

EASY

Living

A pandemic renovation results in happy design, happy clients, and a sophisticated, bold home.

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In this comfortable family room, the custom blue-gray sectional covered in performance fabric is paired with leather-topped stools for extra seating. *Opposite:* For the adjoining family room, the designer sourced emerald-green lounge chairs and an Apparatus light fixture.



his light and airy house in Rye gets its good vibes from the design, the flow, and from its inhabitants, a family of four with a dog that designer Tara Kantor calls "happy clients." Says Kantor: "She was so detail-oriented that everything went very smoothly from start to finish," referring to the client, who is mom to a school-age boy and girl. Although this was a pandemic construction project with meetings in masks and people standing 10 feet apart from one another, they worked together closely from a design standpoint, says Kantor. Her clients had a vision and one major request that made this project different from many others: They wanted color. Not just a hint of blue here and there, but real, saturated hues of green, orange, pink, and burgundy. For Kantor, who is known for her sophisticated designs in understated neutrals, this departure was a welcome change.

"People are often afraid of color. We always start with color and some clients kind of chicken out at the end. She did not. She went for it," says Kantor. "And it was really fun to work on." The design merges Kantor's sensibilities of interiors that are simple, chic, and not overdone while having more going on visually with both color and patterns. The many custom details throughout the 6,000-square-foot house, which was a gut renovation and rebuild of a classic Colonial, make the home feel special and personal.





Grand Entry

In the front hall, the double-height ceiling makes a statement while also calling for lighting that takes up serious real estate. Kantor sourced a fixture that echoes the metal stair railing and looks more like a sculpture or mobile, with substantial height, but also has openness to it. The spiked lighting continues in the living room, into which the entry hall opens with an Apparatus fixture that's wrapped in a custom suede from Holly Hunt. Throughout the home, Kantor employs details like these that link the open spaces and draw your eye to the next room, whether that's complementary rugs or related colors.

Color Therapy

During sourcing meetings — some held outside in the designer's backyard — Kantor and her clients selected fabrics and finishes that met their demand for distinctive hues. In the living room, a pair of green Sean Woolsey chairs became a focal point. In the dining room, a trippy, hand-painted Porter Teleo wallpaper, with flowers in red, green, and blue, set the tone for the room. For the dining room, which is painted in Benjamin Moore Kendall Charcoal, Kantor sourced a credenza in a shade of blue leather that's almost identical to the flowers in the wallcovering and a custom wire-brushed walnut table that anchors the room. The client wanted a rich navy for the Butler's Pantry, and Kantor searched high and low to locate a navy mosaic tile before picking one from Artistic Tile for the backsplash.

The color throughout the house is balanced with soothing neutrals, like the wood cabinets and built-ins in the family room finished in a brown cerused wood with gray tones. The oak flooring throughout gives a calming effect in the not-too-light, not-too-dark shade that was picked after reviewing dozens of samples. Wood tables also add balance, while textural rugs from Fayette Studio ground the design.



A light and airy entryway with modern staircase announces the home's open layout in style. *Opposite:* In the butler's pantry, the homeowner requested navy and a mosaic from Artistic Tile served as the perfect backdrop for this chic-but-functional room leading into the colorful dining room.



In the white and wood kitchen, a sizeable island is a workhorse, topped with durable Caesarstone. The eating area features a custom oval table, also with a Caesarstone top, and surrounded by Gubi beetle plastic shell chairs with wooded legs.



Family-friendly

With two kids and a dog, the family needed décor that is durable and easy to keep clean. Kantor had plenty of tricks up her sleeve. For the kitchen, the client's wish list included Arabesque marble — a surface that's beautiful but not very forgiving. "Everyone always wants marble on the counter-

tops, and I'll say, if you're the type of person who wants everything to look the same as the day you got it, you're not a good candidate for marble counters." Her solution? A marble backsplash and Caesarstone on the counters and island. "Your eye goes right to the backsplash anyway," she explains. "It makes the backsplash pop more." The rest of the kitchen is equally rugged, with Gubi Beetle chairs (plastic and wipeable;

nothing stains) around an oval wooden table that's topped with Caesarstone from Marble America. The bar stools at the island are custom with performance fabrics, vinyl seats and boucle backs. In the adjacent family room, the custom sectional is covered in a blue-gray fabric that's high performance as well.

Neutrals reign in this primary bedroom decorated in creams and taupes, the bed flanked by Lawson Fenning side tables and pendant light fixtures by Suda. A marble-patterned wallpaper in the vestibule adds interest to the space between the bedroom and primary bath.



Soothing Style

The room that's most minimal and neutral in the home is the primary bedroom, the couple's retreat, where, Kantor says, "We wanted a soothing vibe." She kept everything muted, light pendants by Suda, a soft, wool rug from Fayette Studio, and pillow fabric that has a pattern with small hints of mauve. Leading from the bedroom into the primary bath, Kantor had fun with a marble-esque wallpaper, which brought a bolder visual to connect the hallway to the bathroom. The blend of fresh design ideas, color, and simplicity throughout the home give the whole house an inviting, comfortable feeling. It's a collaboration that left both designer and client satisfied. "It really was an easy, great project," says Kantor. And of the clients, she says, "They just love it!" **WH**