



LIVING IN PLACE

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WHEN A COUPLE OF EMPTY NESTERS SOUGHT TO CREATE AND REDEFINE A “FOREVER HOME,” THEY LOOKED TO BRADSHAW DESIGNS IN SAN ANTONIO TO HELP THEM ACHIEVE THEIR VISION OF A STYLISH HOME WHERE THEY COULD AGE IN PLACE COMFORTABLY WITHOUT SACRIFICING THEIR ACTIVE LIFESTYLE.



THE HUSBAND'S EXPERIENCE AS THE OWNER OF A construction company was key in guiding the home's structural direction, and it gave the couple a pre-established understanding of the interior design process. In collaboration with architect Don B. McDonald, the homeowners came up with a symmetrical, refined space with the right balance of industrial elements and warm touches.

McDonald utilized massive concrete posts and lintels throughout the home, balanced with walls of steel-framed windows. The combination brings a contemporary and almost commercial element to the design. Natural stone blocks at each of the interior thresholds visually mirror the overhead lintels but maintain a flush, smooth transition with natural white oak floors. Overhead, warm Douglas fir ceilings are finished with a matte clear coat.

Rehme Steel Windows & Doors provided the glass wall and doors in the entry and throughout the home. The full wall sliding glass doors between the kitchen and a grassy outdoor courtyard by Cantera Doors create a true indoor-outdoor flow.

While the homeowners' collection of indigenous arrowheads was not initially intended to be an artistic piece, it was creatively displayed on a living room wall.

Beyond this glass wall is a screened-in patio with fireplace, one of the homeowners' favorite spaces to relax and enjoy the fresh breezes minus the mosquitos. Although it faces the street, a carefully considered landscape plan by Matt Stevens Landscape Architect provides privacy.





The home, at approximately 4,500 square feet, has three bedrooms, one primary bath, two guest baths and two powder rooms. To make the space accessible for everyone, the floor plan has a particular flow. The entry hall opens into the family room and dining room, which are connected by a striking fireplace designed by McDonald. At one end of the entry hall is a formal powder room, and at the other is a screened-in patio housing another fireplace. “The floorplan is unique in that it is open, yet at the same time private,” said principal designer Julie Bradshaw, who worked alongside designer Crystal Romero. “It has a spacious feeling, but it’s warm and comfortable. The family room, dining room, kitchen and screened-in patio invite one to sit and visit awhile, perfect for the couple’s social life with family and friends.”

Most notably, the team employed universal design features throughout. “Thoughtfully planned universal design elements that are felt, but not necessarily known, include wide doorways and spacious walkways,” said

Julie. Other universal design details include lever-style door handles for easier grip, and slip resistant floor tile in the bathrooms and showers. Common areas and baths also feature dedicated spaces for future handrail installation. There’s abundant lighting at different levels, including surface-mounted track lights on the exposed wood ceilings, onyx and bronze wall sconces for atmosphere in the family room, and task lighting and under-cabinet lights throughout.

Hosting family and friends was also at the forefront of the design objectives. In the kitchen, Bradshaw Designs collaborated with kitchen designer Christi Palmer of Palmer Todd, whom the homeowner had worked with on previous kitchen projects. Ample storage was provided in the primary kitchen with a hidden prep area in the back that keeps things tidy when entertaining and prevents the kitchen from feeling crowded and overshadowing the architectural features. Christi explained, “Many homes today have a main kitchen and what I consider a prep kitchen —

Palmer Todd designed the kitchen, bar and laundry cabinets, as well as the vent hood and island front panel made of black waxed steel. Built by Downsview Kitchens, cabinet materials include high gloss lacquer, textured melamine and metallic bronze lacquer. The countertops are a combination of Sapien Stone porcelain and a custom walnut serving area.

what used to be called a butler’s pantry. The butler’s pantry origination came from the need to store formal dining ware and act as a serving station. Lifestyles have changed and the need for formal dining has been replaced by family and friends gathering, cooking and eating in the kitchen. The prep kitchen serves as a space for overflow including additional appliances.” In this instance, the prep kitchen holds smaller appliances like an icemaker, coffee maker, toaster, blender and microwave.

Beyond the kitchen is the laundry room, cleverly designed with two entry points so homeowners can gain access from public areas as well as the convenience of their primary suite. The laundry room was a very important area for the homeowners, designed to accommodate

not only laundry and cleaning supplies, but a wrapping area with an extra deep countertop and rollout drawers for storage.

“Our goal for the decor was to subtly enhance the home by using soft, organic shapes, colors and refined details. The soft neutral fabrics and rugs, along with custom designed furnishings, a mix of metal and wood seating and precision crafted lighting create a warm, welcoming atmosphere,” said Julie. To that end, the family room has multiple conversation areas where family and friends can relax on an oversized custom sofa, multiple lounge chairs and even the extended fireplace hearth that appears to hover above the ground. Bespoke accent tables are intentionally placed within seating arrangements. The dining room features a modern, clean-lined table and curved, comfortable chairs, which keep the views open without overpowering the space.

When designing the bathrooms, Bradshaw implemented a variety of colors, textures and materials, making each



space unique while maintaining a cohesiveness throughout the home. She explained, “We focused on natural and authentic materials to enhance the architectural elements of the home: the concrete header beams, the steel doors and windows, the wood tongue and groove ceiling and the Lueders stone at the transition thresholds.” Floating cabinets were constructed by Michael Edwards Cabinets, with fine-tuned details like sleek hardware and mitered countertops by Delta Granite and Marble. The vein alignment and slab layout were crucial on the mitered countertops, with the designers ensuring that the veining in each stone slab flowed from the backsplash to the countertop and around the edges. They also chose wall-mounted fixtures to shorten the depth of the cabinets, creating an ideal proportion while also lessening the weight of the wall-mounted cabinets.

The extensive private art collection, carefully curated by Bradshaw and the homeowners with the assistance of Laura Rathe Fine Art, adds an element of personality to the home. When approaching the glass-walled entry, a dynamic multi-colored painting by Hunt Slonem provides a cheerful greeting and a hint at what other treasures await inside. Rounding the corner to the right is a multi-media rice paper piece by Zhuang Hong Yi.

The dining room showcases an impressive art installation by artist Lucrecia Waggoner. Surface-mounted directional track lights replace the traditional overhead chandelier to show off the grouping of custom porcelain

vessels without distraction, and supplements the natural light spilling through two full-length windows on each end of the room.

While the home does not entirely align with all principles of universal design, selective features can be integrated seamlessly and elegantly. “Overall, the project demonstrates that style does not need to be sacrificed when creating spaces for clients who intend to age in place,” said Julie. ♦

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In every bathroom, a singular statement piece was selected and supported by secondary elements. For example, the signature element in the formal powder bath is the alabaster sconces, which are complemented by the grass cloth walls, brass details on warm honey oak cabinets and golden veins in the natural stone. Lighting by Visual Comfort.

In the wine nook, glassware is artistically displayed on a wall, while a bespoke bench provides a splash of color to contrast with the abstract wall sculpture commissioned from Cynthia Saunders through AnArte Gallery. The piece is composed of plaster over dimensional saw-cut wood shapes as well as collected drift and scrap wood found by the artist. The decorative ceiling treatment is a pierced concrete slab that actually functions as a return air vent.

