

LIFE WELL LIVED

Indulgent glamour meets everyday family living in this Chicago abode.

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Interior Design: Lauren Collander, Lauren Collander Interiors

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esign at its very best conjures a mood and a memory. So interior designer Lauren Collander knew she struck gold when her proposed vision for one Chicago couple's family residence immediately

recalled cherished memories of their nuptials. For them, the plethora of dark velvets and shimmering metallic fixtures recaptured the romance of that champagne-tinged night, waltzing around their golden dance floor. "The colors that the design team chose were so very similar to what our wedding colors were," notes the wife. "We obviously made those choices for what was—at the time—our most important day, so to see it replicated in the home's design was pretty cool," the husband adds.

Since becoming parents to two young children, married life has grown even more joyful—but perhaps too boisterous for the genteel sophistication the suggested plans for their house implied. Yet the glamorous ambience Collander cultivates in her work always belies a layer of practicality. After all, she says, "You should live your life and not be stressed out by silly things like getting a coaster."

Overlooking views of a lush park, the home the couple purchased for their family certainly called for grandeur. The Georgian neoclassical interiors came complete with elegant wainscoting, arched doorways and picture-frame molding. The foyer alone commands a sense of ceremony with its coffered ceilings, checkered marble flooring and sweeping staircase. Such heavy millwork could lean austere, so Collander, working with her design director Jessica Johnston, infused more levity with a Hollywood Regency-inspired look. "When I think of the style, I think of opulence and comfort," Collander explains. "For us, that translates to drama, adding high-contrast black and white mixed with different metallic finishes, like silky rugs and glass disk chandeliers shimmering against a dark backdrop."

With this in mind, the designer left the structure intact, but repainted the walls and ceilings a luminous white, punctuated with key dark moments, like the inky black fireplace—chosen to highlight the gold veins in the original marble surround. The intricate black backsplash in the otherwise white kitchen took some persuading with

the clients. But at the beginning of the process, the couple had jovially gifted Collander a "golden buzzer"—a little printed index card giving her carte blanche on one element in the home. "They said, 'there's going to be one thing on this project we're going to say no to, that you are going to feel confident in,'" laughs Collander. She did not hesitate cashing in her golden buzzer for the backsplash, as it provides "this monumental statement right when you walk in," the designer says. Notably, the card is now lovingly framed in Collander's office.

Wrapped in swaths of velvet and leathers, furnishings feel unapologetically decadent, especially the living room's chesterfield-style sofas, made to face each other for cozy fireside conversations. Some pieces introduce playful geometric shapes, from a yin-and-yang-style coffee table to the foyer's angular wing chair. The designer also incorporated unique prints, like the silver-dappled wallcovering in the powder room and the floor-length drapes cloaking the couple's bedroom, which up close resemble rippling water. Throughout, she punctuated the monochromatic palette with metallics and shades of sapphire, emerald and merlot.

Despite these lavish details, the abode caters to the family's needs. Furnishings with lower profiles, such as coffee tables, favored rounded shapes "so the kids can toddle around and be safe," Collander explains. Tapping into her technical textile knowledge gleaned from many years designing hotels, she primarily used durable materials, such as wool rugs and hardy performance velvets resistant to deep creases and stains. "Each of these fabrics is easily cleanable," says the designer. "There's not a single textile in here that I would worry about if it was spilled on."

Perhaps the most considerate design gestures made for the children are the sentimental touches the designer carefully integrated throughout the dwelling. When the kids are finally tall enough to reach the countertops and bookcases, they'll find photos and mementos of their parents' shared life together waiting for them: a wedding photo tucked in the pantry, a saved bottle of champagne and the framed invitation to the ceremony that formally began the family they are today. Indeed, says the designer, the whole home at its romantic core "is an ode to their family, their progression and where they've come from." ■



Inspired by the Chicago home's neoclassical architecture, interior designer Lauren Collander incorporated pieces that would hold their own against the structure. With tall ceilings and checkered marble flooring, the foyer in particular called for distinctive additions, like the lotus-shaped fixture by Currey & Company and a Caracole accent chair covered in velvet, "which has this amazing violet contrasting welt that outlines its angular form," notes Collander.

The connected living and dining rooms are defined by a monochromatic mix of black, gray and white. The pared-down palette provides an ideal backdrop for gilded accents, like the glossy black-and-champagne Arteriors bar cabinet and abstract wall sculptures from Phillips Collection. A recycled-glass chandelier by Currey & Company and Vanguard Furniture dining chairs upholstered in emerald velvet add even more glamour to the spaces.





Left: Collander chose to make few changes to the pantry and kitchen, originally designed by Christopher Peacock. In the pantry, she added contrast to the elegant white cabinetry by coating the beadboard backsplash in Sherwin-Williams' Black Fox.

Opposite: The one small update that Collander made in the Christopher Peacock kitchen was installing a geometric Kelly Wearstler tile backsplash from Ann Sacks. The three-dimensional effect "catches your eye," notes the designer. "And the dark color allows other elements to shine."





In the couple's bedroom—painted Sherwin-Williams' Peppercorn—Collander wanted to incorporate additional depth with a custom Hunter Douglas window treatment that fully envelops the space. Programmed with an automated timer, the curtains are scheduled to open in the morning, "so when they wake up, it's like this regal moment," says the designer. "It announces your day, letting the sunlight stream in."

“When I think of **Hollywood Regency style**, I think of **opulence and comfort.**”

—LAUREN COLLANDER



Left: "When you walk in the front door, you see the powder room, so we wanted to make it a real wow moment," explains Collander. Catching the light, a metallic Phillip Jeffries wallcovering defines the space, while two Arteriors sconces and a geometric Mirror Image mirror complement the checkered marble flooring.

Opposite: Sherwin-Williams' Mindful Gray on the walls and Dorian Gray on the shelves introduce gravitas to the couple's study, which Collander enhanced with new built-in bookcases for functionality. A Kelly green Kravet chair punctuates the monochromatic space.

