

MOUNTAIN SETTING

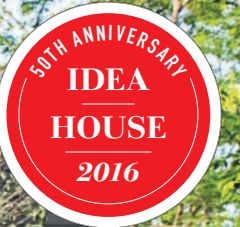
With our house nestled on a corner lot in Mt Laurel, a community located between Birmingham (our hometown!) and Double Oak Mountain, Ingram played to the woodsy locale with a dark gray palette.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF

Southern Decorating

For our **50th Anniversary Idea House**, we selected five of today's best young designers, shared old *Southern Living* stories for inspiration, and set them loose to decorate this charming cottage designed by Bill Ingram Architect. See their fresh takes on traditional Southern style

BY ZOË GOWEN / PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAUREY W. GLENN / STYLING BY BUFFY HARGETT MILLER AND ELLY POSTON



Ashley Gilbreath / THE ARCHITECTURAL DECORATOR



“Comfortable, calm colors and antique pieces make a space warm and not too fussy.”

—ASHLEY GILBREATH

A 4- by 9-foot French antique basket (once used for drying walnuts) stands out as a focal point in the foyer.

HER STYLE

► Gilbreath entered college as an architecture major, which turned out to be a great primer for her career. “If you can’t recognize the architecture, you can’t pull off good design,” she says. Her decorating is intentionally understated. And her understanding of form and color highlights a room’s architecture, or makes up for a lack of it. See how the curvy banquette she chose for the upstairs center hall (page 95) blocks less of the window.

HER INSPIRATION

► The references between Gilbreath’s foyer, bedroom, and upstairs landing and the January 1976 bedroom (shown on page 94) are clear. “We took a lot of the built-in cabinetry and mustard yellow hues into account,” she says.

HER TAKE

► “We made it accessible for today, using mustard just as an accent,” she says. “The bed coverlet speaks to that era’s style. Rather than having elaborate millwork for built-ins, we got creative with curtains.”



FRESH TAKE

This “scable” (sconce and table in one) is an ingenious creation by Montgomery, Alabama, blacksmith Jim Gowan.

THE BEDROOM / Divide and conquer.

Gilbreath measured and designed this 180-square-foot room (which has two slanted walls) 10 times before arriving at this clever arrangement. Covering the walls in this mist-colored linen allowed her to use pelmets and curtains to create two separate nooks (one for a desk and one for sitting) along the slanted walls. She placed a queen-size bed in front of the window, using an extra-low headboard to avoid blocking the view.

*The
Inspiration*
January 1976



A GLIMPSE INTO GILBREATH'S COOL COLOR CHOICES

Gray, blues, and greens are stellar for small and transitional places.

- 1 CURTAIN TRIM IN BEDROOM: 5/8" Miami Braid (31150-9000); houles.com
- 2, 3 & 4 UPSTAIRS BANQUETTE, CUSHION, AND FLANGE FABRICS: Prestwick Wool Satin in Opal, 51551, and Blush, 51542; fschumacher.com; with Pikun in Slate, 3558-15; jimthompsonfabrics.com
- 5 STAIR RUNNER: Rugby Stripe Light Blue Indoor/Outdoor Rug; dashandalbert.com
- 6 LUMBAR PILLOW FABRIC IN BEDROOM: Big Bang in Metal; pierrefrey.com
- 7 WALL AND CURTAIN FABRIC IN BEDROOM: Watermill Sky; kravet.com

THE CENTER HALLS

Keep 'em moving.

"I tried to pull off some overstated, catch-your-attention pieces. Too many tchotchkes become disorienting in a foyer," says Gilbreath. And she found a few key big things, such as the 9-foot-tall walnut basket propped against the wall, a 10-foot-long antique English table, and a 9-foot-long seascape (a tattered but still amazing find from France) that hangs above it. In regards to the moss-toned walls that Gilbreath used both upstairs and downstairs, she adds, "I'm drawn to natural colors that pull in the outdoors and keep you moving. Stark colors like neon green will stop you in your tracks." Upstairs, a game table and 9-foot-long banquette turn a landing into a useful hangout space.

clockwise from top: Visual Comfort's Linden lamps bookend the farm table's vignette; The upstairs center hall; Classic charcoal nudes topped with funky brass sconces line the stairs. **Paint color:** Escape Gray (SW 6185); sherwin-williams.com



TRADITIONAL ON THE OUTSIDE, THIS 4,130-SQUARE-FOOT COTTAGE PACKS IN SOME INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS.

1. DOUBLE PORCHES

The corner lot allows for 900 square feet of porch area wrapped with a traditional X-railing and newel posts, a more modest way for carpenters to finish posts on-site.

2. CENTER HALL

The bottom floor has a 10-foot-wide center hall, which separates the level into two zones: a more active side for the kitchen and dining room and a calmer side for the living room and master bedroom.

3. ARTISAN MILLWORK

With 11-foot ceilings throughout the home, Ingram upped the scale

on some of the millwork. The living room fireplace has a higher-than-normal mantel and firebox. The baseboards throughout the downstairs are a foot high.

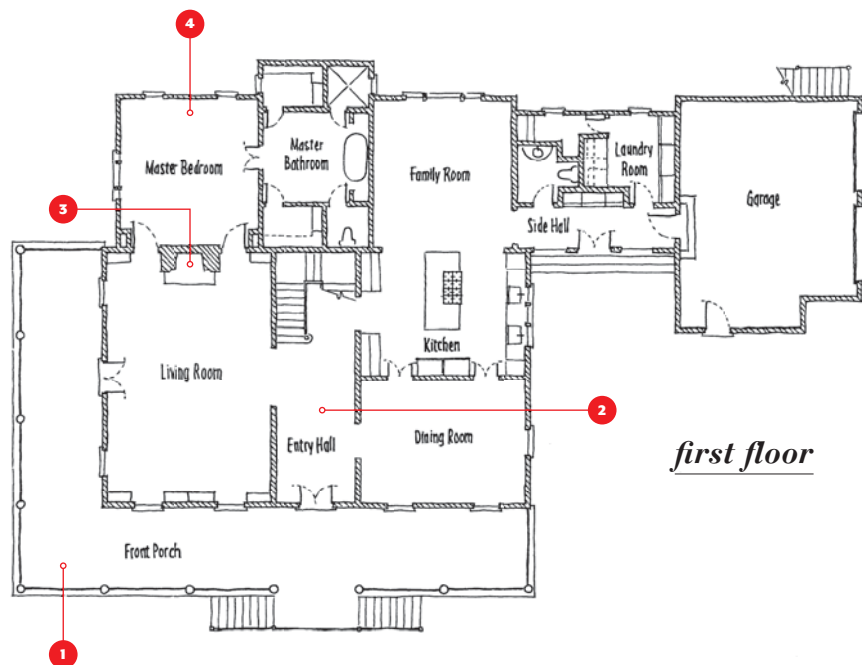
4. FIRST-FLOOR MASTER

Ingram set the master bedroom directly off the living room. This ensures regular traffic to the living room, which is an underutilized space in many homes.

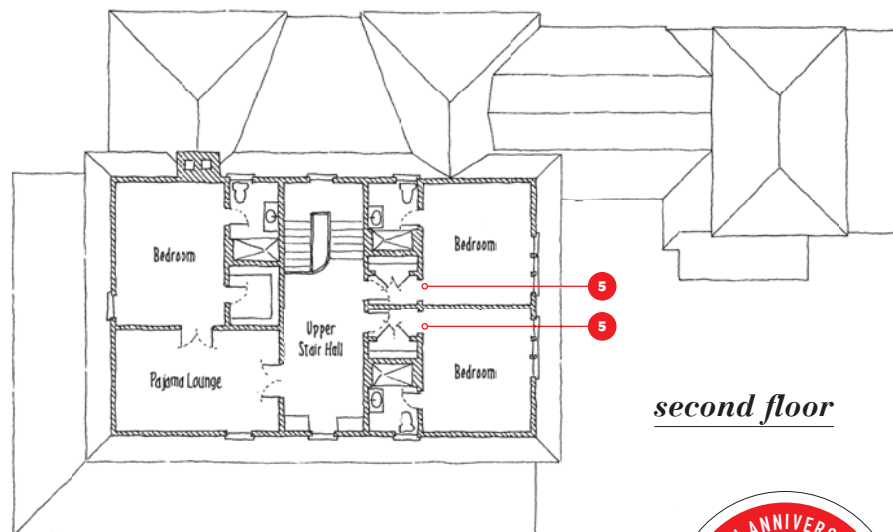
5. ACCESS POINTS

Two of the upstairs bedrooms feature small vestibules to house the closets. This also increases privacy and decreases noise from the hallway.

MOVE HERE! Learn more about Mt Laurel and other great neighborhoods at southernlivinginspiredcommunities.com.



first floor



second floor

Learn All About Mt Laurel

This year, the Mt Laurel community right outside Birmingham hosts our Idea House. Bryan Phillips of Town Builders, pictured second from left with the Mt Laurel sales and marketing team, oversaw the home's construction. Mt Laurel is a New Urbanist community with houses, shops, restaurants, a Montessori school, and a farm. Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, best known for its work with Seaside, Florida, planned the development. A portion of the home's admission ticket sales will benefit Children's of Alabama and the Library at Mt Laurel. For complete information about Mt Laurel, visit mtlaurel.com.

