



# THE SUMMIT OF GOOD DESIGN

BY DREW HENRY | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREA CALO

ARCHITECT DIANNE KETT OF DK STUDIO IN AUSTIN, TEXAS, KNOWS THAT REACHING THE SUMMIT OF GOOD DESIGN IS NO EASY FEAT. SHE WAS UP FOR THE TREK WHEN A SAN ANTONIO COUPLE APPROACHED HER TO REWORK THE INTERIOR LAYOUT OF THEIR 1927 SPANISH COLONIAL HOME ON SUMMIT STREET IN THE HISTORIC MONTE VISTA NEIGHBORHOOD. WHEN SHE SAW THE CHARMING HOUSE, SHE KNEW PRECISELY THE TEAM SHE WANTED TO PARTNER WITH FOR THE PROJECT.

Outside, Dianne and her team made sure to preserve the facade of the historic 1920s Spanish Colonial home, reworking interior spaces around existing window and door placements. The original integrity is maintained and looks as it would have 100 years ago.





A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT TAKES A WELL-ORGANIZED and collaborative team of professionals. Dianne explained, “Achieving a functional and beautiful renovation comes down to knowing the home’s architectural history, understanding the client’s needs and assembling the right team of design professionals. For this project, I partnered with Interior Designer Amity Worrel, owner of Amity Worrel & Co. We’ve worked together on historical homes in San Antonio before, and we actually host the Design Oracles podcast together. When we get together, we really nerd out on design! For the build, we entrusted Troy Jessee Construction, who just does real quality work. Some of my best advice to clients is that your team will make or break the process and have a big impact on the final result.”

This team was able to rise to the challenge and deliver the pinnacle of classic Spanish Colonial style designed for modern living. “While historical houses like this are

Dianne repurposed an existing sleeping porch and small ensuite bath, turning it into a spacious primary retreat featuring a large walk-in shower, freestanding tub and dual vanity. Amity held true to a historical color palette, selecting a rich emerald green Ann Sacks tile for the shower and wainscoting, blue vanity with black soapstone counters, vibrant yellow ceiling and encaustic tiles with a classic pattern that brings it all together.





beautiful, they come with insufficient spaces that don’t function for how we live today. Part of the design challenge is repurposing these spaces while staying true to the home’s integrity,” said Dianne.

Dianne reworked the home’s layout, removing an antiquated secondary staircase to make room for a glamorous downstairs powder room. She reconfigured the upstairs floor plan, expanding the guest bathroom, doubling the size of the primary closet, adding two private office spaces, creating a bright laundry room and reclaiming a sleeping porch to accommodate a gorgeous primary bath.

“I love the flow of the upstairs suite now,” she said. “For the bathroom, Amity chose these gorgeous emerald tiles for the wainscoting and this bright yellow for the ceiling. The client loved the color palette, and it’s actually very accurate for the era of the home!”

The team was met with challenges along the journey. “Old houses always come with surprises and unique limitations. For example, we had to configure interior spaces around the original window placement so we didn’t disrupt the home’s historic facade. While elements like this can be challenging, they push our creativity,” shared Dianne. Creative solutions include the laundry room folding table, pleasantly positioned in front of an original window with a view.

While every journey may have its challenges, with the right team and guidance, you can victoriously reach the summit. ♦

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Through a carefully planned layout, Dianne was able to maximize the space in the laundry room to fit all of the client’s wish list items, including a sizeable front-load washer and dryer, farmhouse sink, fold-down ironing board, folding table, hanging rack and 1920s-inspired drip-dry closet with a decorative metal grate. Amity selected a joyful yellow for the custom cabinetry and encaustic flooring from Cement Tile Shop.

Dianne reconfigured the upstairs layout to expand the guest bath to accommodate a large vanity and walk-in shower. Amity opted for a more neutral palette for this space, selecting an Italian ceramic tile with subtle variations for the walls and shower and vintage-inspired terrazzo for the floors.

Dianne and her team reorganized the downstairs layout to accommodate an oh-so-stylish powder bath where the former secondary staircase once stood. While small, the space packs a big style. Amity selected a Spanish-inspired wainscoting tile from Design Material Inc. for the lower half of the walls, while antiqued mirror clads the upper half on all four sides — surrounding guests with 1920s glamour.