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HOME

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Comfort and style were high priority in the family room, where Burns and her three kids gather on a daily basis. The black rattan chair by Arteriors features thick cut strips, which are looped to create an intricate pattern. The petite vintage sofa in the corner of the room was rebuilt and reupholstered in an ivory Crypton fabric with a black fabric dressmaker detail at the bottom of the skirt.



A PLACE TO CALL HOME

LOOKING FOR A SOFT LANDING PAD FOR HER THREE KIDS, DESIGNER LAUREN BURNS TRANSFORMS A WEST CARY HOUSE INTO A COMFORTING HOME.



TEXT BY BLAKE MILLER | STYLING BY HEIDI DONOHUE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CATHERINE NGUYEN

The oversized sofa by Four Hands doubles as a full-size bed for overnight guests. Glass discs affixed to natural brass rods create a modern sputnik-style orb chandelier by Regina Andrew.





LAUREN BURNS WAS READY TO FIND A SPACE WHERE SHE AND HER THREE children could call home. As a newly single mom of three, she wanted to plant new roots and focus on creating a cozy, comfortable, welcoming home for her brood. “My priority at that time was to have a landing point for my kids,” says the designer. “I wanted to make sure that wherever we went, my kids would feel secure and have the stability they desperately needed. I wanted to create happy memories and I wanted them to feel comfortable with their friends over.”

When Burns found the 2,955-square-foot home in West Cary in 2017, she saw past the dated architectural finishes and envisioned the comfortable home her family needed. “I had only looked at three homes during my search, but when I walked into this one, I thought, ‘this is it,’” she says. “It felt right, but I knew there were many things that weren’t my style or were really dated.” The kitchen was one such space, with its awkwardly shaped island and layout not conducive to entertaining or cooking. “I love to cook and have friends over, and this kitchen was a constant source of frustration,” says Burns.

LEFT: Burns’ goal with the foyer was to open up the space as much as possible and bridge the two rooms at the front of the home. “I wanted to create interest as you walk through the front door and into the main living spaces,” she says. She added a custom three-panel barn door made with matte black hardware accented with two-tiered whitewash wooden pendants by Arteriors.

RIGHT: Burns completely refaced the original cabinetry, removed a center glass cabinet, and installed floating three-inch shelves, all painted in the same white color of the new cabinetry in the nearby kitchen. She then added brass hardware by Schoolhouse to warm up the space, and a wooden bead pendant in a distressed white finish drape by Aidan Gray.

Burns wanted a wow factor in her home, so she connected with artist Caroline Lizarraga to hand-paint the stunning accent wall in the dining room. To balance the modern aesthetic, Burns complemented with organic finishes such as the wooden dining table by Brownstone Furniture and the leather chandelier from Ngala Trading Co.





BELOW: Burns relaxes in her newly renovated kitchen, which involved completely gutting the former awkward space. She created a light, bright, and airy area for her family to gather and to entertain.



A major renovation with Reico Kitchen & Bath at the end of 2020 yielded the kitchen Burns desired: a breathtakingly modern room with a spacious footprint that seamlessly allowed for entertaining as well as food prep and cooking. Custom white shaker-style cabinets complement the Calacatta Gold Silestone on both the counters and backsplash, which bleeds to the ceiling. Burns added warmth to the space by including Schoolhouse hardware with gold accents and a pair of antique brass sconces by Arteriors that feature a glass orb and fine-threaded tassel.

Burns then took to the living spaces, where comfort and versatility were priorities. While the spaces needed to be comfortable for Burns and her three teenaged children, they also had to make sense for their day-to-day lives. The designer began with the front two rooms of the home, one sold to her as a formal dining room, which was unrealistic for her family. “I have nothing against a formal dining room, but,



ABOVE: Burns' daughter's room features a workspace with a desk from RH and a ghost chair from HD Buttercup. She then accessorized with found objects.

RIGHT: The one-time formal dining room was transformed into a lounge space to maximize the home's entertaining options. Burns added the tufted leather bench by Oly Studio and a pair of blush pink chairs from Arteriors swathed in CR Laine fabric. A sideboard from Suzanne Kasler for Hickory Chair sits underneath a painting by Jill Pumpelly Fine Art.

"I WAS GOING FOR A FEMININE, SEXY, AND MOODY VIBE, WITH AN UNDERTONE OF APPROACHABILITY AND COMFORT."

—LAUREN BURNS



for us, that room would never get used," she explains. "When I designed this room, I envisioned it to be a beautiful and welcoming place to hang out with my friends. I also wanted to create a spot where you could sit down and put shoes on, given the narrow entryway and the proximity to the front door. I was going for a feminine, sexy, and moody vibe, with an undertone of approachability and comfort."



Burns began the design process for this space with the Hickory Chair sideboard, which was in the dining room of her previous home. “It reminds me of a modern French piece from the 1940s,” she explains. The gray leather tufted bench with an iron frame by Oly Studio serves dual purposes as a striking complement to the artwork by Jill Pumpelly Fine Art and extra

seating. “The leather withstands my kids and guests sitting on it, as well as the occasional backpack dropped on it as my kids run through the front door when they get home,” laughs Burns. “I love its sleekness and versatility.”

Opposite, the one-time guest bedroom was transformed into a more practical, transitional space that can work as a



guest suite but also a living room. The oversized sofa bed by Four Hands doubles as a full-size bed for overnight guests. By day, it's a cozy place to read or have a cocktail. The midcentury-modern accent chair by Autograph by Wade in a fuchsia fabric began the color story for the front of the home, an array of grays, whites, and pinks. A vintage brass and Lucite ghost table accents the entire look.

Burns' design approach in the front of the home easily transferred to the back of the home, where most of the family's day-to-day living takes place. A completely renovated

kitchen influenced the design of the adjacent dining room with a cool, neutral color palette warmed with organic finishes and furniture like the dining table by Brownstone Furniture and the leather chandelier from Ngala Trading Co. The most striking accent, though, is the hand-painted wall by artist Caroline Lizarraga. "I have been in awe of Caroline's amazing talent and the incredible balance she seems to have," says Burns. "This accent wall is now the perfect addition to a space that needed something that a piece of furniture or art could never bring."



Burns admits that nothing is ever really finished in her home, as she's always adding layers and textures, tweaking the interior design. But overall, she loves what she's created for her family. "I'm so happy with the functionality and the way the house looks now," she says. "I love how it came together architecturally. It's hard to impress teenagers, but the fact that they are really happy with what I've done means a lot to me. When I look at the spaces I created for me and my children, it makes me happy that they got what they needed: a place to call home." ♦

LEFT: The primary bedroom was designed to be peaceful and restful. Says Burns, "I wanted a timeless color palette with layered neutrals and textures." The upholstered bed she purchased from One Kings Lane serves as the centerpiece to the space. Classic bedding by Daniel Stuart Studio provide a neutral base while the antique brass and crystal tiered chandelier by Noir adds a touch of glam.

RIGHT: Burns wanted her kids' rooms to feel just as comfortable and cozy as the rest of the home. Here, she designed her daughter's room with artwork from Juniper and a built-in daybed with Kate Spade bedding topped with Mongolian fur pillows from West Elm. The antique brass sconces are from Visual Comfort.