

HOME & DESIGN

SPECIAL EDITION

Idea Book

your guide to a beautiful home





bold + bright

*Andrea Houck marries neutral finishes and vivid color
in a Bethesda dining room and kitchen*

ALL IN THE DETAILS

CHRISTOPHER
GUY MIRROR ▶

HICKORY CHAIR
◀ HOST CHAIRS



◀ ARTERIORS PENDANTS

◀ ZOFFANY WALLPAPER

PALACEK GUEST
◀ CHAIRS

Longtime clients asked designer Andrea Houck to update their kitchen, which flows into the adjacent dining room. With an eye on resale, they specified a neutral palette for the kitchen but were otherwise willing to embrace a bolder look. Houck’s plan improved both spaces, employing complementary design elements to ensure a strong visual connection between the two.

The project began with a simple structural change. “A breakfast bar flanked by columns awkwardly divided the kitchen and dining room,” she recounts. “Luckily, the columns weren’t load-bearing, so we got rid of the entire bar. This opened the space up and made the dining room much better.”

Working with Judy Bracht of Stuart Kitchens, which supplied the cabinetry, Houck redesigned the kitchen around an L-shaped island. Dark-stained cherry cabinetry offsets Caesarstone counters and iridescent backsplash tile.

By contrast, the dining room boasts deep-red Zoffany wallpaper embossed with a gold flower motif and eclectic furniture in warm wood tones. “Colorful, patterned fabric or wallpaper can be a springboard for your design,” says Houck. “The key is balance.” A Century table is adorned with a diamond-pattern ebony inlay. Host chairs upholstered in Pollack fabric are paired with woven guest chairs. A distinctive bar cabinet combines rosewood and ebony. Hammered-iron pendants in a dark bronze finish hang above the table and a light-hued rug from Surya introduces softer hues.

To unify the spaces, Houck employed the same Cowtan & Tout fabric on both the kitchen shades and dining room drapes. Tracy Glover pendants over the island pick up the dining room colors, while a refinished-oak floor spans both rooms.

Interior & Kitchen Design: Andrea Houck, ASID, IFDA, A. Houck Designs, Inc., Arlington, Virginia. Contractor: Kevin Chung, Chung’s Home Improvement, Fairfax, Virginia. Photography: Stacy Zarin Goldberg.



WINDOW TREATMENTS
CONNECT THE SPACES

In the remodeled kitchen, Lee Industries stools (above) pull up to the island (below, left); its L shape “keeps the kitchen area contained,” says Houck. Iridescent penny tile behind the range (below, right) is flanked with ceramic subway tile, both from Mosaic Tile. The bar cabinet (right) features plenty of storage.



ask andrea

WHAT MAKES NEUTRALS INTERESTING?

Neutrals can be elegant, but an all-neutral space can seem flat. In the absence of color, texture makes all the difference.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL STYLE?

I’m drawn to “eclectic modern.” I love mixing modern furnishings with heirlooms, found objects and collected artwork.

ADVICE FOR CLIENTS EMBARKING ON A PROJECT?

Start with a solid overall plan. Making decisions without one can lead to costly mistakes and a non-cohesive result.

HOW DO YOU SELECT FURNISHINGS?

We take inventory of existing pieces to see what we can incorporate, then consider style preferences, functional requirements and physical needs. If someone is tall, seat depths should accommodate that.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE JOB?

I love presenting a design concept to clients and seeing happy looks on their faces that say, “You nailed it!”