



Soulful Style

MELDING THEIR PREFERENCES FOR THE MOUNTAINS AND THE BEACH, ATLANTA INTERIOR DESIGNER VIRGINIA CHEEK AND HER HUSBAND, ANDREW, BUILD A BESPOKE FOREVER HOME FOR THEIR EXPANDING FAMILY.

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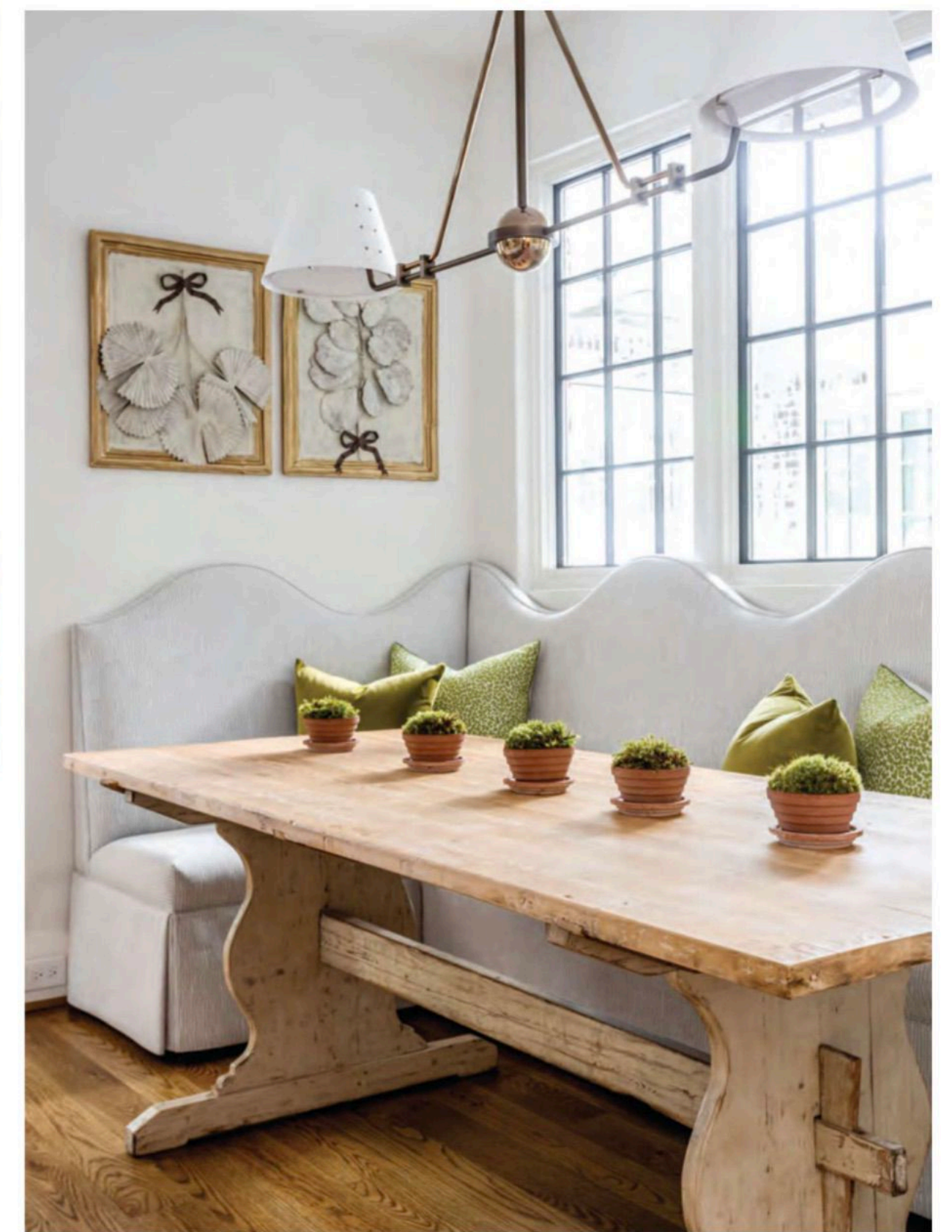
Encouragement and compromise are essential to harmonious relationships but can be just as valuable when building a new home. With one child and another on the way, interior designer Virginia Cheek and her husband, Andrew, knew they needed more space. Living in a desirable Atlanta neighborhood that they loved too much to leave, they decided to build onto their existing lot, which, at the time, accommodated a 1,500-square-foot ranch house. Their goal was to create a forever home—and get it right. Cheek, the owner of Virginia Cheek Interiors, considered how

the design would build upon the base layer in phases as their family evolved, and she devised both short-term and long-term plans.

“During the pandemic and building process, we were in survival mode with two small children,” says the designer, “and we craved the simplicity of clean lines and high texture over bold color. I also knew I would use this house as a design laboratory, honing my own personal style and using it to showcase design work for potential clients—so I needed a neutral backdrop for the early years.”

Cheek began by asking herself some of the same questions she asks her clients: What is your favorite type of home? What do you

Previous pages: In the family room, a neutral palette melds effortlessly with a layering of rustic and refined textures. Modern sling chairs from Bernhardt harmonize with steel doors and weathered beams. A painting from Thomas Deans Fine Art punctuates the fireplace, introducing a soft splash of color. Clockwise from above: Wood-paneled walls establish the study’s quiet demeanor along with a burlwood desk. The family dog welcomes guests alongside an antique settee in the foyer. An eye-catching ceiling fixture from Urban Electric crowns the entrance. Nestled in a quaint Atlanta neighborhood, the whitewashed brick home emits an aged patina that contributes to its charm.



value in a home? Do you like to entertain, and if so, what do you want your guests to feel when they arrive? She also took inspiration from her childhood, where she grew up in Mountain Brook, Alabama, in a warm, inviting, and stylish house full of antiques and comfortable furnishings. “My preferences draw from my upbringing, but at the root, my ideal home is one that lacks pretense and is designed to evoke joy rather than to impress,” she says. “I place equal value on function and beauty and crave indoor-outdoor California-style living—but in the South. A home should also have style and soul that will endure over time, with every detail thoughtfully considered—where proportions prevail no matter the footprint, and there is no wasted space.”

Thankfully, her husband was a supportive design partner and offered only helpful tidbits throughout the process. On the weekends, their rental house was being shown to potential buyers, so their family would journey to the construction site every Saturday and Sunday. “Andrew would wear one baby while I measured so we could make those million-and-one decisions that go into building a house,” she laughs. Their primary goal was to blend clever functionality with an elevated look. They did this by focusing on the base ingredients—elegant shapes and a plan for the details they would layer in over time. By keeping the design restrained in the public spaces and playing off natural light, texture, and wood tones, they could allocate opportunities for depth and color in the powder room, study, and dining room.

Clockwise from above: Dressed in a neutral palette, the kitchen emanates a clean, minimalist feel. Custom cabinetry from Costili Cabinetry brings warmth with its natural wood tones, and brass hardware from Water Street Brass lends a bit of luster. White slip-covered counter stools from Lee Industries and pendant lights from Urban Electric highlight the kitchen island. The spacious wet bar offers an abundance of storage for glassware and other essentials. A brass Waterworks faucet and a pair of sconces from Visual Comfort & Co. lend a touch of glamour. The light-filled breakfast nook features a comfy banquette from Westside Custom Upholstery and a rustic trestle table from Foxglove Antiques & Galleries. Papier-mâché artwork from Casa Gusto and a linear lighting fixture embellish the cozy space.



Clockwise from above: A scallop-framed mirror complements the powder room's fluted vanity. Crawling vines enhance the charm of this home office exterior. Inside, the office bath sports striped tile floors. A Bernhardt bed covered in Matouk linens creates a serene vibe in the guest room. Opposite: The covered porch offers a great place to relax.





Avid entertainers, the couple loves using their porch for casual get-togethers, where guests can connect to the backyard. With multiple access points on every wall, they can serve drinks from a Dutch door off the wet bar or slip into the primary bedroom area to grab something easily. They often leave their iron garden doors open so visitors can see the outdoor splendor the minute they come through the front door. Inside and throughout their home, sea glass-hued ceramics and fresh beach-inspired embellishments juxtapose gracefully with raw, rustic accents, natural wood beams, oak cabinets, and iron details.

“We mixed elements that conjure a sense of both the sea and the mountains,” notes Cheek. “My husband, a definite beach person, and I, historically a mountain person, formed an alliance. For the materials and palette, I looked to mountainous locations that accessed the sea—Scotland, California, and Cornwall. I wanted to meld all this inspiration with Southern influences—hospitality, attention to detail, quality fabrics. I hope that it shines through.”

Opposite: A vaulted ceiling brings a sense of grandeur to the primary bedroom, along with a streamlined four-poster bed with custom fabric panels, a nail head-trimmed bench from A. Tyner Antiques and Bennett bedside tables. This page: A luxurious soaking tub from PDI infuses the primary bath with a spa-like feel, and a Palecek stool sits at the ready with bath-time essentials. The mirror’s aged patina introduces a hint of old-world elegance over the vanity from Costili Cabinetry.



“I love a powder room that feels like you jumped down a rabbit hole and entered an entirely new place,” Cheek adds. “It’s instantly calming.” Along with a bespoke fluted vanity, she installed a custom wallpaper created by New Zealand artist Emma Hayes to bring a touch of glamour and shimmer while evoking the feeling of ocean waves. Unlacquered brass wall-mounted faucet fixtures float on subtly veined marble, lending a sense of old-world patina.

The study, known as the “adult room,” was designed as a respite from the Cheeks’ busy household. “I am a book lover and will jump at any chance to slip into this wood-paneled, intimate retreat by the fire,” notes the designer. “It took us a few tries to get the stain just right, but I’m so glad we took the time to play chemist because the result is timeless—not trendy—as wood stains can sometimes be.”

The couple’s existing furnishings feature a well-curated mix of pared-down 18th- and 19th-century English and French antiques and creations from Cheek’s design studio. They plan to pepper in more antiquities with provenance as they travel in the coming years. Still, as of now, their special items include an 18th-century English leather wing chair in the study, a pair of antique French wrought-iron floor lamps in the family room, and a Neoclassical upholstered arm bench in the foyer.

