

FAMILY FOCUSED

Architect David Baker and interior designer Ashley Gilbreath collaborate to create a restful respite in the heart of Baton Rouge.

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Gilbreath expertly carried the home's color palette into the formal living room while elevating the atmosphere with fine fabrics and sophisticated art. Distinctive cocktail and side tables from Noir Furniture add sculptural interest to the space. Floor-to-ceiling window treatments allow the homeowner to adjust the levels of light and privacy. A pom-pom lamp from Visual Comfort lends a touch of whimsy.



Tucked away in the Bocage neighborhood of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is one young family's little slice of paradise. With three children and two dogs, the hometown couple knew they were outgrowing their former place. And when it came time to make plans for a new build, the desire for a truly bespoke sanctuary away from the rigors of work and school inspired them to contact Montgomery, Alabama, architect David Baker of Tippet Sease Baker Architecture, whose work they'd admired in the homes of friends. "After taking a good look at the property and discussing the clients' desire for respite, we carved out this idea of an inner courtyard," says Baker.

And from there, the design of the home, centered around togetherness, began to take shape. To help meet the family's need for a personalized design that would stand the test of time, Baker turned to colleague Ashley Gilbreath, a Montgomery-based interior designer his firm had partnered with on several occasions before. Hailing from Baton Rouge, Gilbreath was familiar with local tastes and lifestyles and a perfect fit for the project. "With any new project, the goal is really to get to know the clients and make sure you understand their



Southern
home

Clockwise from left: Unique dormers bring a sense of approachability to the home's exterior while adding humble character to the interior. In the living room, Gilbreath combined high-performance fabrics with cozy silhouettes to create a relaxing and family-friendly respite. With its proximity and openness to the living room, the dining room doubles as a conversation area.



Clockwise from left: Welcoming patio furniture from Lee Industries and Summer Classics creates an ideal escape for outdoor living. The panel-mounted moose head slides back and forth to cleverly disguise a television. In the husband's retreat, stained pine panels offer a rustic backdrop for showcasing treasured taxidermy. Each room in the home is oriented to provide a view of the central courtyard. A Dutch door welcomes guests into the home's interior. Plenty of seating and lounging furniture surrounding the pool allows the homeowners to entertain with ease.

needs and vision for the space," says Gilbreath. "They're an outdoorsy family but still young and chic. They didn't want their parents' house; they wanted their own house. They didn't want something overly traditional, and it had to be able to grow with them."

The relaxed and welcoming vibe is felt immediately upon stepping through the front door of the home, where guests are greeted by a tranquil covered courtyard overlooking a sparkling pool. To the right, a cabana with a fireplace and outdoor kitchen creates a cozy gathering spot, perfect for entertaining all ages. To the left, a Dutch door provides a formal entry to the house, where the kitchen, dining, and living areas are blended to maximize family time.

Defining the individual spaces within an open concept area allows an interior designer's skills to truly shine. Gilbreath explains, "The impactful elements became much more about texture and tone, rather than color and pattern. We did lots of neutrals, lots of whites and grays, tone on tone, and a little bit of black. And small, very intentional punches of color."

Using rugs, seating, and sculptural elements, Gilbreath successfully carved the large area into distinct spaces, each with their own individual purpose. Floor-to-ceiling windows let in an abundance of cheerful light, while regionally reclaimed wooden beams add character to the 11-foot ceilings. Gilbreath's team chose pretty but hardworking fabrics for the living areas to stand up to the use of the family's three children and two dogs. "They love to do movie nights," Gilbreath says. "So the living room is very cozy and centered around being able to hang out together around the fireplace or the TV."

Form and function marry in the nearby kitchen, where a gently curving range hood separates the





Above: The rounded Hive Lights from Square Feathers expertly balance the kitchen's island. Rustic wooden beams warm the entire space. Opposite page: A green velvet banquette in the breakfast area adds a vibrant pop of color to the room's otherwise muted palette. To the left: The working pantry allows for out-of-sight prep and cleanup when entertaining guests. On-trend fluted cabinetry beautifully disguises the refrigerator and pantry, while durable Peacock Pavers provide an excellent flooring option for a busy family.

guest-facing island from the working kitchen. Fluted paneling cleverly disguises pantries and refrigerators for an overall seamless look. "My favorite things about the house are spaces, like the working kitchen, that really allow a family to function well," says Baker. "Part of the success of this house is there's a lot of volume with the 11-foot ceilings, but there are apologetic spaces that help to transition from one room to the next. The entire house is set up with windows, views, and axes that pull you from one space to the next."

With each room touching or witnessing the interior courtyard, the "heart of the home," that is, the restful atmosphere the creative team aimed to achieve is apparent from every corner. "The idea is to be the hands, the steward, and the protector of our clients. Applying what's appropriate for each property and each client," says Baker. "And I think we achieved that here."



Clockwise from left on this page, Gilbreath chose a chest from her own line, Parish, to sit at the foot of the home's primary bed. A stand-alone soaking tub in the primary bathroom delivers a relaxing end-of-day oasis. Classic sconces from Visual Comfort lend a refined touch to the space. Opposite page: In the primary bedroom's sitting area, the homeowners can curl up with a good book or simply enjoy the view of their sparkling pool from the white chaise longue by Highland House.



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