

Esprit DESIGN in Thomas Point

Texture and color combine to create an eclectic sitting room.



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PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAUREEN PORTO



A living room can be relaxing yet stimulating. The interior designer notes that the home owners "are not afraid to go for the unique. They like to push the edge with things like color"

The owners of this standout Thomas Point home are a real, live family with two active sons (one teen, one tween). So it is no surprise that the word "durable" came up when describing their decorating needs. However, let's make it perfectly clear that durable does *not* mean drab or utilitarian.

Sparkling might better describe the home. And colorful. Interior designer Wesley Thompson Pehlke, of Simply Wesley in Annapolis, tells us that the owners "are not afraid to go for the unique. They like to push the edge with things like color." The fabric used on the side chairs in the family room—F. Schumacher & Co.'s Chiang Mai Dragon—perfectly illustrates their penchant.

The assignment this time was strictly aesthetic. The home's "bones" were already wonderful—no structural changes were involved.

The contents and furnishings would be tasked with reflecting the style sensibilities of the family. For instance, Wesley explains, "They wanted a family room where they could put their feet up knowing it would be a high traffic area." Which is why she covered the Lillian August ottoman in a Kravet faux leather lizard print fabric. The style of the Vanguard sofa is a favorite and the sturdy, yet classic, indoor/outdoor fabric is capable of withstanding any active family.

A custom cabinet (by Old Biscayne Designs) cleverly conceals a large screen TV behind sliding mirrored doors. And who wouldn't love that whimsical suit of armor (the one item in the room that came from their previous home)? "We found that at an antique store and just popped him into our Jeep," the lady of the house tells us. "Occasionally we move him around the house just to change things up." As for the bold sisal rug... "You've got to have stripes somewhere," Wesley says with a chuckle.



The wallpaper is made out of hemp and has a silver shimmer that picks up the shine in the striped Kravet chair.

The formal living room is rich and lustrous—without sacrificing comfort. That comfort is enhanced by incorporating two pieces from the owners' previous home: the antique cabinet (brought over from Italy by ancestors) and the chartreuse sofa "in a shade that works well with the aquas, teals and turquoises," says Wesley. "Peacock colors" are woven into the décor through the inspirational pillow on the sofa. (It's all about artfully tying in tiny details.) Meanwhile, the high ceiling gets a dramatic splash of color that manages to further instill a cozy quality. The surprise here is the showstopper Robert Abbey light fixture. "They loved the Sputnik style of it," Wesley tells us, a perfect pairing with the mod shag rug.

The Les Touches fabric (in black and white by Brunschwig & Fils) on the wingback chairs boasts an abstract animal print.

There are repeated references to animals throughout the home, such as the ottoman in the family room and the hair-on-hide fabric for the living room ottoman. The somewhat zany and imaginative end tables (found online) demonstrate that the decor never takes itself too seriously.

The relatively square formal dining room was practically asking for a round table at its center. Bernhardt chairs in the color white may seem a bold choice, but the indoor/outdoor fabric does take most of the risk out of the equation. "We have spilled things," the owner shares "and with these chairs, there was no problem." The distinctive dark wallpaper, in a tone-on-tone trellis pattern by Schumacher, blends well with the black banding on the draperies. The Niermann Weeks chandelier (another holdover from the previous home) adds a final dazzling

touch. The dining room is the owners' favorite room. This gracious hostess wants guests to be so comfortable "they don't want to leave."

The office may be Wesley's favorite. The wallpaper is made out of hemp and has a silver shimmer that picks up the shine in the striped Kravet chair and the wow-factor geometrics of the metallic hide-on-hair rug. Along with the shimmer, Wesley points out, there are textures galore. The desk is covered in shagreen, a type of rawhide, in a faux sharkskin pattern. Wesley designed the custom cabinetry (with Woodworking by Design, a family-owned business in Owings, Maryland) to create an indispensable office piece. "The washed finish ties in with the room's color story," Wesley says. "Details are really important to me—the knobs and the pulls are leather. Again, another texture." The Currey & Company chandelier lights the room, and possibly the soul. It's shaped like a lotus which promises good energy. We can all use a little Zen," Wesley assures us.

Zen and serenity take center stage in the completely redone master bedroom as well. It's a large room that easily accommodates the impressive platform-style bed by Vanguard. There's a Bernhardt dresser on the "his" side of the bed and a vanity on the "hers." The ottoman is in the same print as the drapes, in creams, browns and grays. The room suggests a cloud of comfort. How perfect.

The owners were looking for "a comfortable home, not too modern and not too precious." Mission accomplished. **PH**





Each room in this home has its own distinct details. The dark wallpaper, in a tone-on-tone trellis pattern by Schumacher, blends well with the black banding on the draperies.

RESOURCES:

INTERIOR DESIGN: Simply Wesley (Wesley Thompson Pehlke), simplywesley.com, Annapolis, Maryland | FAMILY ROOM CABINETRY: Old Biscayne Designs, oldbiscaynedesigns.com, Americus, Georgia | DINING ROOM CHANDELIER: Niermann Weeks, niermannweeks.com, Millersville, Maryland | OFFICE CABINETRY: Woodworking by Design, 410.257.0092, Owings, Maryland