WELL BLENDED

A RENOVATION FOR A NEWLY COMBINED FAMILY RESULTS IN A LOOK THAT IS CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY, YET WITH SPACE FOR EVERYONE TO ENJOY.

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ARCHITECTURE  Erik Peterson, Inc. Architecture
INTERIOR DESIGN  Elizabeth Finkelman, Elizabeth A. Rissman Design Studio, LLC
HOME BUILDERS  Chris Turner, R & D Development, Inc.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT  Russell Grey, Green | Pickett
It only makes sense to renovate a house for a newly blended family to reflect the merging of lives—in this case, a husband and wife and five girls ranging in age from elementary school to a recent college graduate. The owners had specific updates in mind for the residence that the wife already owned in Paradise Valley. First, they envisioned a household that could evolve with the two younger girls while also offering entertaining space for adults. Second, they wanted to showcase their collection of art in a well-lit house that didn’t compete with the architecture. “We wanted it to be classic-contemporary,” says the husband, who called on architect Erik Peterson to fulfill their wish list. “It’s a genius at interpreting that vernacular.”

“Mainly,” Peterson says, “we simplified the whole thing.” Architectural breakups and steps between the rooms were eliminated in order to create one continuous level. “We didn’t do too much major structural change,” he says, but did open the kitchen to unfold into the dining area, so the space seats two or 20. He also expanded the master suite, which is finished in two shades of curated oak, and put on an addition for his-and-her closets.

A mix of old and new furnishings make up the family room, which was revealed with a colorful rug from David E. Adler and a sofa upholstered in Scalamandre Textiles fabric. The recessed ceiling grid, which incorporates cork to buffer noise, helps center the room.
A Taliesin rug unifies the palette in the living room, where the floor is clad in a series of low-ESR safes from the MN Collection collective among architects. A sculptural pair of elbow chairs with open-framework frames joins a weighty stone-like cocktail table from Phillips Collection.

Rosensteel chose oyster-shell porcelain tile for the flooring throughout the ground level. The tiles, which extend to one of two covered outdoor patios to help unify the indoor-outdoor spaces, are durable and look clean, even with a dog running around. "It creates a great first impression and sets the tone for the rest of the house," Rosensteel says.

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Chris Turner, the superintendent and project manager on the project, noting the critical 10-months schedule, used his firm's in-house carpenter, Daniele Cabeças, for the finishes and doors. "We were able to create a higher quality by making them custom," he says.

For the interiors, Petersen brought in designer Elizabeth Rosensteel, whose first instinct was to pull the house out of its poured-concrete boxiness. "We're in Arizona," she says, "where everything is about light and how it plays off structure and texture." As a result, the team added skylights to the master bathroom and the living room, where a shaft of light grazes a curved pebbled wall that was previously exposed masonry block. "We made it a focal point of the room," Petersen says.
The artwork, after all—with works by Rosenquist, Warhol and Picasso, among others—is center stage, and built-in throughout, designed by Rosensteel and fabricated by Brothers Woodworks, help show it off. A palette of neutral furnishings in a mix of beige fabrics lends a quiet elegance that complements the collection. In the living room, for example, three black angular custom steel tables offset two pale green cotton-and-linen sofas and nod to a nearby trio of spherical natural-toned sculptures by Tricia Jamaica of Brooklyn's May Furniture Co.

In the kitchen, Rosensteel paid homage to Frank Lloyd Wright—the architect they met 15 years ago while working at Wright's Taliesin Associates Architecture—with a mix of curved and straight lines. Here, the designer went with built-in components on the custom island and repeated that same rounded shape in wood just above the toe kick. High-quality art lighting previously installed throughout the house was re purposed as pendants strung in a circle around the skylight.

Rosensteel designed the kitchen cabinetry built by Brothers Woodworks, and chose the pale green backsplash tile by Wabi Stone. The rounded island, topped with crisp white Carrara marble, reflects a skylight above it.

Weber stools from ML in New York, covered in a resistant fabric from Arctico's Write-Off collection, are practical for quick meals at the kitchen counter. Handblown glass fixtures by New York designer Joe Slobogin add a whimsical touch of color.
Landscape architect Russell Green designed the pool, fabricated by Aqua Essence Pools and featuring a dynamic, tiled trapezoid and rain curtain, zero-edge spa and glass tiles from Noble Tile Supply. Existing furniture was reupholstered in outdoor Serrano in Mexico. Planters by Korenberg Design House.
Outside, landscape architect Russell Greer was brought in to design the pool, landscape and plantings. Set on an axis with the family room, the pool was purposefully relocated in order to become a focal point from the indoors. Decked out with LED lights and a 12-foot-wide rain curtain with a fire pit, “It has ‘wow’ factor for entertaining,” says Peterson. Adds the husband, “The pool itself becomes almost like dynamic art.”

In the end, the entire design team worked together to create the perfect home for the now-combined family—resulting in a space that is at once fun and sophisticated, a place they can enjoy for years to come.