



Contemporary Comfort

By Mauri Elbel Photography by Red Pants Studio



In the hills of West Austin, surrounded by green treetop views that stretch on for miles, a lofty, light-filled home achieves a beautiful blend of contemporary style and Hill Country comfort thanks to a little professional help from Brooke Anderson.



Once the architectural phase of their stunning 7,000-square-foot Barton Creek home was complete, a couple with two sons in college turned to Brooke Anderson, Austin-based interior designer and owner of Bay Hill Design, to curate the stylish, far-from-fussy look they were after.

“They wanted a modern Hill Country house — a really comfortable, high-style home,” says Anderson. “Everything is done with an air of comfortable formality so the same room can be a space suitable for flip flops or a formal party.”

For a couple who values family time, it was important that spaces remained flexible enough for casual gatherings as well as entertaining their community of friends. Anderson’s design

philosophies positioned her as the perfect candidate for the job. While the designer admittedly loves formal spaces, she doesn’t think they are always practical in Austin or for families. Rather, Anderson curated a thoughtful layering of selections to balance the home’s contemporary, clean-lined architecture and create warm, inviting interiors.

For example, comfortable seating in the great room, custom-made by Bay Hill Design, can be dressed up or down according to the season and function. In the summer, casual washable Belgium linen slipcovers tone down the formality of the space to inspire conversation and relaxation. Beneath, custom cotton cream Schumacher Gainsborough velvet upholstery dresses up the sofas during the cooler winter months. With upholsteries made to match the hue of the neutral walls, painted

in Etiquette by Benjamin Moore®, the views take center stage.

“I didn’t want to think about color — I just wanted this beautiful light-filled setting,” says Anderson of the space. “There are punches of color and accessories that can be changed for the seasons, but the overall absence of color lets you see the greenery and the Hill Country views outside.”

Subtle pops of color come in through Fortuny pillows on the sofas and chairs. The custom banquette is wrapped in Jim Thompson velvet in luscious, deep navy blue, and it provides an inviting spot to sit, sip a cocktail and gaze out on the rolling hills.

Anderson married the sleek, European-like look of the kitchen with a selection of elements that show age and patina for lived-in warmth. The finishes are undeniably formal—luxurious marble countertops, a glistening white signature Ann Sacks® ceramic tile backsplash, polished bands of brass and touches of gold. But linen chair covers and European antiques add touches of livability and history to the otherwise refined space. The large face taken from an old Belgium clock tower presides above the double-sided fireplace. A shelf of French dough bowls and cutting boards juxtapose sleek stainless appliances, shiny Dornbracht faucets and a custom plaster box vent hood by Bay Hill Design featuring a brass band and rivets.

“There’s a layer of relaxation that comes in through the upholsteries and accessories that give the space a versatile look,” says Anderson. “It is an underlying theme throughout the house.”

White oak floors provide a rustic yet refined feel throughout the sprawling one-story home where reversed beam ceilings soar 15 feet above the great room. Throughout the home, rooms embrace each other as true open spaces that connect through archways and wide pass-throughs, creating designated spaces while allowing each room to feel as if it is part of the next. The lighting, which Anderson sourced from 15-plus different companies, becomes the jewelry of each room.



“The lighting is a modern mix of clean lines that connect the spaces by the use of mixed metals,” says Anderson who relied on a combination of bronze and brass. For instance, the kitchen island lights by Visual Comfort are a mix of brass with bronze which ties into the fabulous dining space light by Global Views which features a unique branch design in a brass and bronze mixture.



The spa-like master bath serves as a retreat for the homeowners to greet the world every day and sign off each night, says Anderson. Wrapped by gray-green Italian marble, the master bath serves as a regal retreat for the couple to renew and refresh, with antique pine doors hung on barn door hardware, Venetian glass mirrors and a zinc apron tub adding warmth.

From the moment you enter the home through the large Portella open glass and steel doors, it is obvious Anderson's selections serve to enhance rather than overshadow the surrounding views that pour in through floor to ceiling windows.

"It is just a beautiful light-filled space," says Anderson. "This is what a home should be like. It is sleek and sophisticated, but it is also inviting." ♦

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