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# A Change of Mood

With modern, family-friendly amenities and a clean take on classic style, this stately Bay Area property is ready for its next chapter.

WRITTEN BY CHRISTINE DEORIO  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON



Architecture: Charlie Barnett, Charlie Barnett Associates Interior Design: Heather Hilliard, Heather Hilliard Design  
Home Builder: Matt Gomez, Allwood Construction





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ore than a half-century ago, when a prominent Bay Area heiress commissioned a home for a sprawling property studded with old-growth oaks and redwoods, she had one thing in mind:

entertaining on a grand scale.

Decades later, when a young couple purchased the property and began designing a new residence, they approached it with a different perspective: creating a comfortable family abode. They hired architect Charlie Barnett, designer Heather Hilliard and builder Matt Gomez to create a dwelling that would accommodate their modern lifestyle—complete with a gym and sauna, a media room, his-and-her offices, and a bunk room and playroom for their young children.

After determining the family's needs couldn't be met by the existing home, Barnett and design associate Gilberto Floresta decided to create a new, two-story structure with an elegant scale and a tempered formality. Working with the original residence's classical, U-shaped courtyard footprint, they created a floor plan divided into distinct public and private zones. At the center, a two-story foyer—accessed by three glass entry doors and flanked by twin staircases—opens onto a living room with an almost 18-foot-tall window wall that “gives you an axial perspective of the site from the start,” Barnett explains. “This procession of spaces into the south-facing courtyard makes the house feel alive.”

The homeowners had a clear vision of their new abode's aesthetic: “They wanted a very classic, timeless white house,” says Barnett, who paired white stucco- and French limestone-clad exterior walls with a black slate roof and steel windows that lend a sense of modernity to the structure's traditional shapes and proportions. Inside, Hilliard, senior designer Fleur Keyes and Barnett collaborated on clean interpretations of traditional details, from the living room's 24-foot-tall, coffered ceiling—which builder Matt Gomez's team finished Michelangelo-style from atop rolling scaffolding—to wall paneling “that pays homage to traditional Shaker paneling, but is just 3/16 of an inch thick,” Gomez says. “We had

to reinvent how we put it all together.” The thin profile “feels very fresh and contemporary,” says Hilliard, who amplified the effect in the dining room and study with atmospheric blue-gray paint colors, which also created “moments of intimacy in the sprawling house,” she says. “You feel really enveloped in the color and in the space.”

In the living room, three distinct groupings of furniture—in blue and gray wools, bouclés and mohairs mixed with creamy-hued parchments, linens and leathers—create a sense of coziness. Before the limestone fireplace, a teak armchair holds court with a tufted sofa and curvaceous armchairs. On the other side of the room, an intimate conversation area and game table are anchored by a carved-wood credenza designed to look like an antique. “I think it's so important to have a mix of new and custom pieces and a few antiques to create a layered look that feels collected,” Hilliard says. Which is why, in addition to scouring the New York, Paris and Bay Area showrooms, the designers invited their client on a tour of Los Angeles shops. “We met her at 7:30 a.m. one day and said, ‘I hope you brought your running shoes,’” Hilliard recalls. “We covered a lot of ground looking for interesting pieces and she was really game for it.” The day's finds include an Arrow pendant by Apparatus that illuminates the study's plush upholstered chairs that “make you want to sit for a long time,” Hilliard says.

In the family wing, which overlooks a new pool and pool house, there's a shift to lighter tones, including soft-white marble countertops and cabinetry in the kitchen, and cool-gray and warm-taupe furnishings under the family room's tongue-and-groove wood ceiling. “The wife is blond, with sparkly blue eyes, so you can imagine how great she looks in these colors,” Hilliard says. “We always want our clients to look good in their homes.”

It's clear the design team wanted them to feel good as well. “What's key to this house is that it's comfortable for informal family gatherings, but you can also picture a very elegant party happening in the living room and courtyard,” Barnett says. So, although this property's history had a more imposing beginning, its future is all about laid-back California living. ■

Three glass-and-steel doors open onto the two-story foyer of a stately Bay Area home. Designer Heather Hilliard furnished the space simply, with Liaigre's Table Cochon in oak, Gregorius Pineo's Palisades stools in a Desert Black iron finish with Jerry Pair Leather upholstery, and a custom pendant fabricated by Phoenix Day.

Near the fireplace, a Misole console by Christian Astuguevieuille backs A. Rudin's tufted No. 2736 sofa; Moon Garden with Blue #2 by Silvia Poloto hangs above the mantel. Lucca Studio's Bennet chairs complement the Anees Upholstery games table. The bronze-and-glass pendants were made by Phoenix Day.





A hip-vaulted, tongue-and-groove wood ceiling sets a casual tone in the kitchen, breakfast area and family room. A mix of seating—Bacco chairs from Design Within Reach and custom benches upholstered in Perennials fabric—pairs with a custom table fabricated by Fabian's Fine Furniture and a pendant by The Urban Electric Co.

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—CHARLIE BARNETT



**Right:** A custom-designed walnut armchair upholstered in Métaphores' Mies Carbone pulls up to an oak desk in the library; both pieces are Hilliard designs made by Fabian's Fine Furniture.

The built-in bookshelves are painted in Benjamin Moore's Blue Note and accented with a handcrafted brass ladder rail.

**Opposite:** A Bardiglio marble-clad fireplace and slate-colored walls make the study inviting; armchairs crafted by Jonas make it irresistible.

A tufted ottoman designed by Hilliard is upholstered in Jerry Pair Leather's Incredibull nubuck in Plume. The contemporary Arrow pendant is by Apparatus.





**Above:** Frosted windowpanes provide privacy while still allowing plenty of natural light to filter into the main bathroom, emphasizing its airy palette. The tub is by MTI, and a salvaged-cedar table by Riva 1920 from Nido Living adds an organic accent.

**Left:** The main bedroom's neutral palette blends the cool gray tones of a paneled wall and upholstered Brian Paquette for Lawson-Fenning bench with the soft beiges of bespoke bedside tables in bleached white oak and a bed upholstered in a woven Coraggio fabric. The oil-rubbed bronze-and-linen pendant was made by Phoenix Day.