

ORGANIC LUXE

HAVEN DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION
INCORPORATES NATURAL MATERIALS
AND TEXTURES TO GIVE
AN EXPANSIVE HOME A
CUSTOM QUALITY AND
WELCOMING ATMOSPHERE.

By **Drew Henry** | Photography by **Matthew Niemann**





WHEN A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL COUPLE AND their family decided to build their forever home in the Belterra community of Dripping Springs located outside of Austin, they wanted more than the standard finishes and fixtures that their big box builder had to offer. While they loved the new home's soaring ceilings and spacious floor-plan, they desired curated finishes, luxury lighting fixtures and customized built-ins to elevate their home to the next level. So, they put their trust in Haven Design & Construction to renovate their standard builder home into a fully customized forever home, complete with luxuriously personalized touches and a warm and pleasant feel that they can grow into for years to come.

Haven Design & Construction is an award-winning design firm led by husband-and-wife team Jana and Armando Valdez. This contractor and interior designer pair met salsa dancing at a mutual friend's birthday party, and it was a match made in home design heaven. After they got married, they formed their design firm and have been creating lifestyle-centric home designs ever since. "We started out doing luxury kitchen and bath remodels," explains Jana, "but now we have become known for entire home renova-

tions." Jana dreams up fabulous designs and Armando carries them through with expert care and attention to detail. "We complement each other well," explains Jana. "I am really good at the creative side and he's really good at implementing the plans into the home. We have a yin and yang, and that's what makes us a great team." No matter the style of the house or the scale of the project, Armando and Jana do what it takes to deliver a dream result to their clients. "Nothing we do is easy," Jana adds, "but we handle all of the unexpected twists and turns to make it look seamless to the client in the end."

When Armando and Jana were approached by the Austin couple to renovate their new construction home, they weren't completely surprised. "We've noticed a trend where homeowners are approaching us to fully customize and elevate their newly constructed homes," explains Jana. "Today, people want fully custom and personalized spaces that feel warm and cozy. Standard builder finishes don't meet the lifestyle needs of many homeowners out there. After living in the space, they know they need something more — something that looks beautiful and works for their lifestyle."



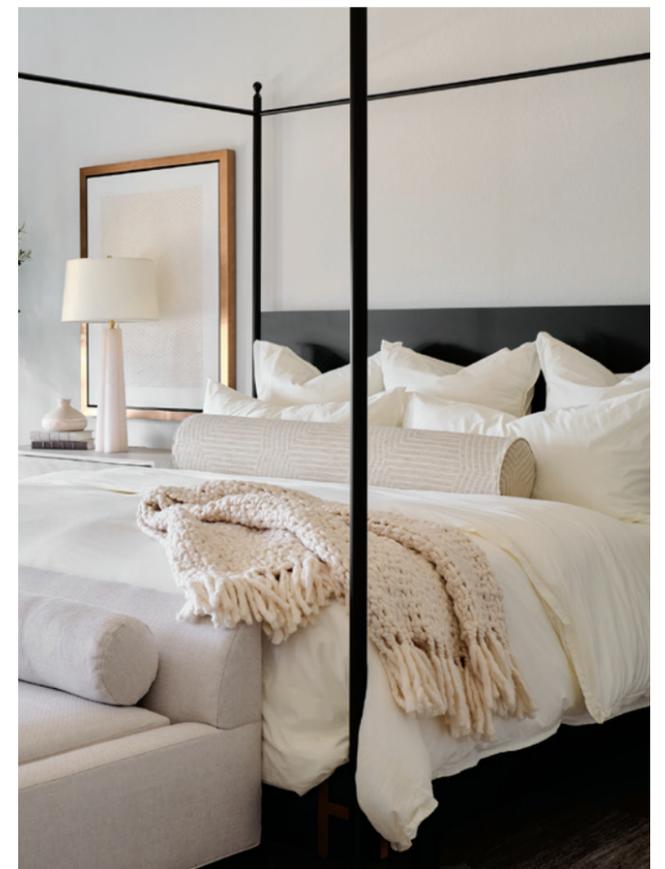
After this couple built their dream home, they realized that they wanted a home that felt warmer and more personalized. The house felt large and empty, and they needed help injecting their style throughout the finishing details. “While the home had great existing elements like the white oak floors, quartz countertops and marble backsplashes, it was missing those small details that really highlight the beauty of the space and tie it all together,” explains Jana. “We came in to add beautiful focal points, like oversized chandeliers, a marble slab fireplace and a stunning range hood. We also updated finishes, including all cabinet hardware, door hardware and plumbing fixtures, to add a level of needed character.” No details were overlooked in this expansive project. “All furnishings in this home were curated by our team, from drapes to artwork, bedding and even towels,” Jana adds. This turn-key project has been over a year in the making, and the final results are stunning.

The couple came to Armando and Jana wanting clean lines, texture, neutral colors and a consistent feel throughout. The team delivered a beautiful palette of contrasting black, whites and grays with an occasional punch of color where appropriate. Natural fiber textiles, like cane, rattan and jute, tie each room together and allow the light and shadow of the textures to take center stage in the design. The finished result is an organic luxe home with an elevated sense of streamlined comfort and ease.

When entering the home, you are greeted by double-height ceilings that soar 22 feet high through the living room, dining room and study. This striking architectural feature presented challenges as well as opportunities for a stunning design. “It’s difficult to make a space feel warm and cozy with ceilings this high,” explains Jana. “You have to pay close attention to proportion and scale.” The living and dining room contain two massive chandeliers from Restoration Hardware, spanning as wide as 60 inches in diameter. To install these light fixtures, Armando had to reinforce the ceilings to accommodate the weight, which was a challenge to pull off in a home that was already built. The team also replaced the tile cladding on the living room fireplace with four massive Calacatta Gold butterfly book-matched marble slabs to create a stunning and luxurious focal point for the space. “Installing these marble slabs was nerve-racking, to say the least,” exclaims Jana, “but it was totally worth it!” The living and dining spaces are finished with sheer drapes, neutral furnishings and natural woven accents. “I wanted these spaces to look luxurious but also work for a growing family,” says Jana. “We picked highly durable textiles that can stand up to wear, pets and children, all while looking beautiful and inviting.”

Unlike the other light and bright spaces in the home, the study has a darker and moodier feel. However, it still carries







through a cohesive look, featuring natural-toned materials like cane chairs, a beaded chandelier and gold-studded sisal-look wallpaper on the ceiling. “We added the wallpaper on the ceiling to tie into the darker gray paneling, create a cozier feel and to also visually bring down the ceiling,” explains Jana. The final result is a breathtaking space fit for a day of work and meetings behind a striking live-edge stone desk by Palecek. In addition, the team added custom 12-foot-tall built-in bookshelves that make the perfect background for video conferencing. “When we took on the project, the study was just four white walls and a white ceiling. It is amazing to see the transformation,” says Jana.

The original kitchen had good bones, with beautiful features like white quartz counters, soft gray cabinets and a herringbone marble backsplash. Without the right details, however, these elements weren’t living up to their full potential. First, Jana created a focal point in the massive kitchen by installing a new stainless steel and brushed brass range hood, anchoring the space. To complement it, she selected brushed brass cabinet hardware and plumbing fixtures, which also highlight the existing cabinets and pop against the white counters and backsplash. In addition, they removed the standard 36-inch refrigerator and replaced it with a larger

42-inch integrated refrigerator that blends seamlessly with the cabinets. To complete the design, the team chose black and gold pendant lighting from Crystorama to showcase the massive waterfall-edge island. The adjacent breakfast nook was finished with cohesive materials, adding another comfortable spot for family meals.

To finish off the home, Jana designed personalized spaces for the couple and their kids. The primary suite features a simple canopy bed by Doorman Designs, layered textures and multiple seating areas that make for a relaxing retreat. The children’s spaces include playful details like a bright green reading nook, a map of the world mural and a camping tent bed, all fit for little explorers. A game room provides a fun hangout, complete with a pool table, bar and mounted TV. While these spaces offer fun and functionality, they also work within the home’s overall theme — each room is united with natural finishes and textures.

Now, the family has a fully personalized home that they can grow into and live in comfortably (and stylishly) for many years to come. ♦

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