

HOLIDAY COUNTDOWN: THE FIVE BASICS OF LAST-MINUTE ENTERTAINING

House Beautiful

JANUARY 2006

MORE SPACE!
FIND IT, CREATE IT

MORE LIGHT!
A BRILLIANT
CALIFORNIA
MAKEOVER

PLUS
KATIE COURIC AT HOME:
HER DAUGHTERS'
ROOMS (SO COOL)





Surprised by light

An unexpected courtyard brings daylight into the core of this San Francisco townhouse, while romantic French antiques and a restrained palette play to the new openness

THE DILEMMA IS A familiar one—a house too small in a neighborhood the family doesn't want to leave—but the solution in this case was ingenious. Architect Thayer Hopkins, a longtime friend of the owners, was charged with nearly doubling the size of their existing house with an addition that would include a kitchen and family room on the first floor and a master bedroom suite on the second. His inspiration was to create a light-filled courtyard by pushing the addition farther back on the lot, thus leaving an open space linked by an enclosed passage and service area to the original house. “Transparency is maintained from the entry through the dining room and kitchen to the rear yard,” he says. “It defies expectations.”

From the street, the traditional facade gives no hint of the spaciousness within. Floor-to-ceiling French doors and windows line three walls of the courtyard, both bringing light into the center of the house and creating a sense of openness that is unusual in a traditional floor plan. Wide-cased openings visually connect the generous entry hall with the living and dining rooms. In the rear addition, one grand space accommodates kitchen, family room, and breakfast table.

Interior designer Martha Angus used glowing colors that reinforce the open flow: soft hues give each space a distinctive mood but eliminate dramatic contrasts between rooms. The living room was the only place where the clients hesitated, initially preferring the existing marigold color to Angus's recommenda-

tion of a softer yellow that she calls “room temperature butter.” Angus insisted, and, says the owner, “I’m glad she did.”

Angus considered the client's firm likes and dislikes a plus, particularly during a whirlwind shopping trip to the Paris flea markets. “We’re both huge Francophiles,” says Angus, “and we outfitted the whole house in eight hours from the Paul Bert and Serpette antiques markets. We couldn’t have done that if my client didn’t know to take advantage of a good thing when she saw it.” Their efficiency also stemmed from going well prepared with floor plans and a shopping list. “We taught our 12-year-old boys to use a measuring tape. One would measure and the other would take a picture while we negotiated price.”

Despite her love for French antiques, the owner's dominant request was for “a home that looks like a family really lives in it.” For the custom upholstery pieces in the family room, she requested the same commercial-grade nylon fabric that Angus had used in her weekend home. (“She figured if it had held up with my own teenager, it would hold up with hers too,” says the designer.) Jute carpets and matchstick blinds further temper high-style elements in a livable mix. Four ample seating pieces in the living room are covered in the same golden low-pile chenille. “That room is quite small,” Angus points out, “but it feels larger with a monochromatic scheme. With the furnishings quiet, everyone pays attention to the collection of African art.” And in similar fashion, the newly created space and light are a mellow backdrop to a spirited family life in a home now large enough for all.

Opposite: The dining space (which like the living room was part of the original house) now opens onto the courtyard. The addition, which encompasses a new family room on the first level and master bedroom above, forms the rear wall of the courtyard. An oversize passageway and service area on the left connects the old and the new.

WRITER AND PRODUCER: KATHERINE PEARSON PHOTOGRAPHER: DOMINIQUE VORILLON



Clockwise from top left: In the living room, a Tibetan jute carpet by Stark and golden chenille upholstery provide a warmly neutral background for an art collection. The dining room mural is by Katherine Jacobus. A Masai headrest and necklace and a Tibetan prayer wheel create a vignette on the living room coffee table. Opposite: The owners wanted the room to be livable and not museumlike, so interior designer Martha Angus added comfortable seating with plump damask pillows and a footrest.

Interior designer Martha Angus used glowing colors that reinforce the open flow. Soft hues give each space a distinctive mood but eliminate dramatic contrasts between rooms



This page, clockwise from top left: The kitchen, at one end of the addition, has a large island and maximum wall storage to accommodate a serious cook. Designer Martha Angus added raspberry accents to the courtyard, reinforced by her peony arrangements in

French Astier de Villette urns for the dining table. Muted tones and wearable materials ensure that the family room, with French doors open to the courtyard, is a great hangout for teenage boys. Opposite: A large bay for family meals extends into a second courtyard at the rear of the house. Hopkins designed the bay to “grab the southern sun, which can be at a premium in San Francisco.” Hanging iron light fixture is from Paul Ferrante.



This page, clockwise from upper left: Toile and check fabrics keep the guest bedroom within a classic comfort zone. Soothing color and uncluttered design in the master bath. A terraced garden of evergreens, white roses, lavender, and catmint is visible from the master bedroom and bath. Landscape designer Todd Cole dealt with the radical slope of the lot with a graciously curving stair to the upper level garden, ingeniously camou-

flaging an imposing retaining wall. Opposite: An oculus and barrel ceiling in the master bedroom deliver on the owners' request for "very interesting spaces and a surprise in each room." The generous bay echoes the breakfast bay below it and opens the room to a view of the upper garden.

FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES