



MAGNIFICENT MAKEOVER

By Julie Catalano
Photography by Matthew Niemann

After purchasing a home in north San Antonio, the new owners were thrilled with the size, location and neighborhood ambience. But, they wondered if they could really overcome the home's earth-toned, rustic style and put their own light and bright stamp on it.



They could and they did, thanks to a massive remodel by Jana Valdez, interior designer and co-owner of Haven Design and Construction in San Antonio, along with her contractor husband Armando Valdez, also co-owner.

The 5,356-square-foot custom home built in 2007 on two acres needed an extensive update to give the couple the sleek and clean look they wanted for their young family. To start, Jana repainted almost all the interior walls in

Benjamin Moore® Swiss Coffee, a subtle, sophisticated shade from the brand's Off-White Color Collection.

The existing kitchen, with its dark wood cabinets and large 2,000-pound rock range hearth, was a force to be reckoned with. There were definitely some positive attributes — the base cabinets were in great shape, and after filling in holes in the knotty alder, they were ready for Sherwin-Williams® Pure White paint; the appliances were just a few years old; and the tall refrigerator cabinet needed only a fresh coat of paint in

Benjamin Moore Onyx to add depth to an all-white kitchen with European oak floors.

The 19 x 22-foot kitchen with 12-foot ceilings (“the largest kitchen we’ve ever done,” says Jana) required designing and constructing elements to scale, like the new 60-inch-tall range hood and a 90 x 90-inch kitchen island with form quartz countertop by Walker Zanger and seating for five. The island is topped with oversized pendant lights by Hudson Valley Lighting.



The 48-inch-wide range and its large custom cabinetry hood serve as the focal point of the new kitchen design. Pullouts on either side of the range provide storage for spices and utensils. Over the range is a decorative tile panel in the “Delauney” pattern by New Ravenna Tile selected from Materials Marketing in San Antonio.

A wet bar in the hallway connecting the kitchen to the dining room serves as a convenient beverage station with a tile backsplash in the Simone Studio Line by New Ravenna. Brown cabinets were painted in Sherwin-Williams Pure White, glass shelves replaced wood shelves, and a bank of drawers in the base cabinets was removed to install a GE Monogram wine refrigerator.

The dining room is the picture of elegance, with a dramatic table and chairs from the homeowners’ own collection. The stylish beaded Chanteuse chandelier is by Currey & Company and Regina Andrew Quatrefoil alabaster lamps provide a soft glow for evening, while large windows provide ample natural light during the daytime. The soothing neutral color palette is complemented by wall paint in Benjamin Moore River Reflections and beaded textured wallpaper from York Wallcoverings in a pattern called “Luscious” covers the accent wall.

Next, Jana turned the existing dark wood office nook off of

the kitchen into a “fresh, modern, energizing place where the homeowner would actually want to work.” Cabinets of knotty alder were refreshed in Sherwin-Williams Pure White paint and a glass top was added to the desk. The desk’s accent wall was “jazzed up” with York Wallcoverings in a pattern called “Interlocking Geo” and a graphic art print, *Royal Feathers*, that leans against the wall.

In the living room, another accent wall features “Shining Sisal” wallpaper by York Wallcoverings to define the entertainment center space and set off the wall-mounted television. Underneath the TV, an impressive custom cabinet features a bold interlocking circle pattern designed by Jana (“constructed by our amazing cabinet guy,” she adds), and painted in Benjamin Moore Onyx.

The highlight of the fully-equipped laundry room is the floor, which at first glance looks exactly like brick, but is actually 2 x 10-inch porcelain tile called Capella Taupe Brick laid in a herringbone pattern. Frustrated by her initial attempts to get the “authentic brick look” just right, Valdez learned the secret from husband Armando on how to achieve the brick-like effect: “My eighth-inch grout line made it look more like tile,” says Jana, “Armando knew the secret to making it look like real brick was half-inch grout!”

The homeowners wanted a sophisticated and transitional



master bedroom that incorporated their existing furnishings — a charcoal gray upholstered bed and gray zinc nightstands with coordinating dresser. To add lighter tones and softness to the existing charcoal furniture, Jana dressed the bed in layers of luxurious bedding in cream and gold tones — a perfect complement to the “Serendipity” patterned wallpaper that she selected from York Wallcoverings for the accent wall behind the bed. Continuing the classic metallic effect, an upholstered metal bench graces the end of the bed, while a 31-inch-wide Helix chandelier from Maxim Lighting reflects dramatically in the couple’s floor-length mirror.

All in all, the once-apprehensive homeowners were thrilled that the home now reflected their style and their personality. Jana’s attention to detail was instrumental in fulfilling the homeowners’ desire to make the new home their own — a task that



had once seemed overwhelming until the pieces starting falling into place.

It all began with the kitchen, which turned out to be a winner — literally. Jana recounts the 2018 Legacy of Design Awards, won at the statewide American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) Awards show in Dallas this September: “First Place, Kitchen Design” in its respective price category; and also “Residential Best in Show,” overall best residential project for the ASID Texas Chapter.

“Now when people insist on an all-

white kitchen, I pull out a photo of this remodel to show how effective adding some contrast to a white kitchen can be,” says Jana. “I think part of being a good designer is getting your clients out of their comfort zone.” ♦

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