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INSPIRING SPACES

LOCAL DESIGNERS SHARE THEIR FAVORITE PROJECTS

From a relaxing breakfast nook to the shared owners' lounge inside a brand-new high rise, the spaces that are inspiring us this season have been created by some of the city's top design talent. Here, they give us the story behind the room and what about it speaks to them.



Benjamin Vandiver
*Benjamin Vandiver
Interiors + Lifestyle*

“When new clients approached me to design and furnish an addition to their home that was still under construction, they not only had a new room, but a new baby. They didn't have many requests other than comfort, durability, and a starting point for the rest of the property (if we got along through the initial phase). Though they already had a formal dining room, there was no place for this young family to eat breakfast or a casual dinner with friends. Instead of another table with six chairs, a banquette felt like the accessibility they craved—if they need to pull up a highchair, it still looks put together, while feeling incredibly young and easy. Considering they wanted to grow with the design, this felt like the best solution—they can change pillows, hang family art alongside the vintage Matisse poster or accommodate lunch dates for the now toddler. With luxury items like the Apparatus lighting and peacock-blue velvet covering the banquette, this is not your basic breakfast nook.”



Laret Casella
Casella Interiors

“The most rewarding aspect of being given the responsibility to design the owners’ lounge for the Twelve Twelve building was being able to create a space that would provide a sense of community for the project. The lounge creates a shared space, which serves as an extension to the living rooms of each of the residents. It encourages interaction among the dwellers to formulate bonding between the residents and strengthens their sense of community. Although the room is large, the selection, placement, and design of the various seating groups allows for both intimate gatherings as well as throngs of people to co-use the space comfortably. Quality, neutral-colored materials were selected to create a rich, warm palette with the goal of providing a place that is both modern and inviting. In addition, the large expanse of windows with views of the city’s surrounding urban core pulls the eye outward and connects the residents to their greater Nashville community. Ultimately the design of the room will enhance the quality of life for the dwellers of the building.”



Ray Booth
 McAlpine Booth
 & Ferrier

“Our clients challenged us to create a space that would not only accommodate a changing art collection but one that was architectural-ly pleasing and provided furnishings that allowed for entertaining. The interior architecture we created offers a quiet backdrop that has the strength to accomplish all the programming required while integrating subtle nuances that allow for the function. Examples of this are the steel channels that ride above the fireplace in the salon, which esthetically unifies the composition; they also have channels cut into them that allow the art to be hung without having to drive a screw into the stone thus allowing for the flexibility for changing art. Some of the challenges of this space were the scale and play of proportion. On one side we have a two-story space filled with light and on the other we have a single (albeit gracious) one-story space. The need was to find a way to tend these two opposing realities and have the room feel accommodating and relate to human scale. We often rely on furnishings to help us layer in scale and proportion to a room; in this instance we designed low wooden screens that reach out and hug the smaller tables to the larger sofa and lighting. They are ‘gathering’ devices that allow the furnishings to be held in the space thus allowing the inhabitants to feel tended and nurtured. We also used furnishings that have a lower seat and back height so that they actually relate to the floor plane instead of trying to be too tall. They have wide arms and extra-long length so that they feel gracious and have a gravity that keeps them from feeling frivolous. In this room we really enjoyed the integration of interior architecture with furnishings. It allowed a broad canvas from which we could paint.”



Julie Couch
*Julie Couch
Interiors*

“Fun. Energetic. Welcoming. Confident. Brave. These five words describe not only this colorful dining room, but also my good friend and the homeowner, Beth Garza. From our first meeting, I knew that this fabulous mom of four was going to be different. I learned quickly that, in her eyes, absolutely no fabric has quite enough color or pattern; high-end lighting and mirrors make her happy; and her home would be unlike any other. We worked with her existing metallic wall covering, adding brass hardware and lush purple drapery. Modern wing chairs clad in a bold pattern by Schumacher complement 18th century English-inspired side chairs that we modernized in a crisp white lacquer. I designed the one-of-a-kind emerald green buffet, made by a local artisan. Friends have told Beth that when they walk into her home they immediately feel welcome and happy, and that her home is so very ‘her.’ As a designer, those words are the hallmark of a job well done. Our collaboration is effortless because Beth has a strong point of view and knows what she wants for her home. My role was to make her vision come to life, and we did—with flinging colors!”



Brad Ramsey
Brad Ramsey
Interiors

“It is rare to design a room that is simply about the aesthetic design. More often than not, it is a dance between form and function. As a designer, I strive to imbue a space with balance, layers and character while providing a design that truly functions for my clients. In this instance, my lovely client Kelley and her husband Scott, presented me with the challenge of reviving their tired bonus room while making it cozy for them, three teenage boys, their beagle, and the numerous buddies who come over to hang out and watch football. Scott wanted an updated rustic feel, so we faced the old fireplace with stacked stone, added tongue-n-groove slats and beams to the drywall ceiling, and displayed a few of his hunting trophies. We reoriented the room by putting the TV over the mantel and adding a custom sectional with rolling hide ottomans for extra seating and comfort. In case that’s not enough seating, we cleverly hid four industrial stools underneath an 80-inch-long rustic console on the backside of the sectional. In the end, the bonus room turned out to be gorgeous, inviting, and is always full of family and friends.”