterpiece Furniture by Tilden Stone
Gregg Museum of Art & Design
Through September 8
gregg.arts.ncsu.edu

Carolina Ballet: George Balanchine’s Rubies
Fletcher Opera Theater
September 12–September 29
dukeenergycenterraleigh.com

Game of Thrones Live Concert Experience
Coastal Credit Union Music Park at Walnut Creek
September 18
gameofthronesconcert.com

CenterFest Arts Festival
Downtown Durham
September 21–September 22
centerfest.durhamarts.org

One Giant Leap: North Carolina and the Space Race
North Carolina Museum of History
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ncmuseumofhistory.org
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