

Triangle

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HOME

DESIGN & DECOR®

IN LIVING
Color

PLUS:
MAD FOR
MEMPHIS

AQUA
ALLURE



The powder room boasts Clarence House Tibet wallcovering along with beautiful Addison Weeks malachite hardware and a Mirror Image Home mirror.

BALANCE *in* MOTION

RALEIGH-BASED DESIGN TEAM
BRINGS A 1980s-STYLE HOUSE
INTO THE MODERN ERA WITH
VIBRANCY AND PANACHE.





When Hunter and Katie Diefes started searching for their dream home, many of the homes they walked through exuded the cookie-cutter concept. Preferring instead to create a space with character and originality, and one that would ultimately accommodate a growing family, they came across an older home. The only trouble? It was perfectly preserved in the 1980s, before the birth of the open floor plan and when pastels and florals reigned supreme.

"I remember looking at pictures of the home, and I said, 'Absolutely not,'" Katie Diefes recalls. "But Hunter said, 'Just trust me.' We walked through it, and I could see that it had really good bones. I could see the potential."

Though the home was structurally sound, the project was "almost a full gut job," Hunter Diefes says. "There wasn't a wall in the home that we didn't touch," he adds. The couple partnered with Zandy Gammons and Liles Dunnigan of The Warehouse, a full-service interior design firm based in Raleigh. They replaced the '80s touchstones, and spaces that were originally designed solely for functionality became gathering spots that are at once aesthetically pleasing and fully functional.

The kitchen is a prime example. They tore down a wall between the family room and kitchen to open the space, and they extended the latter's hardwood floors into the family area, removing old carpet. They expanded and reconfigured the island. Finally, they raised a steel beam and the ceiling itself so that the new glass-fronted cabinetry can soar higher, making both the cabinetry and the room feel bigger.

In terms of the color scheme, Katie Diefes didn't want the sterility of all white, but she did want something neutral, given the pops of color throughout the rest of the house. "Grays and whites were first choices for us," she says. "We achieved all of our goals in terms of color scheme and navigability." As an avid cook, Hunter Diefes was also focused on the result in the kitchen, citing one of

Left: A sophisticated use of blues, teals, and oranges liven up the formal living room. Art by Charlotte-based Adele Yonchak hangs above an antique English chest. Pillows are upholstered in Schumacher Chiang Mai fabric.

Fiesta Yellow paint by Benjamin Moore complements both the vintage and new furnishings in the formal dining room.





Counter-to-ceiling subway tile in a chevron pattern serves as the kitchen backdrop along with Visual Comfort light fixtures and a vintage rug.





his favorite features as the pot filler, which he says is “a must-have in any kitchen renovation.”

The must-have in the adjacent family room is light. Previously, Hunter Diefes says, it felt like an old smoking room, with a dark brick fireplace, raw wood, and no natural light. Sunlight now pours in from the kitchen, illuminating everything from the calming serene blue on the walls to the coffered beams of the ceiling. The Diefeses painted the fireplace and the built-ins a lighter shade, expertly blending the neutrals with bolder hues. “I love the way the darker emerald greens blend well with the colors we put on the walls,” Katie Diefes says. Deep greens are also found in the club chairs and some of the pillows, complementing the deep greens in the painting above the fireplace, which belonged to her mother.

More of her mother’s heirlooms can be found in the dining room, including the elegant sideboard and mirror. Gammons and Dunnigan skillfully combined traditional Southern antiques with features that are more modern and contemporary. The eye-catching yellow on the walls – Benjamin Moore Fiesta Yellow – is undoubtedly contemporary, and it served as the springboard for the rest of the room. “We told Katie that it was a bold choice and that if she was afraid of the color, we could do something else,” Gammons recalls. “But she said she loved it.” The deep navy and white hues of the Schumacher draperies contrast perfectly with those bright yellow walls.

The chinoiserie dragon wallpaper in the downstairs powder room, Tibet by Clarence House, served as part of the initial inspiration for the whole concept of the home. “That’s a small space with a lot of impact,” Gammons says, “and the fun paper embodies Katie’s style.”

Moving into the formal living room, there are more heirlooms from Katie Diefes’ mother, integrated nicely with newer pieces. Gammons and Dunnigan recommended recovering the sofas in a soft cream, which Katie Diefes says, “is a nice neutral and allows the colorful pieces like the rug and painting above the fireplace to be the places the eye really goes to first.” Bright and bold pillows, a quartzite coffee table with a gold base, and draperies made by Peter Dunham Textiles complete the look.

Finally, the master bedroom and bathroom are unrecognizable from the partitioned and dated spaces they were previously. By reconfiguring and eliminating



Top: Artist Allison Chambers created the entryway’s painting, which rests above a refined cabinet from Woodbridge Furniture.

Bottom: A thoughtful array of antique books, family heirlooms, figurines, and other decorative objects rest in the family room’s lined built-ins, which give the space a layered and collected feel. The burlwood coffee table is by Society Social.

The master bedroom's soothing
duvet cover is by Raleigh native
and artist Laura Parks.



The vintage rug, Society Social vanity stool, and lavender Roman shade add warmth and texture to the master bathroom.



dead space, the bathroom now accommodates a massive soaker tub and spacious shower. Katie Diefes ended up with a second walk-in closet in the expansive bedroom, which boasts a fireplace. Lavender shades and linen lavender draperies on the windows create a soothing retreat feel.

The kitchen might be called a retreat in its own right, and it's the room the Diefeses consider their favorite. "It's a well-appointed, well-decorated space but it also feels comfortable," Hunter Diefes says. "It all magically came together in a really great way," Katie Diefes concludes. ♦