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California Meets Carolina

AT HOME WITH
JESS EBERT
OF FOUR STORY
INTERIORS





“I’m a serial mover,” Jess Ebert of Four Story Interiors says. Although she’s lived in her Eastover home for three years—and it seems to be sticking—it’s the fourth home she’s lived in since moving to Charlotte from California eight years ago. (If you’re a dedicated HGTV fan, you might recognize her: Ebert and her husband were featured in an episode of “House Hunters” during the process of buying their first home in the Queen City.)

Life has changed a lot for Ebert since leaving California. In addition to all those moves, she became a mom of three (to Jackson, 7, Vivienne, 4, and John, 5 months), and she launched her dream career as an interior designer after eight years in corporate planning and public relations. “Design is something I’ve loved forever,” she says. “I feel like a mad scientist: What can I play with, what can I change? Can I change the color of this door? Can I change the way this window treatment works? It makes me feel good to do something I enjoy.”

When it came to her own home, as with many homeowners, Ebert focused on the one classic, all-important factor when it comes to real estate: location, location, location. She knew she could create a clean slate in

On the cover: The photograph, by Los Angeles-based photographer Stephanie Vovas, has a very California '70s vibe. “Once I hung the piece, I knew I needed some furniture to ground it,” Jess Ebert says. “I found the Gabby console and layered in some different pieces to play around with texture and style. One of my favorite books, Surf Shack, lives on that console.”

Left: One of the family’s pugs rests on the living room sofa. On the wall behind the stairs, the art print was made by Jess Ebert’s college roommate. “I found it in storage a year ago, and decided I needed to frame it,” she says.

Guests (and kids) often gather in the kitchen, where the island is functional and beautiful.

Top Right: Jess Ebert and the kids spend most of their time in the white-on-white kitchen. The pendants are from Schoolhouse Electric; the vintage runner is from Eliko Rugs at High Point Market.

Bottom Right: A crisp white color palette sets the tone for the dining room, where unexpected shapes — like the open-back end chairs from Selamat — offer contrast. The art above the fireplace is a custom commission by Kiah Denson from Art House Charlotte.









almost any style of home, so she sought walkability and a great neighborhood — and found a perfect fit in Eastover. “I wanted a home that gave us a city feel. I want to be able to walk to restaurants and parks,” she says. “The street we live on has so many young families; it’s got that quintessential neighborhood feel with kids running back and forth and neighborhood cocktail parties. We feel like we’ve hit the jackpot.”

Inside, Ebert opted for a soothing, neutral color palette. “Downstairs I just wanted it to feel kind of like a breath of fresh air, where it’s like ‘Ah, it’s nice in here,’” she says. “I have three children, and I have a chaotic life. We’re a young family. I want it to feel like we have kids but not like we’ve decorated for kids. It’s nice to walk in the door and feel like I’m calm here.”

Left: In the elegant but casual living room, cozy fabrics pair with more traditional designs, like the brass reading lamps that flank the armchairs.

Right: In the breakfast nook, woven chairs by Safavieh surround a round mango wood table from Details. Pocket doors, which are painted Sealskin by Sherwin Williams, separate the space from the sitting room.



A colorful, abstract painting pops against the gray, taupe, and white palette, and a chunky throw adds a cozy touch to the sleek lines of the upholstered chairs.



Ebert's calming neutral palette and mixed-textures aesthetic bring a sense of peace to the master bedroom, where a curved end table with a mirrored top flanks the traditional bed in a dark stain.

She's also added some lighthearted, muted design elements throughout, playing with texture and small, measured pops of color. "For me, the biggest thing was the texture," she says. "A lot of times I think that's a mistake people make when they're going for a neutral palette. I just want some beautiful cool elements but then keep everything else relaxed and simple."

Ebert's two favorite spaces are both downstairs: the kitchen and the mudroom, both of which got a major makeover after the family moved in. "My favorite place to hang out is the kitchen," Ebert says. The light-filled space is anchored by white subway tile, white marble countertops, and warm, rustic accents like natural wood and bronze. "We turn on music, and the kids sit at the island and eat. And when friends are over, we are always in the kitchen."

In the mudroom, Ebert swapped out can lights for pendant

lights, added custom built-ins, and applied wallpaper to the hallway and powder room. But the most striking element — and possibly Ebert's favorite — is the custom Dutch door, which is beautiful and functional.

"I have always loved the element of a Dutch door," Ebert says. "For me, it feels very homey. We've got two kids that run around; we always have friends over. It's fun to pop that open when the weather is nice."

In the nearby powder room, the wallpaper makes a statement. It's a little design surprise that energizes, complements, and contrasts the laidback feel of the rest of the home. Ebert chose a floral design by Portland, Oregon-based Makelike, purchased through Celedore Wallpaper. She had the company remake an existing pattern into custom colorway then painted the ceiling and trim to match. "It feels like a little jewel box," she says.



In the upstairs bath, classic tile pairs with a moody wallcovering and a yellow barn light for a traditional-meets-casual mashup. “I wanted to play around with some of the colors in the wallpaper, and I decided to pull out that yellow accent color,” Jess Ebert says.



Sophisticated but whimsical, the playroom is big on personality, with an animal-print wallcovering and mismatched pillows. The side table is from Selamat.

“I love a bold wallpaper,” Ebert says. “For me, that’s so fun. It’s almost like artwork. You install some beautiful wallpaper, and you’re done. That’s another way to inject personality into our home, and it reflects a little bit of our style, too.”

“When I walk around the house, I want pieces that feel unique to us, that feel special,” Ebert says. There’s no doubt this comes into play in her kids’ rooms and playroom. “I wanted the spaces to reflect their personalities,” she adds.

For her super-girly daughter, Ebert chose classic pink and florals (the wallpaper is from Anthropologie), in a sophisticated way that feels youthful but can grow with her. For her older son, who she describes as “cool and chill,” she chose blues: A blue herringbone wallcovering by Serena & Lily is the perfect backdrop for wooden furniture in a dark finish; a colorful rug adds energy and movement. In the playroom, whimsical artwork

hangs on an animal-patterned wallcovering — it’s a removable wallpaper by Chasing Paper — pillows covered in hearts and the Beatles’ yellow submarine add personality.

Although Ebert’s home reflects her personal style, she doesn’t have trouble taking a few steps outside her own design aesthetic when it comes to designing for her clients. “My style is my style,” she says. “I’m happy to work with my clients and have their style be different. My role is to make their home the best version of themselves. Just like I would like my home to be the best version of me.”

Ebert truly takes this to heart but recognizes that as a designer, it’s sometimes her job to push the envelope with her clients, too. “A lot of people in Charlotte really love that sort of modern traditional look. That’s a really common theme I see in my clients,” she says, adding that her home has a little more

Jess Ebert designed her son's nursery with a bohemian flair using Stark antelope rug and photograph that's a nod to their California roots.





In Jackson's room, classic herringbone wallpaper lends a boyish touch when paired with dark-stained furniture and rattan window coverings.



In Vivienne's room, Jess Ebert layers the large florals in the wallcoverings with dainty window treatments. "I think it's so important to play with scale when pairing patterns," she says.

"I feel like a mad scientist."

California cool, a little more edge. "But they say, 'Oh, you've put a really gorgeous chandelier in here, and I want statement lighting.'"

Her clients also really respond to the way Ebert balances design with kid-friendliness. "Kids and dogs are tough on everything, and the majority of my clients are young families. We talk a lot about balancing beauty with function," she

says. "But kid-friendly design should not be a compromise in style. I make sure to choose hard-wearing fabrics with a stain protectant. I like to have zippers on pillows so they can be taken to the dry cleaner or go through the wash. If you want to decorate with fragile pieces, save it for a bookshelf that's out of reach of little hands. And make friends with an upholstery cleaner."◆