

Space, Location, SPECIFIC DESIGN



Couple's "must haves" include three essential elements

“**S**ince we married in 2002, we’ve lived in three homes, and each move was dictated by a need for more space both indoors and out,” disclosed Deneige and Derek Dooley with smiles on their faces. Their current abode is the result of their own vision, enhanced by experts in architecture, custom building, design and décor.

Now, with more than 7,000 square feet on a large lot full of mature oak trees and plenty of room to play inside and out, they’ve got the right place. “Luck and a gut feeling had much to do with how we got here,” explained this father, who also owns Hamilton Steele, an award-winning landscape design/build firm. “We knew the street and loved the trees and lot sizes here; however, a significant portion of the street was built on already, and any lots that came available were typically sold through private transactions.”

“It was a cool evening in December, and we were just driving through the neighborhood looking around,” shared Deneige.

Derek continued, “We’d had our eye on this place for a while,

Text by: Cheryl Alexander

Photography by: TK Images

Architecture by: Travis Mattingly
and Ben Patterson

Construction by: Corbel Custom Homes

Landscape by: Hamilton Steele

Interiors by: Cindy Witmer,
Cindy Witmer Designs



THESE PAGES: An antique Swedish clock found at Joyce Horn greets guests as they enter the front door. In the background, the library is one of the few rooms with a pop of deep color on the walls and cabinets. } Though the original plans called for a brick fireplace and traditional built-ins, the plastered arched niches with reclaimed wood cabinet fronts below create a simpler and warmer atmosphere. The olive vessels make a statement without the clutter of many knickknacks that tend to distract from the design. The repurposed shutters hide the family's large screen TV. Hien Lam upholstery; curtains by Linda Falk; limestone fireplace by Alamo Stone.

so I followed my instinct and some advice I once heard that 'everything is for sale.' I parked the car, knocked on the door, introduced myself to the elderly homeowner and simply told her I wanted to buy her property. The owner actually told me, "Today is your lucky day; just this weekend I decided I wanted to sell."

They finalized the deal, demolished the home, began putting together their design team and started building 14 months after closing. "The lot and neighborhood offered exactly what we desired," she said. "We have a great lot on a quiet street with mature trees and plenty of natural foliage to provide privacy, and we are in a large enough neighborhood for our kids to ride bikes."

So... space? Check. Location? Check. Next? Design.

Style Influence

Derek is from Houston; Deneige is from South Louisiana. The couple met in Houston through mutual friends after both completed graduate school. When they married two years later and set out on their family

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The brick floors continue into the spacious breakfast room which looks out onto the beautifully landscaped backyard. The table was custom made from a local craftsman to fit perfectly in the area. A custom-built bench serves to seat more children, so the family can have casual dinners together. Chandelier from Memorial Antiques & Interiors and architectural wall hanging from Tyner Antiques, Atlanta, GA. } Antique beams are the tie that binds the kitchen and the family room. Shades of blue in the island also tie into the pillows on the sofa to allow the rooms to blend seamlessly.



plans, their styles began to fuse into what is now their family dream home.

She explained the exterior, “Though I’m the Louisiana native, my husband and I have both always connected with Hays Town. In particular, his use of stucco and brick, parapet walls and wooden headers above windows on the exterior as well as antique beams, brick arches and combination of brick/wood floors in the interior.”

Her husband continued, “And as far as the façade of the house, it really started with our desire for a more modern, French interior. We carried that theme to the exterior and made sure to design in French elements such as large archways, a gabled roof, French doors with full-length, operable, louvered shutters, that great slurried antique brick (so popular with Hays Town design) and gas lighting.”

Interior Design

Some of the couple’s interior design needs were dictated by their family considerations. With six children, a must for them is an interior that is open, warm and welcoming. “When I say open, I am talking both floor plan and open views to the outside,” explained this conscientious, multi-tasking mother. “We desired a modern country French interior ambiance, which meant combining Old World French elements with subtle splashes of modern features.”

To achieve the right balance of old and new, the homeowners worked with their designer, Cindy Witmer, to implement this design throughout the house. Deneige assured, “Cindy understood our desires and did an excellent job making our wishes a reality. She was highly recommended to us, and we were impressed with how familiar she was with the style we desired. She also made the process enjoyable for us by listening, taking action and being very professional in every way. We utilized Cindy to decorate the entire home which allowed her



French country inspired this family kitchen, which features a large Calacatta marble island, reclaimed french tiles on the countertops by Chateau Domingue, custom lanterns by Bill Pena and wonderful brick floors. The row of barstools allows every child to have a seat. Hand painted tiles by ADR. } Southern-style brick arches frame the entry to the family room from the entry. Exposed wooden beams are another distinct Southern detail and are used throughout the home. } Custom-carved sliding doors from reclaimed wood easily open and close to mom's home office refuge.





to take the same theme throughout the house.”

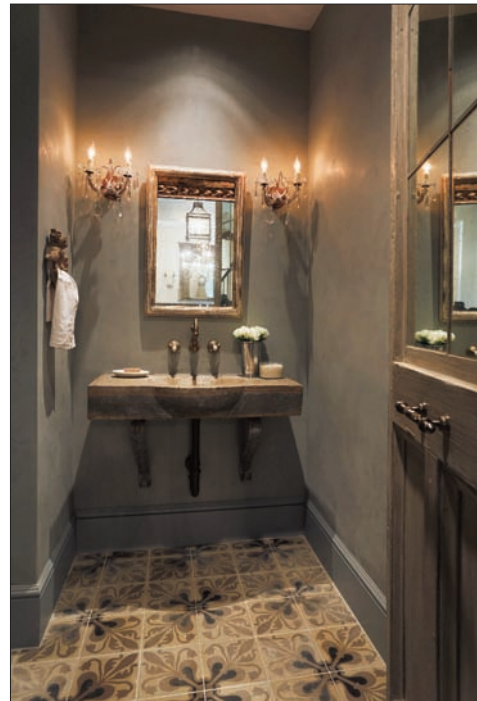
Cindy explained, “My challenge with this project, aside from accommodating the needs of a family of this size and children of these ages, was to fuse the modern with the Old World.”

Some of the Old World elements included in the house are:

- Reclaimed French stone on kitchen countertops from Chateau Domingue
- Repurposed limestone sink from Chateau Domingue
- Reclaimed antique pine beams throughout the house
- Both antique and custom made lighting throughout the house
- Antique hand-carved oak floors
- Elegant Old World kitchen and dining room tables
- French olive jars in the family room
- Antique tiles used on powder room floor from Chateau Domingue

Common in Europe and found more and more in current trending interiors are pieces of custom built furniture for storage versus standard built-ins. The couple’s designer achieved this by placing beautiful, hand-made pieces in the keeping room, dining room and the master suite.

The more modern country French elements included in the home’s interior design are a large kitchen island with a beautiful Calacatta marble countertop and a large Shaw farmhouse sink. The optimal word here is large; with the family’s six children and associated friends, the kitchen island is a constant gathering spot to refuel for the next activity. So with these features — a large countertop, numer-





THESE PAGES: The library off the main entry is a transitional contrast to the more French country design found elsewhere in the home. High gloss enameled cabinetry and grass cloth on the walls create a modern space to entertain. } The formal powder room is a small jewel. Reclaimed pine door was fitted with antique mirror and opens up to even more repurposed elements found at Chateau Domingue. The painted concrete tile floors and blue limestone sink are taken straight from the French countryside and define the charming atmosphere the homeowner and designer were trying to achieve. } In dining room, a French sideboard was found in Round Top. Mirror and chandelier from Memorial Antiques & Interiors. Rug by Creative Flooring and window treatment by Linda Falk. Custom-built table seats 12 for their ever-growing family.

ous barstools and a large sink — the homeowners are prepared to serve in a moment's notice.

Elegance is not, however, lost on function in this space. Though large, the kitchen island is also very elegant. The undertone of the Calacatta marble is light and bright for the kitchen, while the gray veining in the marble blends perfectly with the gray glazed cabinets, plastered walls and surrounding reclaimed Chateau stone. Cindy designed the kitchen and keeping room to be very cozy at the same time. For this reason, and also because of the large window that overlooks an antique sugar kettle planter, the kitchen and keeping room are favorites for both husband and wife.

The couple loves the beautiful antique brick archways in the foyer and between family room and kitchen; they love the antique brick floors with various patterns in the kitchen, mudroom, wife's office, and downstairs utility; they love the authenticity of the cool plastered walls throughout the home and selective glazed cabinets. And they love the special features in each bedroom.

As it should be, each bedroom is defined by its occupant. The master suite is grand with a cathedral ceiling and antique beams, and the master bathroom includes a spectacular Calacatta marble counter and shower and a beautiful limestone floor. And the kids each have secret rooms in their bedrooms that they love to play and read in.

Outdoor Design

As the owner of a landscaping firm, it was important to Derek that the exterior be unique and that the house have many large windows along the front and back to enjoy the views. The house design included



a loggia with a zinc-top table, outdoor grilling area, TV and surrounding seating.

However, the couple desired additional outdoor living spaces. With this in mind, they integrated a large, stand-alone fireplace — with the same slurred antique brick as indoors — that can be enjoyed while others lounge on the loggia.

They also built a large bluestone and brick patio area parallel to the breakfast and family rooms that encompasses that aforementioned antique sugar kettle, a raised brick seat wall, beautiful zinc planter boxes and a beautiful wooden bench for additional seating. “It’s a great outdoor space where my kids can play outside, and I can see them from inside,” said Deneige.

In the front, the home is accented with raised, slurred antique brick planter walls, a bluestone and brick sidewalk and a grand landing area that lead to a covered porch. The porch features a faux bois bench and an oversized Bevelo gas lamp.

The right size, the right location and the right design. This family of eight has settled into the place that is perfect for them. ●



THESE PAGES: The master bedroom is draped with custom linens as well as a coverlet and duvet by Kuhl Linscomb. The headboard is a custom design and made by Hien Lam, as well as the chairs. The arched mirrors are a lovely backdrop to the Aiden Gray lamps and dressers found in Round Top. Window shades by the Shade Shop. } Carrera countertops are a must-have for a light and airy master bath. The light fixtures are Circa, floors by Materials Marketing and plumbing fixtures are Hollywood Hardware. } The homeowners, who own a landscape company, made a special effort to encourage beauty and comfort while also providing ample opportunities to watch their children in the manicured play area. } The backyard terrace is a wonderful mixture of antique brick liner, Pennsylvania blue stone and slurred antique brick. The sugar kettle overflowing with seasonal flowers and the Bevelo gas lanterns are a must for this Southern Louisiana native.

