

# Style Times Two

A PAIR OF DESIGN-SCHOOL PALS  
UNITE TO GIVE A TEXAS COUPLE A  
GRAND NEW DWELLING THAT EXUDES  
ONE-OF-A-KIND FLAIR.

BY Marie Baxley | PHOTOGRAPHY BY Lance Selgo





**B**old, colorful rooms backed by pretty florals, soft patterns, and timeless lines give this Dallas abode pizzazz nurtured by the incredible synergy between the savvy owners and a duo of designers—one working remotely.

“The wife wanted every room to have its own personality, each area distinct. That was a goal of hers—that it look different than everyone else’s home and different from her old house,” says Emily Johnston Larkin of EJ Interiors in Dallas. Emily had worked with the couple on their previous open-concept residence in Keller, Texas, where they employed mid-century modern elements. This time around, the wife and husband, who was also the builder, selected a more traditional plan for their expansive accommodations in the Westlake neighborhood.

A black-and-white marble tile floor in the entrance immediately creates a

sense of high drama that is echoed in the showstopping dining room with textural vinyl-clad walls, a bright sunburst mirror, and a cut-to-fit leopard rug. Any one of the dining area accessories would be a statement piece, but together they offer a balanced look capped by a Louise Gaskill Company light fixture crafted by hand from vintage pieces. “It [the chandelier] gives a little bit of sparkle but also an element of having an antique piece in there,” Emily says. An antique Chippendale-style cabinet, bought online in a British estate sale, also grounds the scene, which opens onto the hub of the home: a large shared living and kitchen space.

Muted shades of blue and green create cohesion as back-to-back sofas anchor two seating sections, one facing the television and one towards the kitchen. A pale blue sofa fabric with a thin white stripe melds with geometric patterns and cheerful

prints. The counter chairs bring a dab of yellow to the tableau, a suggestion from Lauren Haskett, whose firm Lauren Haskett Fine Design in Houston was brought in to help with the kitchen and master bath.

“The kitchen is very open to the living room, so we definitely had to coordinate. That’s why I wanted to keep a very simple white color scheme with a pop of color on the island,” says Lauren, who has known Emily since their days at the University of Oklahoma in the design program. The jewel of the kitchen is a made-to-order metal hood painted in a soft pewter patina with brass trim to complement the custom cabinetry, molding, and white marble backsplash and countertop.

Crafted newel posts and a granite top on the island further the bespoke beauty, all created under the guidance of the wife, who loves to cook. “She was very involved and specific. When the



A spectacular brass-trimmed hood is the focal point in the kitchen, where abundant drawers, an appliance cabinet, and adjacent butler's pantry allow for ample storage. Houston designer Lauren Hatchett selected lucent silver light pendants to allow a clear view. "They needed to hold their own and let your eye go right through to the back wall," she says.



Floral chair fabric inspired the master bedroom's mix of blue and white with soft lavender accents. Emily Johnston Larkin of EJ Interiors selected a handcrafted ceramic lamp to complement the blue velvet upholstery on an eye-catching French-style bed. "It looks like an antique, but it has modern lines," Emily says.



client wants it to be really beautiful and special, you can do things that are one of a kind because they are motivated to make it work," Lauren says.

Lauren, who didn't see the structure in person until after its completion, rose to the challenge of working remotely with her former classmate Emily, whom she totally trusted. "I knew how detailed Emily was, and the wife—with her husband being the builder—made the project easier because I could get what I needed," says Lauren.

Emily, in turn, also treasured the experience of creating a unique manse for longtime clients who appreciate the finer points of interior design. "She just wanted something more classic," says Emily. "He was very trusting with everything we did. Since it was the second house, it was easier for him to let go and say, 'Just do your thing.'"

