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SPANISH REVIVAL

HISTORIC DETAILS, RICH COLORS AND LIGHT-FILLED
SPACES ENLIVEN A HOME IN OAKLAND.

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INTERIOR DESIGN / APRIL POWERS, APRIL POWERS INTERIOR DESIGN INC.
ARCHITECTURE / MARK BECKER, MARK BECKER INCORPORATED
HOME BUILDER / JAMES TERRELL, JAMES TERRELL CONSTRUCTION



For the living room of an Oakland residence, designer April Powers paired a sofa by O. Henry House and Livia chairs by Marcali, all from Hewn, with a custom walnut coffee table. A Paul Ferrante chandelier and a wallcovering by Gregorius Pineo lend color to the space. Residential designer Mark Becker added beams to the ceiling and a new fireplace surround by Napa Valley Cast Stone.

Several years ago, an Oakland couple attended a fund-raiser in a 1929 Spanish Colonial-style home in the city's Rockridge neighborhood. "My husband fell in love with the house," says the wife, who was also taken with the structure's charms—like graceful archways, beautiful woodwork and intricate ironwork—but felt it was a bit too formal for her taste. However, "it had a great lot and location," she notes, so when the house went up for sale, they took the plunge. The couple purchased the home and then turned to designer April Powers and residential designer Mark Becker to make it their own.

"The home has amazing bones," says Powers. "But it was in need of updating to meet the requirements of a more current family lifestyle." While looking to improve the structure's functionality, the couple aimed to make livability a top priority. "We wanted it to be beautiful but not too fancy, because we have kids," says the wife, noting that they often host casual get-togethers and were hoping to create a welcoming atmosphere for family and friends.

Although the couple were initially looking to make a few simple changes, Becker had something bigger in mind. "It was a beautiful old house," he says. "Unfortunately, the floor plan was very compartmentalized, and it wasn't tapping into the light." To remedy that situation, he suggested flipping the entire layout of the main level. Becker, who brought in architect Chris Coffee of Graff Architects to handle the construction documents, relocated the dark kitchen to the sunnier side of the house and created spaciousness with a breakfast area and adjacent family room. He also shrunk the living room, turning it into a dining room, and expanded the existing dining room to create a formal living area with three pairs of French doors opening to a trellised patio. "We moved walls all over and changed everything to orient toward the yard," Becker says. Outside, landscape designer Katrine Benninger of Katrine Benninger Landscape Design revamped the grounds to include Mediterranean plantings, garden beds and flagstones around an existing gazebo.

Inside, Becker kept or repurposed the structure's existing architectural details. Builder James Terrell was key when it came to maintaining the highest level of craftsmanship in creating new elements to match those original designs. "I have a skilled crew of carpenters, and I also brought on more very experienced ones to execute the really tricky work," says Terrell of elements including vaulted ceiling framing and arched openings. "Also, we worked with mills that make curved moldings, and window and door fabricators who do beautiful work with levels of craftsmanship that were commonplace 100 years ago, but are rare now." Original arched doorways, for instance, in the dining room were retained and new ones were added to the living room, where a cast stone fire surround went in as well. "In remodeling projects," says Terrell, "it's the responsibility of the builder to bring in workers whose skill and experience can be put to the highest use."

Honoring the architectural shell, Powers incorporated Mediterranean elements like an arabesque-motif tile in the master bathroom and a Moroccan tile for the kitchen floor.

"My husband and I spent some time traveling in Europe and went to Spain," says the wife, who had showed images of kitchens with patterned tile to Powers. "We loved the tilework at the Alhambra." The saturated blue tones of the floor pick up in the island, which Powers painted with Ralph Lauren Paint's Rue Royale to play off the otherwise sparkling white cabinetry.

Powers opted for subtle but equally rich tones in the living room and dining room, where she wrapped the spaces with textured wallcoverings in sage and off-white tones, respectively. "The wallpaper made all of the woodwork sing in a way that none of us expected," she says. Indeed, in the living room, wood-framed arched windows and new wood ceiling beams display a dark stain, which Powers duplicated in a tall custom bookcase anchoring one side of the room. She rounded out the space with a chandelier painted with Benjamin Moore's Carolina Gull suspended above an O. Henry House sofa and two wing chairs.

In selecting furnishings, Powers opted for pieces that both complemented the scale and style of the house as well as the owners' sensibilities. "They like traditional mixed with modern," says the designer, who played out that aesthetic in the dining room with custom chairs bearing classic silhouettes upholstered with a contemporary Jim Thompson Fabrics stripe. Artwork by Reed Anderson hangs above the fireplace and was sourced by Laura Grigsby of Laura Grigsby Art Consulting, as was all of the artwork in the home.

As the couple's previous residence had muted walls, they were eager to bring in more color, pattern and texture. When it came to the master bedroom, the husband suggested an aubergine hue for the walls, which Powers executed with a fine linen-weave wallpaper. A custom arched headboard and lattice-motif chandelier pick up the Moroccan thread, which follows through in the upstairs sitting room. There, the designer piled pillows atop custom built-in daybeds appointed with indigo-hued cushions and paired leather poufs with Moorish wall scones.

While the project became larger than originally planned, the house now reveals itself to be a perfect reflection of its history and owners. "The architecture definitely inspired the overall design of the interiors," says Powers, "along with the owners' appreciation for traditional with a twist." ■

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Opposite: The kitchen's vibrant floor tile, from Martyn Lawrence Bullard's Eastern Promise collection for Ann Sacks, was handcrafted in Morocco. The sleek cabinetry by Mueller Nicholls is painted in Benjamin Moore's Snowfall White.

Below: The light-filled kitchen features a generous island, which is painted a shade of blue and capped with a walnut butcher-block countertop by Restoration Timber. Custom swivel counter stools by Kroll Furniture offer comfortable seating, and pendants by E.F. Chapman hang above.





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Custom chairs upholstered with Anatolia Stripe by Jim Thompson Fabrics surround a walnut table by Formations in the dining room. A custom chandelier by Bone Simple Design hangs above. The Reed Anderson artwork was sourced by Laura Grigsby Art Consulting.

Below, left: In the living room, Powers had a bookcase custom-made by Mueller Nicholls and stained to match the structure's millwork. The shelves hold the owners' albums and decorative objects.

Below, right: Glass wall tile by Walker Zanger adds a glamorous touch to a powder room, where Powers designed a custom mirror framed with cerused white oak. Huntley sconces by The Urban Electric Co. hang above the vanity.



The upstairs sitting room, which serves as a lively retreat for the owners' children, features built-in daybeds fabricated by Mueller Nicholls and appointed with cushions custom-made with a Holland & Sherry fabric. The leather Moroccan poufs and Moorish sconces are by Tazi Designs.





Opposite: An aubergine-hued wallcovering by Romo from De Sousa Hughes lends depth to the master bedroom. Cisco Home's Tulip chair, upholstered with a Casamance fabric from Shears & Window, stands next to a Parquet Chest by Jayson Home. The Astinn rug is by Stark.

Below: An Asilah chandelier by Ironies from Kneeder Fauchère suspends above the master bedroom, where Powers crowned the bed with a custom headboard upholstered with Tambo fabric by Harlequin. A Field bench by Cisco Home is covered with Kenmore fabric by Clarence House.

