WEB-EXCLUSIVE HOME TOUR

Tour a Nashville Residence Where the Architecture Steals the Show

Designer Suzanne Kasler and architect Bill Ingram transform a dated property overlooking the city into a serene retreat made for entertaining

By Alyssa Bird

Photography by Melanie Acevedo

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With all four kids grown and out of the house their family shared for 22 years, Lyn and Scott Sohr were ready for a new chapter. Having always preferred the building process to renovating, it came as sort of a surprise when they found themselves buying a dated 1990s fixer-upper after touring it on a whim. "It needed a total rehab, but the views of Nashville's skyline sold us," says Lyn of the 11,000-square-foot, four-bedroom residence. As luck would have it, Scott's brother and sister-in-law are cofounders of the Nashville-based design firm Pencil & Paper Co. and knew exactly who to recommend for the overwhelming gut job: Enter AD100 interior designer Suzanne Kasler and architect Bill Ingram, both of whom are based in Atlanta.

"The house was in dire need of an identity," Ingram says. "It was part Craftsman-style lodge and part Las Vegas opulence, with marble, travertine, and carved Corinthian columns. We really scratched our heads over how to make it cohesive." In the end, Ingram and Kasler decided on a few major changes to the floor plan that would allow for better flow (the couple often hosts gatherings for up to 35 extended family members who all live in the area) and left no surface unturned in the process.

Ingram went about transforming a small sunken living room into a gracious entry hall (the current floor plan had lacked one) and installed a grand six-foot-wide staircase to replace the "dinky" spiral one in the main living area—a tall, narrow space that Ingram refers to as the spine of the house. "The biggest challenge was making that room more usable," the architect says. "Originally it had a 30-foot vaulted ceiling with exposed timbers, and it just felt too much like a lodge. We brought the height down to 22 feet and swapped in a flat rough-sawn pine ceiling for a cleaner look." The kitchen, with a choppy layout made worse by the odd placement of a staircase leading to the basement, was another point of contention. "There was a floor-to-ceiling aquarium and a massive electric carousel pantry that would rotate out of the floor," Ingram explains. "I had never seen anything like it. It was overwhelming at first, but we stripped the home of its dated components and tried to give purpose to the rooms that hadn't been thought out well. Now, the overall effect is more calming and spa-like."

Kasler further emphasized this spa-like quality by employing neutral furnishings and painting nearly the entire house in Benjamin Moore's White Dove. "White walls show off the strong architecture, which I wanted to be the main feature of the residence," says the designer, adding that this was one of the most problematic houses she has ever laid her eyes on. "Renovating is always more challenging than building new," Kasler says. "Still, some of my favorite projects have been renovations because they often turn out to be more interesting; this one started with a very traditional aesthetic and an unusual floor plan, but now it's clean, tailored, and cozy—and every room has a function and encourages socialization."

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The entry features a Formations light fixture and a Liaigre desk. Architect Bill Ingram created a grand staircase to replace the wrought-iron spiral stair that previously stood in the center of the living area.

A seating area in the living room contains a sofa from Saladino and a pair of chairs from Jonas.

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The Nashville residence of Lyn and Scott Sohr was a collaboration between designer Suzanne Kasler and architect Bill Ingram. The shiplap-clad gym is painted in Farrow & Ball's Drop Cloth and the pendant lights are by RH. "At first, the client didn't think the gym needed curtains," says the designer, "but they make all the difference in the scale of the room."

In the main living space, the pair of armchairs, the table, and the ottoman are all Suzanne Kasler designs for Hickory Chair. Artwork by Anke Schofield hangs above a chaise lounge from Saladino on the opposite wall. “The living room is very long,” notes Kasler, “so we created three seating areas that relate to each other and flow nicely.”

Off the living area, a bar nook is offset by a dark custom stain and furnished with designer Suzanne Kasler's Laurent barstools for Hickory Chair. The artwork behind the bar is by Jean Marc Louis.

Taj Mahal quartzite makes a statement in the kitchen, which features Verellen barstools and Mattaliano pendant lights.

Artwork by Steven Seinberg hangs in the family room, just off the kitchen. Kasler's Provence chair for Hickory Chair sits to the left of the limestone fireplace, and the sofa is from Dmitriy & Co.

The butler's pantry features Fior Di Bosco marble countertops.

In the dining room, a Liaigre light fixture hangs above a table from the client's own collection and chairs from Lee Industries.

The loggia features seating by RH.

Artwork by Dusty Griffith hangs above a limestone fireplace in the master bedroom. The bed and armchair are from Dmitriy & Co, the bench is by Natasha Baradaran from R Hughes, and the rug is by Stark.

A window above the Francois & Co. tub in the master bath looks into the shower area, and the sconces are from Visual Comfort & Co.

In a guest bedroom, a bed designed by Thomas O'Brien for Century Furniture is upholstered in a Holland & Sherry fabric. The artwork is by Dusty Griffith, the bedside tables are by RH, and the lamps are by Visual Comfort & Co.

Chaise longues by RH line the pool area.