

In the dining room, the team took special care in ensuring that the patina on hand-hewn beams accentuating the ceiling strikes the right balance between rustic and refined.



GOOD AS BLUE

From royal to sky, interior designer Lori Andriot of Bittners explores the many moods of blue.

Written by Bridget Williams / Photography by Andrew Kung

How ironic that a home designed for entertaining would be completed at the precipice of a pandemic. Fortunately, in the right hands, seemingly singular and simple elements—paint, wood, textiles, and light—can be transporting, with carefully executed architecture and interior design allowing the senses to slip outside the boundaries of four walls. Such is the case with a residence orchestrated by Lori Andriot of Bittners in collaboration with architect Daniel Grimm and builders Clayton Langan and Ed James from Karzen Langan + James and Four Boards Woodworks.

"We focused on foundational and functional details in every room," said Lori, citing the builders' deft skills in applying elaborate and beautiful woodwork and unique ceiling details such as the paneled and barreled ceiling in the kitchen and the groin vault ceiling in the main hallway.

This project represents Lori's second collaboration with the homeowner, and she had the good fortune of being involved before ground was broken. During a meeting in 2017, when neutral color palettes were still the rage, the wife, who says she enjoys the interior design process, went against prevailing trends

and her own largely minimalist inclinations by presenting Lori with a photograph of a bold blue sofa culled from her organized idea file. Taking this cue, Lori worked like a watercolorist, lighting touching a loaded brush to a white canvas and allowing the color to subtly infuse the ethereal interiors. "The look is traditional with a little edge," explained Lori.

High on the homeowners' wish list was an abundance of natural light provided in spades in the double-height entry and living room. In the former, the gentle curve of the staircase is accentuated by a custom iron railing by Bluegrass Ornamental Iron and floor-to-ceiling flat panel wainscoting. A niche created beneath the stair's curvature provides an ideal spot for displaying a contemporary sculpture on a wood pedestal.

In the adjacent dining room, the team took special care in ensuring that the patina on hand-hewn beams accentuating the ceiling strikes the right balance between rustic and refined. A restrained display of white vases of varying sizes resting on shelves within a pair of built-in bookcases painted blue that flank the wide doorway is a testament to the power of careful editing.

Bifolding doors create a wide opening for unfettered movement from the bar to the screened patio with a stone fireplace.



The kitchen's barrel vault ceiling seems to amplify natural light provided by windows over the sink and at the eat-in area. Expertly designed to continue the clutter-free aesthetic found throughout, there is a place for every accoutrement.

A veterinary assistant is credited with the pencil drawings that capture the unique personalities of the couple's 11 dogs.



In the foyer, the gentle curve of the staircase is accentuated by a custom iron railing by Bluegrass Ornamental Iron and floor-to-ceiling flat panel wainscoting.

Varying patterns in the tile used for the primary bath create a feeling of movement and energy.



Blue is most predominant in the living room, beginning with a custom contemporary rug from Anabel's, whose pattern recalls the randomness of a well-worn Oriental carpet. The seating area, centered on the fireplace, features the vibrant blue Ultrasuede sofa mentioned earlier. Echoing the hue is a custom abstract artwork resting on the fireplace mantle. The art is "framed" by trim work that draws the eye upward to unique ceiling details.

The wife is an accomplished cook, so it was paramount that the kitchen is as practical as it is pretty. The barrel vault ceiling seems to amplify natural light provided by windows over the sink and at the eat-in area. Expertly designed to continue the clutter-free aesthetic found throughout, there is a place for every accoutrement.

A sentient designer can use color to create specific moods. In a home with a predominance of white, which signals feelings of order and calm, Lori did a 180 in the bar, embracing an ebonized ethos that conjures the Rive Gauche, and the inebriating Parisian era that belonged to bohemian artists, writers, and philosophers. "[The wife] wanted a dark and dramatic upstairs bar with a New Orleans speakeasy vibe," explained Lori.

She made the space even more provocative using ebony-stained wood, brass inlays, antique mirror, cremone bolts, and very textural fabrics, including grasscloth on the recess of the

box beam ceiling. Changing the hardwood floors' pattern from wood strip to herringbone signifies a change in energy from orderly to more off-the-cuff. Walls are clad in cypress. Fourboards Woodworks fashioned the handsome bar from oak as a nod to Kentucky's bourbon industry. A custom rug from Bittners defines the seating area in front of the fireplace. Bifolding doors create a wide opening for unfettered movement from the bar to a screened patio with a stone fireplace.

A focal wall of solid marble with a mitered edge in the primary bedroom is a feat of engineering. Muted blues in the restful space are found in the rug and accent pillows. Artful use of natural stone, selected with the assistance of Robin Straub at Louisville tile, continues in the primary bathroom, where varying patterns rather than color are employed to create a feeling of movement and energy. An extra-thick stone atop the vanities reflects au courant inclinations. Dimensional tile from Ann Sacks accentuates a wall behind a free-standing tub. One imagines that bathing in this airy environment must feel like floating on a cloud.

Home as a haven has taken on new meaning during the pandemic. While this newly finished residence was designed for entertaining, for these fortunate homeowners, sheltering at home has never been so stylish. 