

All in the Family

A designer majorly renovates her beloved late grandmother's home—but manages to keep all the love intact.

THE FAMILY CALLS HIM "CLARENCE."

BREAKFAST ROOM

In 2018, designer Cate Dunning expanded the once-cramped kitchen to include a dining area. Her husband, Chris, hand-painted the ceiling to match a [Cole & Son](#) mural **wallcovering**. **Table:** [LexMod](#). **Bench:** vintage, in [Fabricut](#) with [House of Hackney](#) pillows. **Chandelier:** [Currey & Company](#). **Lamps:** vintage (left) and [West Elm](#) (right). **Side tables:** [Target](#). **Floor tile:** [Daltile](#).

interior designer [Gordon Dunning](#) / architect [Castro Design Studio](#)
writer [Hadley Keller](#) / photographer [Emily Followill](#)



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E CALL IT THE URBAN family homestead,” Cate Dunning says of the house she now shares with her husband, Chris, and daughter, Mollie. “When-

ever there’s a holiday, or any event, everyone is in our house.”

That tradition dates back to long before the home belonged to Dunning, an interior designer by trade and cofounder of Atlanta design firm GordonDunning. The story begins in 1955, when her maternal grandparents moved from Maine to Decatur, Georgia, and settled into “773,” a loving nod to the address. They raised four children in the house, and, later, it was a hub for extended family. “We grew up going there all the time,” says Dunning, who

was especially close with her grandmother. When Gram moved into assisted living, in 2012, she asked her granddaughter, “Can you take care of the house?” Dunning agreed, ultimately giving up her Atlanta apartment and relocating to Decatur. The day she moved in, her Gram passed away.

While holding her memories of the home close, Dunning began to make it her own with Chris’s help: Together, they removed cornflower blue Formica and installed IKEA butcher-block countertops in the kitchen. Days after their honeymoon, they tore a Kelly green rug from the family room floor. And one Christmas, Chris surprised Dunning with a repainted great room when she returned from a work trip.

In 2018, the couple decided it was time for a full-scale renovation. Working with Dunning’s business partner, Lathem

Gordon, and architect Rodolfo Castro, the couple conceived an addition that opened up the kitchen to make room for a much-needed breakfast table, turned the screened porch into a larger great room, and added a primary suite and powder room.

Then Dunning reoutfitted the home, giving it the layered warmth for which GordonDunning is known. The welcoming space is dotted with family heirlooms from both her maternal and paternal grandparents, who were avid travelers, as well as a few nods to Dunning and Chris’s more DIY days (like a ceiling painted to match a mural and an erstwhile kitchen island revived as a dining table). **“The vibe of the house,” Dunning says, “is still very much my grandmother’s. She was just so vibrant.”** ■

↳ BEDROOM

The Chippendale-style secretary belonged to Dunning’s paternal grandparents, as did the armchairs facing it, which she reupholstered in [Rose Cumming fabric](#). Antique bird prints pop against walls and trim painted Wythe Blue by [Benjamin Moore](#). **Side chair:** [Safavieh](#).

▲ GREAT ROOM

The Hans Wegner Papa Bear chair is also courtesy of Dunning’s paternal grandparents. “I remember learning about it in design school and thinking, *Wow, my granddaddy has that,*” she recalls. **Drapery:** [Etsy](#). **Etageres:** [Lamon Luther](#). **Sofas:** [Lee Industries](#). **Ottoman:** custom from [Naked Seat](#). **Drinks tables and table lamp:** [Circa Lighting](#). **Armchair:** vintage, upholstered in [S. Harris](#). **Drop leaf table:** vintage.



POWDER ROOM
Dunning pored over samples before settling on this Schumacher wallcovering.

Sconces: Circa Lighting. **Sink and faucet:** Signature Hardware. **Mirror:** antique.

DINING ROOM
Curtains in Jim Thompson silk pop against walls in Blushing by Sherwin-Williams, which "just makes everyone look good," Dunning says. **Tablecloth:** Anthropologie. **Chairs:** antique from Chairish. **Art and china:** family heirlooms.



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DAUGHTER'S ROOM

The wicker rocker once belonged to Dunning's great-grandmother Mollie, namesake to both her mother and daughter. "It's the most special piece in the house," Dunning says. **Chandelier:** [Ro Sham Beaux](#). **Mirror:** [Horchow](#).

▼
KITCHEN

A Mexican mask that belonged to Gram keeps watch over the kitchen. **Cabinetry:** [Wellborn](#). **Backsplash:** [Fireclay](#). **Floor tile:** [Daltille](#). **Hardware:** [House of Antique Hardware](#). **Faucet:** [Kohler](#). **Stools:** antique.



BEDROOM

"It feels like living inside a robin's egg," Dunning says. East-facing French doors let in magical morning light. **Paint:** [Wythe Blue](#), [Benjamin Moore](#). **Shades:** [Blinds.com](#). **Bed:** [Oscar de la Renta](#) for [Century Furniture](#). **Bedding:** [Peacock Alley](#). **Nightstand:** [West Elm](#). **Chairs:** vintage, with [Rose Cumming](#) upholstery. **Lamps:** [Circa Lighting](#). **Carpet:** [Safavieh](#).

