





Above: Limestone and iron wood make up the exterior along with specially mullion-free windows. Landscape firm MESA Design Group added ball-shaped boxwoods in the front yard and spiral ones for the planters that lead to the home's entrance.
 Below: A banquette designed by Wagner for the living room shows off fabric by Hobbs & McKeize edged with Samuel & Sons trim. The artwork is by Jim Brooks.
 Opposite: The clients' rug from their prior residence served as a starting point for the palette throughout the home. The glamorous chandelier, sideboard, and lamps are from Jan Showers. The art is by Dan Christiansen. Previous pages: A pretty blend of finishes and textures set the stage in the foyer. For the living room, the clients' favorite white is in play along with some rusty neutrals and gold accents. A custom ottoman is dressed in Rose Tarlow fabric. The chandelier is by Johnathan Browning.



Change can be intimidating, but it can also be invigorating. That's what Claire and Dwight Emanuelsen, clients of Dallas designer Shelby Wagner, must have certainly felt when they left a very traditional home where they had lived for 20-plus years to embrace a more contemporary style in a new neighborhood. "We loved our old home, but with our children out of the nest, Dwight and I were open to a change if the right opportunity presented itself," says Claire. "We discovered this house when it was about 80 percent complete and the owner put it on the market. We realized it could work beautifully for us." The Emanuelsen's now love the open floor plan, which allows for an ideal flow throughout the main floor. "You can walk from the front door to the very back of the house without ever making a turn," notes Claire.

There was a little hesitation at first, however, as Wagner explains, "Claire was worried that the home was such a departure from the past, but I told her to envision the rooms with her things in them and the warmth they would impart." Those things included antique furniture and mirrors collected over the decades, many from Claire's native New Orleans. What wasn't an issue was the setting. The back of the house looks out to Turtle Creek and beyond that a park. "When you are standing in the great room, it feels like the green spaces are an extension of your backyard," says Wagner.

Since the Emanuelsen's purchased the house during construction, they were fortunate to inherit longtime talented and like-minded collaborators, architect Mark Hoesterey and Mark Danuser of Tatum Brown Custom Homes. When drawing up the plans for this narrow lot, Hoesterey landed on an L-shaped design with a garage on the side to make the best use of the space. "I call it a contemporary, indoor-outdoor home," he says. "All the living spaces downstairs give that pool court a big hug. And when you are in the primary bathroom and bedroom balcony, it's as if you are hovering over nature's canopy, rather like a tree house." The exterior of Texas limestone and iron is punctuated by single-pane windows from Germany. "They are clad in white oak that is so beautiful that most designers just have us do a clear finish to show off the beauty of the wood," says Danuser.

One of the clients' favorite aspects of the design is the abundance of windows everywhere. "Light floods throughout this home, and light makes me so happy! The sliding glass doors leading from the kitchen and great



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room to the covered outdoor patio, pool, and firepit allow us to open the interior spaces to a wonderful outdoor living area," says Claire. "Every day we have ducks, ducklings, geese, and even a swan in our own backyard—this connection with nature is so good for the soul."

The design team was able to tweak the existing plans to include a grasscloth-wrapped bar area outside the dining room and turned a lower-level playroom into a wine tasting and media space, among others. For the interiors, Wagner was tasked with making the house feel less contemporary but also to lean into the openness of the design. "I wanted everything to blend together and make sense," says Wagner. "The Emanuelsons had this dining room rug that I always thought was beautiful, so a lot of the colors came from that." The designer pulled his clients' favorite white for the living room and blue for the great room, with a sprinkling of gold tones throughout on the main floor. One standout feature is a captivating wallcovering for the dining room ceiling made to look like hand-applied gold leaf, which casts a flattering glow on dinner guests.

He was also challenged to create as much seating in the living room as possible since his clients are avid entertainers. The room was not really meant for two seating areas, so the designer had the ingenious idea to install a custom L-shaped banquette to create separate gathering spots and even found a home for the grand piano. This challenging space is now a favorite among many. "It's large enough for a festive cocktail gathering and intimate enough for two of us to enjoy a glass of wine on the banquette overlooking the pool," says Claire.



The great room shows off a studied mix of texture, such as the handwoven rope armchair, ottomans in tiger velvet, and striped sheer window panels. Opposite, clockwise from top left: The existing floor plan was tweaked to include a sophisticated raffia-wrapped bar with quartzite countertops. The contemporary style kitchen features a sleek wooden waterfall island. The breakfast room's modern edge springs from a Knoll Saarinen table while the Twiggy David Istanta chandelier speaks to the outside.

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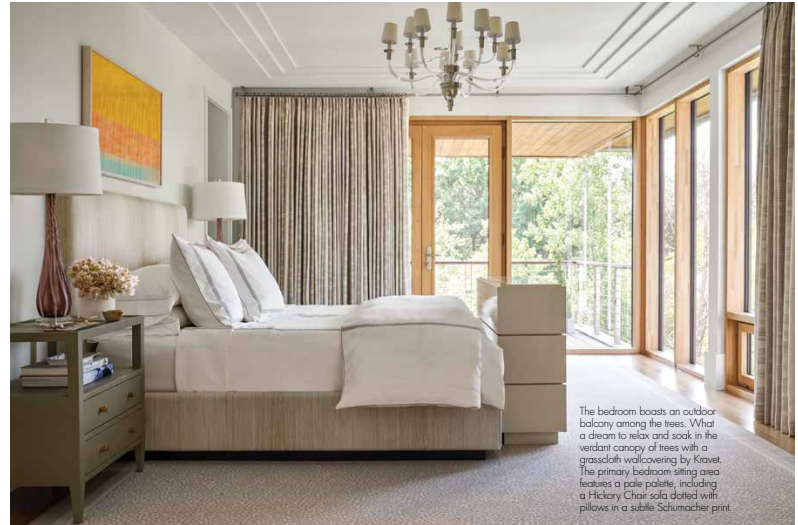


Clockwise from top left: Artwork by Larry Zax adds a colorful wow moment set against the ipe walls. A saturated dark plum hue envelops the study and provides an ideal backdrop for artwork by Aaron Porazette. A wall of glass opens to the outdoor wooden covered deck.



This was the second project Wagner has worked on with the Emanuelsons, and a third is in progress, so the designer really understood how the family lives and how they use their spaces. "We wanted the interiors to be clean and elegant, yet warm, cozy, and comfortable with soothing color and texture, but we also have three granddaughters under the age of three and wanted to be sure that nothing was so precious that it would be off-limits to them," says Claire. Many of the outstanding lamps and overhead lighting were designed by interior designer Jan Showers, a personal friend of Claire and Wagner. These include a Murano glass chandelier in the dining room as well as numerous glass and ceramic table lamps that inject a sense of colorful liveliness.

The extensive contemporary art collection (many inherited from Dwight's father) graces the walls in every space, so Wagner kept that in mind, making decorating choices that temper the works while giving them starring roles at time. Claire admits it was a difficult balance to achieve, but Wagner nailed it, she says. The Emanuelsons trusted their team of professionals and couldn't be more delighted in this new life chapter. "We love hosting small dinner parties, large cocktail parties, pizza and movie nights, Easter Egg hunts—you name it," says Claire. "But we are just the happiest when we are surrounded by all the wonderful people in our lives."



The bedroom boasts an outdoor balcony among the trees. What a dream to relax and soak in the verdant canopy of trees with a grasscloth wallcovering by Kismet. The primary bedroom sitting area features a pale palette, including a Hickory Chair sofa dotted with pillows in a subtle Schumacher print.

