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LAUREN COLLANDER AND DANIELLE CHASE OF LAUREN COLLANDER INTERIORS CREATE A HOME FILLED WITH TEXTURE FOR A TECH-SAVVY FAMILY IN NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

TEXT DEBORAH L. MARTIN PHOTOGRAPHY MARINA STORM

When a family in Naperville, Illinois wanted to update their suburban home, they called in the designers of Lauren Collander Interiors. Lauren Collander and Danielle Chase shared that their inspiration for the project was their client's love of modern design, entertaining and technology. Collander shares, "The original layout was made up of a lot of small rooms that didn't work well for them as their love of cooking and hosting has grown. Like many families, they found themselves with an unused dining room and formal living room." She explains, "We took over that unused square footage by extending the kitchen area and adding a large pantry that doubles as a secret passage through the entire house. We turned the formal living room into a wine and game room so the party can flow throughout the space."

To open the kitchen, the team worked with the architects of Meyer Design to remove one of the main support columns that was hidden in a kitchen wall, which required restructuring down to the basement. Chase says, "We also had to come up with a clever new ceiling design to work with the new steel beams without losing ceiling height. We worked with the architect to place the beam just so and added a symmetrical second beam that looked planned all along. We then clad them and installed recessed LED linear lighting to make them functional and modern."

The kitchen is connected to the wine room via the all-black butler's pantry, which has "secret doors." Collander explains, "When the doors are closed, they blend in with the kitchen cabinetry as well as the wood-paneled wall in the wine room, and when they're open, they blend in with the pantry cabinetry." Instead of having the dining area separate from the main living space, the designers included it in the larger kitchen. They created a "mega-island," with bar-height seating, banquette seating, and a large expandable dining table that interacts with the great room. The clients also wanted high-tech functionality. The induction cooktop can be operated by an app, and a Galley sink comes with inserts perfect for food prep, serving and clean up. There is a pizza oven that can cook a pizza in 90 seconds but can also braise meat perfectly. Though the space is modern, the designers did not want a clinical atmosphere. Collander says, "Walnut was our first pick. It has a richness and a beautiful range of colors while balancing nicely with a pre-finished white oak floor. Slab cabinets in walnut warmed up the space while black-stained oak cabinets provided contrast and depth. Quartz countertops and walls kept the space bright and clean."



A butler's pantry area continues the elegance of the black cabinetry set off by walls covered in black grasscloth by Phillip Jeffries.



A "mega-island," centers the kitchen, and has both banquette and bar-height seating.





The kitchen is equipped with high-tech appliances such as the induction cooktop which can be operated by an app. The designers chose walnut for its warmth, and black-stained oak for contrast.



Left: The great room sofas are sleek in profile but are upholstered in an ultra-soft gray indoor-outdoor fabric which means they are party-safe. Two lounge chairs in cognac leather pick up the warm tones in the kitchen. The oversized fireplace balances the 85-inch television, and the wall behind it is covered in dark wood veneer in a chevron pattern. **Below:** In the powder room, light fixtures by Lodes illuminate faux-wood, vinyl wallcovering and walnut paneling. **Bottom Left:** The wine room gets a pop of color from the Merlot-velvet bar stools. The room glimmers with silver sconces by Tom Dixon and cork and metallic wallcovering.



To add interest to the mostly neutral palette, the designers added layered texture in wallcoverings, upholstery, and finishes. Wide-plank, white oak flooring runs throughout the home and is the base of the design. In the wine room, a cork veneer is covered with metallic paper with a subtle shimmer. Black grasscloth envelopes the pantry, and black wood veneer in a chevron pattern covers the great room's fireplace wall. In the powder room, they used a wood-look vinyl in a geometric pattern that coordinates with walnut paneling on the lower part of the wall.

Chase and Collander agree that converting the attic into a third floor was the biggest transformation in the house. They added a floating staircase that can be seen from the foyer. The unused space was quite large, so they converted it into a home office and lounge space complete with a wet bar and powder room. The design is masculine and modern with an oak waterfall desk and matte black accents. Storage cabinets line the perimeter of the room to make use of the vaulted roofline.

Collander shares, "The clients' favorite part of the project is the new, functional use of each room. We took unused space that houses are just supposed to have and created a home around the unique way they live. The new spaces include a two-story closet for the wife, a private, third floor office and lounge for the husband, and large open gathering spaces for the family and friends."



An elegant corner of the wine room is a comfy place to curl up with a glass and a book.