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BIG on Style

Blue Hue. The homeowners requested happy, bright colors in the living room, where the family gathers at the end of the day, so Joann strategically placed fabrics with pops of blue in the room.

This Atlanta home proves that oversized rooms needn't be overwhelming to decorate.

“The homeowners requested that **this be a room for family snuggling, reading and talking.** They are busy doctors, and family time is coveted.”

When a family of four moved into their spacious new home in Buckhead, Atlanta, they had an idea of how they wanted it to look, but they had no idea how to achieve the look in the right proportions or where to obtain the elements. They contacted designer Joann Kandrac, of Kandrac & Kole Interior Designs, Inc., to turn their new house into their dream home.



Sweet Seats. This sitting area in the living room looks cozy, thanks to draperies made from Thibaut fabric, comfy chairs from Lee Industries and a stylish table from Bernhardt.

“The challenge of putting a sofa this large in a room is what to put against it. We custom-designed the sofa table (96 inches wide) and lacquered it navy blue for the *piece de resistance* in this room.”

The homeowners have two young daughters and wanted their home to be tasteful and beautiful but not too fussy—comfortable and practical for family time and a lot of hustle and bustle.

“The house is lovely and had lots of wide open space to work with,” Joann says. “The home is about 6,200 square feet. Because it was so big, the homeowners wanted it to feel cozy. It was basically empty when we started working on it, and the clients were not keeping any items they had from their recent move.”

While Joann admits it’s a challenge to make a large house feel cozy, she managed to achieve the effect by keeping scale in mind for each room design. “You don’t know what you don’t know,” she says, referring to the creative ways she was able to custom-design furnishings to the proper scale in the large rooms. For instance, she wasn’t able to find the right size area rug for the dining room, so she purchased a carpet at one store and had it bound by ProSource wholesalers with a navy-blue diamond pattern to create a larger area rug. “You can also put a border around a rug to make it larger to scale,” she says.

There were a few architectural challenges the design team had to deal with in terms of arched niches on some of the walls. “One was in the library, so we dressed it up with pretty gold shelves and knickknacks,” Joann says. “The other one was in the family





Refresh Your Rooms

Designer Joann Kandrac shares her favorite ways to freshen up rooms.

Shine On – When people ask me how to quickly refresh a room, my answer is always to improve your lighting. Usually the scale is wrong and the wattage is low. Table lamps are not tall enough and poor quality.

A Splash of Color – A fresh coat of paint in a revived color makes the biggest impact.

Pillow Talk – Invest in quality, down throw pillows that are at least 20” square on a sofa or chair.

Paint Old Pieces – We get a big bang for our buck by painting furniture. We love to scour antique markets or take people’s ignored heirlooms—items that have interesting legs, drawers and shapes—and lacquer them in fun colors. Changing out the hardware can make a big difference.

Filling a Niche. Joann styled the niches on the wall with shelves to display decorative items. The candelabrum on the piano is from Dunes and Duchess. Unique lacquered pieces are hand finished with painted maple wood and are customizable.



room. We put an oversized, arched vintage mirror in the space to make it more attractive but not to treat it the same way as the other one.”

Welcome Home

Joann designed the foyer to be a warm, welcoming entrance for the homeowners’ family and friends. The foyer is long and wide, with a castle-like door and a chandelier that spills light onto the ceiling. “It was almost like a room unto itself, so we treated it as such, with pretty, neutral wallpaper that wouldn’t compete with the dining room and library on either side,” Joann says. “We had a durable, stain-resistant carpet cut to a custom size and added two commissioned art pieces of the daughters painted by Gina Hurry from Gregg Irby Gallery.”

Fine Dining

Joann used a less-is-more approach to designing the dining room. “I think dining rooms often have too much furniture in them,” Joann says. “I like having a console to serve food and drinks, and offer a place for additional lighting. But otherwise, it’s all about comfort and company.” Joann likes to add wallpaper to dining rooms because it’s a more formal space. “The builder had put moulding on the wall, and this beautiful

Spicing up the Kitchen.

The kitchen was already designed when Joann came on the scene, but she added her own touches with woven rattan counter stools from Serena & Lily; partially seen in the background is the mudroom’s green wallpaper with trees design from Thibaut.



1

1 Fifth Wall. In a creative design idea, Joann used Thibaut wallpaper on the ceiling for a dramatic effect. The lighting fixture is a Belgium chandelier in white so it wouldn't interfere with the wallpaper. "Not everything needs to be a wow; the ceiling is a wow," Joann says. The dining set is from Theodore Alexander in a classic traditional style. The centerpiece is an arrangement of blue and white ceramic pieces and beautiful moss-filled urns. The navy-blue wall paint is called Salty Dog by Sherwin-Williams.

2 Stylish Storage. On the back wall of the dining room is a console that coordinates with the table. The mirror is from Theo Alexander. It is 59 inches and has interlacing branches. The console buffet, also from Theo Alexander, has shelves for storage. The buffet lamps, called Atlas able lamps, are from Currey & Co.



2

Thibaut wallpaper had just come into our office. We wanted to put it somewhere and when we decided to use navy blue in the dining room, we said we had to put that wallpaper in too," she says.

The clients' original dining room table was moved to the kitchen so that the new dining room could have a more sophisticated adult look. "The cerused wood on the Theodore Alexander table was the perfect complement to the Thibaut wallpaper on the ceiling," Joann says. "We went round and round about how to treat the millwork on the main wall and decided that we liked the architectural interest of painting the trim color."

Lighting the Living Room

The homeowners wanted the living room to be comfortable and family friendly, as they often gather there to listen to their daughter play the piano or to read books. "However, since this room is to the right of the front door, it had to be well done, as it is a first-impression room," Joann says. "Our client also requested 'happy, bright colors' throughout the house, so the Thibaut fabric on the panels and the original art by Casey Matthews from Pryor Fine Art helped us meet that request."

Warming up the Kitchen

The clients had three requests for the kitchen, which had



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been already designed when Joann came on the scene. “They wanted us to improve the lighting, find fun counter stools that their daughter would not tip over and incorporate the dark wood dining table from the other room,” Joanne says. “So we ended up selecting large, bright pendants from Visual Comfort that make quite a statement and add more interest to the kitchen than the clear globes that were there before. We selected French bistro counter stools in navy blue and white

from Serena and Lily. To tie in the wood from the dining table, we crafted a fun photo gallery using Pottery Barn’s ‘Gallery in a Box’ frames.”

Family Time

“The homeowners requested that this be a room for family snuggling, reading and talking,” Joann says. “They are busy doctors, and family time is coveted. We were thrilled that

instead of a TV, the clients agreed to a 48” original painting called ‘Rise & Shine’ by Erin Gregory from Anne Irvin Fine Art. We ended up putting an oversized, deep Bernhardt sectional in this room with two chaise lounges that were 164” long. Our client said it was the first time she’d ever seen her husband come home from a long day at work and actually relax. The challenge of putting a sofa this large in a room is what to put against it. We custom-designed the sofa table (96” wide) and lacquered it navy blue for the piece de resistance in this room.”

With all the grand-scale elements in the home, the biggest one was the impact that Joann’s creative ways of approaching the room designs made in the completed project.

See Sources, page 112

Kitchen Comforts. The design of the eating area of the kitchen mimics the Roman shades on the window and door on the right side of the room. Joann created a family gallery wall of black and white photographs. “Color photos get busy; black and white is easier on the eyes,” Joann says.