

CHARLOTTE URBAN

HOME

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2015

CELEBRATING INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN AND PERSONAL STYLE







Old World.

MODERN LIFESTYLE.



By Nancy Atkinson
Photography by Chris Edwards

When former Charlotte residents Erica and Craig Coblenz moved home to be closer to their family, the perfect house was waiting. Ideally situated in the Old Providence North area and sitting on three acres, the home was built in 2003 and still in mint condition.

WHILE THE COUPLE LOVED THE property, its location and schools, they weren't as enamored with the homes' heavy country French architectural style, reproduction furnishings and materials. They wanted a quieter palette with a simpler, more modern vibe to make the home livable for their active family with three young boys and a dog.

To achieve their vision, their REALTOR led them to Circa Interiors and Antiques and designer Heather Smith. Well-traveled and known for her ability to bring a youthful, edgy spirit to traditional interiors, Heather's aesthetic was a perfect match for the family's needs.

She pulled together a handpicked team of master craftsmen to build in layers of creative details that transformed the home. Her team included kitchen designer Emily Bourgeois, who completely redesigned the kitchen as well as cleaned up and redefined the breakfast area, family room, mudroom and coffee bar, which are all adjacent to the kitchen.

David Purser refinished all the hardwood floors in the home and

collaborated on the kitchen island with builder Damon Rumsch. Mudwerk created the artisan plaster for the range area, ceiling, and walls in the coffee bar. Damon Rumsch of Coral Construction oversaw the six-month renovation.

Heather also called on the talents of local artists to add a layer of modern interest to the home. Terry Reitzel's original branch artwork creates a statement in one of the hallways. Custom sconces designed by lighting artist Evan Wood accent the padded headboard in the master bedroom. And Chris Kudra created custom steel windows, doors and the mesh firescreen drapery in the family living area. Other art, furnishings, accessories and lighting in the home are from Circa Interiors.

Each element was carefully to be functional as well as beautiful. "If it's not useful, it's cluttering up the space," says Heather. "With three small children and a dog running around, we don't need that."

The breakfast room, located to the right of the kitchen is one of Heather's favorite rooms in the house. With its







“Clean lines, neutral colors and fabrics that wear well over time are key. You don’t want to invest in trendy pieces you will grow tired of years down the road.”



custom steel and glass doors that let in lots of light and a great view of the backyard, this is the spot that invites you to linger, long after breakfast.

“I love the way Emily defined that space with the ceiling beams, painted darker to make the space feel cozy,” says Heather. “Some of my favorite antiques from Circa are in the house. I love the pair of bookshelves we used to hold everyday dishes and the pair of Venetian lanterns we hung in this space and over the kitchen island. The crusty gilt on those pieces is balanced by the warm walnut iron trestle table.”

You might not expect these beautiful furnishings to be so functional. “The seating is super kid-friendly,” she says, explaining that the stools of faux leather are easily wiped clean, the chairs are on casters to move around effortlessly and, like the sofa, they are covered in washable slipcovers to manage any spills.

While the homes she designs are layered with details, Heather’s design philosophy is simple. “The main components – paint, carpet, drapes, lighting and large furnishings – should be timeless and durable,” she says. “Clean lines, neutral colors and fabrics that wear well over time are key. You don’t want to invest in trendy pieces you will grow tired of years down the road.”

Like the home she transformed for the Coblenz family, she prefers functional simplicity and a clutter-free environment, using beautifully collected items and thoughtful layers to add personality.

“I like to personalize the space with pillows, throw rugs, books, objects, artwork and lamps that are fun to move around as you accumulate new things,” she says. “It’s the same way I think about clothes – invest in quality where it matters and throw on some great accessories.” ♦