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All-American CHIC

Designer Traci Zeller transforms a Davidson home

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A Lake Norman couple opts for color in their new home

by BLAKE MILLER • photography by DUSTIN PECK AND MADISON WEAVER



It all began with a piece of fabric. When Traci Zeller laid eyes on the Kravet fabric boasting an array of colorful blues, greens, and lavenders, the Charlotte-based designer knew she had found her inspiration for her client's brand new, custom home in Davidson. "That fabric really set the tone for the whole home's design," explains the Charlotte-based designer.

That color palette layered atop a neutral base—a signature look of Zeller's—was a departure from her clients', Sharif and Maggie Metwalli, previous home, which had a much more traditional aesthetic incorporating deep reds, yellows, and browns. This time the couple







wanted something more colorful and fun to fit into the modernized Colonial home architect Blake Ramsy of R&R Designs had designed with the help of Zeller and builder Chris Knight of CM Knight Fine Homes. “It’s a clean, updated traditional,” explains the designer. “It has classical roots, but is made for a modern family. Great flow, wonderful, open spaces that make it really modern and current.”

To achieve the neutral-meets-color aesthetic the Metwallis were hoping for in their new home, Zeller began layering textured neutrals such as seagrass and

patterned sisal rugs with more colorful draperies like those in the great room, a combination of linen and lavender from the AERIN Collection for Lee Jofa. “It was wonderful because Maggie isn’t afraid of color,” says Zeller. “There are not a lot of homeowners who are willing to do a lavender drape.”

Zeller also wanted to play up the architectural details she, Ramsy, and Knight had collaborated on such as the stained wood beams in the great room and the wide bead board ceiling running the length of the dining room, great room, and keeping room, not to mention the





adjacent kitchen. So as not to overshadow these details, Zeller opted for complementary light fixtures such as the Oly Studio piece in the great room—"I needed a center fixture that would stand up to the beams. It's like artwork."—and the oversize lanterns by Visual Comfort in the kitchen.

The kitchen, however, is one room that remained wholly neutral amongst an array of color elsewhere. "If we'd done something out of the box in the kitchen, it would've forced me to carry that throughout the whole space," says Zeller of the decision to remain neutral. "But I wanted to give the family more flexibility and longevity going forward." Quartzite counters give way to polished glass white subway tiles and glazed off-white custom cabinetry by Walker Woodworking while custom counter stools and dining chairs from Wesley Hall are swathed in durable, complementary Crypton fabric.

Since moving in, the homeowners haven't changed a thing about the design in spite of its dramatic departure from their previous home, says Zeller. "It's so gratifying to get an email from a homeowner about how comfortable and elegant [their new home] is. That's really what makes my job worthwhile. I just feel so good when the homeowners are so happy." **LNM**