



FRESH & MODERN

VINTAGE TREASURES AND PERSONAL STYLE IMBUE THESE DREAMY SPACES WITH UNMISTAKABLE CHARM. From cleverly embellished details to special pieces used in new ways, these homes show how to craft exciting, unexpected spaces. Get in touch with your creative side, and use art, bold color and a mix of styles to create a home that is uniquely you.



Erlinge Formal. The vibrant
hazards, dark green velvet and
smoke velvet make the formal
living room lively. The latter will
not overlook that of the drapes
and velvet while the hazards
not tropical ornaments prove these
were fun and fast into the mix.

Haute HERITAGE

See how a traditional Georgian home is
transformed to a chic, unique transformation—and
still remains timeless.

DESIGNER: BARBARA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN FECK
STYLING BY GARY WICKER



K When old and new can come together in a harmonious blend of tradition and personality, you know you've got a room to remember. Gray Walker, an interior designer with deep Southern roots, embraces tradition. She takes great pride in honoring the rich historical contexts of a home's surroundings as well as the classical elements of composition and style. Yet, at the same

time, as the flashes of inspired print and touches of dramatic flair in her work prove, she's also a bit of a rebel. "I know all the design rules, and I know how to break them," she says—a confident stance more than justified by her incredible designs. Mixing the steady with the glamorous, the shabby with the cutting-edge, she refines the tricky middle ground of unexpected yet totally elegant living spaces.

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International Accent.

Elements of midcentury style peek out here with the slightly dark wood tones and tables. The pale arabesque wallpaper in the hall with faux bamboo detailing popular during the 1950s lends a quiet yet worldly quality to the scene.



Fine Arts and Dining

The essence of this dining room's decor is the compelling curves displayed in the background. It offers powerful visual interest that reflects the essence of the space. Note how the burst of teal in the painting calls out to the vase on the table and how the flourish of stoneware echoes the many intersections of the chandelier.



Green Light. The double bouquet of flowers hanging from the chandelier adds a good dose of greenery and freshness to a room laden with heirloom pieces and heavy textiles. A touch of foliage will reintegrate any room.

Georgian in Carolina

When she designed this 4,000-square-foot Georgian home in an older neighborhood of Charlotte, North Carolina, she aimed to not only achieve that unique mix but also address all the facets of the homeowners' lifestyle. "I wanted to stay within the character, style and scale of the home. The house is charming and inviting, and the owners have exquisite taste. I wanted to [reflect] their personalities and the way they ...

live in the home. They also inherited some fabulous pieces. I wanted to mix the inherited items in with some newer pieces to reflect the young, modern family that they are," she explains.

Richly Natural

Though every room in the house is a standout, the kitchen is one domain that really counts the eye with a sumptuousness



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Efficient Design Olive green is a key color that runs throughout the kitchen, from the upholstered stools to the Roman blinds. The selected green shade harmonizes with natural elements, like the rustic wooden island, which is a nod to the family's heritage.

Grains and Vines The kitchen's ceiling and floor are made of wood, creating a warm, natural feel. The ceiling is made of thin, horizontal wooden slats, while the floor is made of wide wooden planks. The ceiling is painted a light yellow, and the floor is painted a light brown. The ceiling is made of thin, horizontal wooden slats, while the floor is made of wide wooden planks. The ceiling is painted a light yellow, and the floor is painted a light brown.

Deja New. This sitting room repeats some elements of the adjoining master bedroom without becoming redundant. The repetition demonstrates a deft connection between the two rooms, but the introduction of more glam elements like the brass floor lamps and the peace-sign rug gives it a distinct charm all its own.



"It's inviting, it's glamorous, it's a place that my client keeps her personal possessions in an artful way. The design of the closet really functions for what she needs, and it's beautiful. Who would think a closet could be so gorgeous!" Gray enthuses. Though a walk-in closet is the dream of many, this one with its chandelier, custom built-ins and abundance of natural light inspires renewed aspirations.

Beyond Limits

The biggest challenge of the project was the home's low ceilings, a limitation that didn't jibe with a home-

mont to exude refined panache. Making the best of the structural situation, Gray installed beadboard ceilings in a type of wood called Pocky Cypress to expand the sense of height in the kitchen and dining areas. Crown moldings and impressive lighting solutions served this function elsewhere in the home.

This creative kind of problem solving is necessary if you wish to emulate Gray's design prowess. Still another requisite is the ability to devise a good mix: "There has to be a balance between hard and soft materials, between comfortable seating and fabulous antiques, and between pattern and neutral space."



Edited Affairs. "I don't like anything to be overdecorated, and every room needs a sense of serenity," Gray asserts. Nothing frivolous, but nothing lacking, the luxury of this room is in its lightness of touch. Gray edits this tranquil space down to the most elegant essentials.



Signature Style

Try Gray Walker's top tips for a classic home with modern gusto.

Easy Reads. Gray is a big advocate of equilibrium. "I really like rooms that are easy to read—it's a balancing act. I think you've got to add interest and detail, but you also have to have space to breathe, so you can see the art, you can see the antiques, you can see the details," she says. So, when decorating your own home, go ahead and be bold in style, but be even bolder in your editing process.

Top to Bottom Color. If your house also suffers from low ceilings, it can put a limit on any big statements you want to communicate with your décor. Structural renovations aside, try the wooden beadboard ceilings that Gray used in this project or, if that amendment isn't quite to your taste, try painting a room all one color, including the ceiling. This way "you don't see the transition from wall to ceiling, which helps to add height to a room."

Heirloom Precedence. Many of Gray's clients have a rich family history, often including furnishings that have been passed down through the generations. If you also have beloved heirlooms, follow Gray's lead. "You don't want heavy wood pieces everywhere you look in a home, so I place the heavy things to see where the weight will be in a room, and then build around them."

Visually Touching. The plush sofa, shaggy carpet, tufted ottoman and enlaced, metallic vines of the wallpaper all elicit our impulse to reach out and touch. This wide assortment of textures is anchored in monochrome. The pale overtones provide excellent contrast for the room's select pops of color, engaging the eye and heightening the sensory experience of the room.

How Bazaar. Framed magazine covers add a little intimacy to this chamber of couture while the Greek key patterned rug and meringue curtains contribute a dreamy, seductive feeling. The Lucite chair upholstered with a soft-tufted textile is the perfect nod to the lady of the house whenever she wishes to sit and write out her thoughts.

