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Mix and Match

An early-20th-century Colonial's design refresh blends contemporary decor with historical elements.

BY JENNIFER CARMICHAEL



Gather round: The living room is full of hangout zones, from facing seats in front of the original fieldstone fireplace to a handsome bar, making the space well suited for relaxing with family and friends.

When Dr. Shayna Zachary and her husband Ross first saw the house that is now their home, it was love at first sight. A perfect marriage of old and new, this historic, early-1900s Colonial on an idyllic street in the Riverside section of Greenwich was the impetus for leaving their two-bedroom apartment in New York City behind. With their 18-month-old son in tow, they were excited to build their lives in a house that held stories and memories shared by generations before them.

“We walked in, and I could just see our growing family here,” says Shayna, an anesthesiologist at Stamford Hospital who recently welcomed their fourth child.

In 2017 the couple moved into their new, 6,000-square-foot house, which the previous owner beautifully renovated and expanded in the style of the early-20th-century original structure. The Zacharys spearheaded décor changes and painted in their more contemporary taste.

They lived in the house for about three years, including during the height of the pandemic. Between homeschooling, and Ross working his finance position remotely, the house wasn’t serving them correctly. Having met Andrea Sinkin of Greenwich-based Andrea Sinkin Design through mutual friends, Shayna invited her over to see if she could bring what they already had to life.

“They have great taste,” notes Sinkin, who believes interior design is all about living better and healthier in any given space. “They already had pattern, color and a point of view on the home, and I carried the ball over the finish line. Some rooms were blank slates, and some were surface touches.”

When Sinkin first stepped into the home and saw the stunning, leafy, tropical palm print wall covering they had chosen for their entry, she thought, “Oh, we’re going to have fun.” But the wallpaper stopped before the second and third-floor landings, so she chose a shimmering, silver grasscloth wall covering that would reflect the sun coming in from other rooms since there wasn’t much natural light.

“It’s interesting, plus it wears well with children,” says Shayna. “When she showed it to me, I jumped at it. I could not have dreamt that one up. From one of the kid’s bedrooms, it may look one way, and from inside the stairwell a completely different way. It has many personalities.”

The Zacharys needed Sinkin’s vision in the living room to create a space they’d want to be in every day. With beautiful basketweave grasscloth on the walls and crown molding already as her backdrop, she created zones in the room. Whether sitting in the conversation area, reading a book in the corner chair, competing in *Monopoly* at the game table, playing the piano, or having a drink at the bar, the room invites



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In the dining room, green walls are set off by gray ceiling paint which has a shimmering, glass-like finish.

everyone into it. Respecting the home's history, Sinkin had the bar custom-built by hand to match the existing century-plus-old paneling on the wall.

"I often find that people are stumped with layouts because they live [a certain] way, and that's how they see it," notes Sinkin, who always starts with hand-drawing the layout of the room, playing with it over and over until it feels right, and then putting it into CAD. "So coming in with a new set of eyes and flipping things around is key to getting the room to function for them."

While Sinkin worked with the leather furniture already in place, she brought in new pieces such as the swivel chairs that can rotate 360 degrees to see people at the bar or game table. Previously, the leather couch they had for years was against the wall, but floating it gives the room an open feel and allows for seating areas and a better flow. A 10-inch-deep console table with a stone top from Made Goods is just the right proportion and size to tuck a couple of ottomans.

Playing off the natural beauty of the home's historical elements, such as the original mahogany banister, wood floors and solid front door, Sinkin chose a warm color palette of blues and browns. A wool, cable-knit, braided rug brings added warmth and a soft, cozy texture, while modern lighting balances out the room's ruggedness. Alexander McQueen haute couture-inspired sconces from Arteriors, cast in brass with a convex glass shield and brass-wire ponytail, bring a modern art element into a traditional vibe. Sinkin also added a large, asymmetrical Visual Comfort light fixture in the room's center, showcasing concentric circles with a modern aesthetic. She also brought in simple pendant lights over the bar, along with lamp lighting, to give the room a layered glow.

Refinished in a high-gloss gray, a piano is a hub of activity, and the kids take lessons. It had belonged to the painter's sister-in-law.

"I didn't believe this was possible," remembers Shayna. "Everything we have in here is very purposeful and thoughtful. We use the piano, but it's also art. Instead of buying something new, we bought something that had a life before us and gave it new life."

In the family room, Sinkin put in the two chairs originally in the living room and had pillows custom-designed with fabric from





The kitchen features a large center island and a dark ceiling with geometric detailing.

The first-floor landing boasts a mix of modern touches (wall covering and side table) and Colonial structural elements.

Contents of built-in shelves in the family room were carefully curated with an eclectic but not overwhelming mix of objects.





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Osborne & Little and Fabricut for the existing sectional. The oval-shaped coffee table from McGuire adds an organic element to the room. The hand-painted art above the sofa is from Leftbank, as is the art in the living room. But styling the shelves was Sinkin's shining moment. She and Shayna spent a day in New York City visiting designer showrooms to purchase just the right items.

"We had coffee table books, some vases, and items from trips already, and only wanted to buy things that spoke to us as opposed to just filling space," notes Shayna. "Andrea was a master at creating visual calm."

Sinkin elevated what was already in the dining room. She added a rug, window treatments, a side table designed by Century, sculptural lamps by Visual Comfort, a custom mirror with antiqued glass and an aged-patina gold frame made locally. Dining room walls were already painted a rich evergreen, but Sinkin chose a smoky gray with a green undertone for the ceiling, tapping Fine Paints of Europe. The company uses a painting process that takes almost two weeks to complete, thanks to about nine layers of sanding and painting. The result resembles glass, reflecting light and making the room shimmer.

"What a beautiful process, and we love it," Shayna says. "It completely changed the feeling of the room."

Like the Zacharys, Sinkin finds that most of her clients need an extra set of eyes to make their spaces truly sing. Many see a room as it is, as opposed to how it could be.

"The attention to detail and vignettes she added to our home are why we are so happy with Andrea," Shayna says. ■

Every home has a story

Each month we share the story of a Connecticut home, including new builds, additions, renovations, restorations, plus interior designs. If you'd like to see your home featured, send a summary of what makes it special, along with 3-5 photos, to editor@connecticutmag.com.